

Committee:	Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date:	1 July 2015
Agenda item:	6
Wards:	All
Subject:	Agreeing the Work Programme 2015/16
Lead officer:	Rebecca Redman, Scrutiny Officer
Lead member:	Cllr Katy Neep, Chair of Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
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Recommendations:

That Members of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

- i) Consider their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion;
 - ii) Consider the methods by which the Panel would like to scrutinise the issues/items agreed;
 - iii) Identify a Member to lead on performance monitoring on behalf of the Panel;
 - iv) Identify a Member to lead on budget scrutiny on behalf of the Panel;
 - v) Agree on an issue for scrutiny by a task group and appoint members to the Task Group; and
 - vi) Consider the appointment of co-opted members for the 2015/16 municipal year, to sit on the Panel and/or on the Task Group
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to support and advise Members to determine their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year.
- 1.2 This report sets out the following information to assist Members in this process:
 - a) The principles of effective scrutiny and the criteria against which work programme items should be considered;
 - b) The roles and responsibilities of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
 - c) The findings of the consultation programme undertaken with Members, senior management, voluntary and community sector organisations, partner organisations and Merton residents;
 - d) A summary of the discussion by councillors and co-opted members at a topic selection workshop held on 19th May 2015; and
 - e) Support available to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to determine, develop and deliver its 2015/16 work programme.

2. **Determining the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Work Programme for 2015/16**

- 2.1 Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of Merton.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have specific roles relating to budget and business plan scrutiny and to performance monitoring that should automatically be built into their work programmes. Members are recommended to appoint a Performance Monitoring Lead Member and a Business Plan/Budget Scrutiny Lead Member on behalf of the Panel.
- 2.3 Overview and Scrutiny Panels may choose to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work. Any call-in work will be programmed into the provisional call-in dates identified in the corporate calendar as required.
- 2.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2015/16, including the scheduled budget meeting (representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting). Members will therefore need to be selective in their choice of items for the Panel's work programme.

Principles guiding the development of the scrutiny work programme

- 2.5 The following key principles of effective scrutiny should be considered when the Panel determines its work programme:
- **Be selective** – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.
 - **Add value with scrutiny** – Items should have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the Authority and its partners. If it is not clear what the intended outcomes or impact of a review will be then Members should consider if there are issues of a higher priority that could be scrutinised instead.
 - **Be ambitious** – Panels should not shy away from carrying out scrutiny of issues that are of local concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. the Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental well being of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.
 - **Be flexible** – Members are reminded that there needs to be a degree of flexibility in their work programme to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration/comment during the year and accommodate any developmental or additional work that falls within the remit of this Panel. For example Members may wish to questions officers regarding the declining performance of a service or may choose to respond to a Councillor Call for Action request.

- **Think about the timing** – Members should ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, their findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. Members should seek to avoid duplication of work carried out elsewhere.

Models for carrying out scrutiny work

2.6 There are a number of means by which the Overview and Scrutiny Panel can deliver its work programme. Members should consider which of the following options is most appropriate to undertake each of the items they have selected for inclusion in the work programme:

Item on a scheduled meeting agenda/ hold an extra meeting of the Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Panel can agree to add an item to the agenda for a meeting and call Cabinet Members/ Officers/Partners to the meeting to respond to questioning on the matter ■ A variation of this model could be a single meeting to scrutinise an issue that, although important, does not merit setting up a 'task-and-finish' group.
Task Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A small group of Members meet outside of the scheduled meetings to gather information on the subject area, visit other local authorities/sites, and speak to service users, expert witnesses and/or Officers/Partners. The Task Group can then report back to the wider Panel with their findings to endorse the submission of their recommendations to Cabinet/Council ■ This is the method usually used to carry out policy reviews
Panel asks for a report then takes a view on action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Panel may need more information before taking a view on whether to carry out a full review so asks for a report to give them more details.
Meeting with service officer/partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Member (or small group of Members) has a meeting with service officers/partners to discuss concerns or raise queries. ■ If the Member is not satisfied with the outcome or believes that the Panel needs to have a more in-depth review of the matter s/he takes it back to the Panel for discussion
Individual Members doing some initial research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A member with a specific concern carries out some research to gain more information on the matter and then brings his/her findings to the attention of the panel if s/he still has concerns.

2.7 Note that, in order to keep agendas to a manageable size, and to focus on items to which the Panel can make a direct contribution, the Panel may choose to take some "information only" items outside of Panel meetings, for example by email.

Support available for scrutiny activity

2.8 The Overview and Scrutiny function has dedicated scrutiny support from the Scrutiny Team to:

- Work with the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Panel to manage the work programme and coordinate the agenda, including advising officers and partner organisations on information required and guidance for witnesses submitting evidence to a scrutiny review;

- Provide support for scrutiny Members through briefing papers, background material, training and development seminars, etc;
 - Facilitate and manage the work of the task and finish groups, including research, arranging site visits, inviting and briefing witnesses and drafting review reports on behalf on the Chair; and
 - Promote the scrutiny function across the organisation and externally.
- 2.9 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel will need to assess how they can best utilise the available support from the Scrutiny Team to deliver their work programme for 2015/16.
- 2.10 The Panel is also invited to comment upon any briefing, training and support that are needed to enable Members to undertake their work programme. Members may also wish to undertake visits to local services in order to familiarise themselves with these. Such visits should be made with the knowledge of the Chair and will be organised by the Scrutiny Team.
- 2.11 The Scrutiny Team will take the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's views on board in developing the support that is provided.
- 3. Selecting items for the Scrutiny Work Programme**
- 3.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Panel sets its own agenda within the scope of its terms of reference, with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission taking a coordinating role to ensure that any gaps or overlap in the scrutiny work programme are dealt with in a joined-up way.
- The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel has the following remit: -
- Children's social care (including child protection)
 - Education (including school standards, special educational needs, the extended schools programme, and the Healthy Schools Initiative)
 - Youth services and youth engagement, including the Youth Parliament, young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), and the Connexions Service
 - Youth Offending
 - Children's Centre's
 - The Children's Trust
- 3.1 The Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for issues to scrutinise either as Panel agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions have been received from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the police, NHS Sutton and Merton and Merton Voluntary Service Council. Other issues of public concern have been identified through the Annual Residents Survey. Issues that have been raised repeatedly at Community Forums have also been included. The Scrutiny Team has consulted departmental management teams in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the panel could contribute to the policymaking process.

- 3.2 A description of all the suggestions received is set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The councillors who attended a “topic selection” workshop on 19th May 2015 discussed these suggestions.
- 3.4 The suggestions were prioritised at the workshop using the criteria listed in Appendix 3. In particular, participants sought to identify issues that related to the Council’s strategic priorities or where there was underperformance; issues of public interest or concern and issues where scrutiny could make a difference.
- 3.5 A note of the workshop discussion relating to the remit of this Panel is set out in Appendix 4.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 contains a draft work programme that has been drawn up, taking the workshop discussion into account, for the consideration of the Panel. The Panel is requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.
- 3.7 The Panel may also wish to select items for scrutiny from the presentations made by Directors and Cabinet Members (at the Panel’s meeting on 1 July 2015) or based on other public priorities of which Members are aware through their ward work.
- 3.8 Items on the Cabinet’s forward plan that relate to the remit of this Panel are listed in Appendix 5. The Panel may wish to include one or more of these issues in its work programme.

4. Task group reviews

- 4.1 The Panel is invited to select an issue for in-depth scrutiny and establish a task group.

5. Co-option to the Panel membership

- 5.1 Scrutiny Panels can consider whether to appoint non-statutory (non-voting) co-optees to the membership, in order to add to the specific knowledge, expertise and understanding of key issues to aid the scrutiny function. Panels may also wish to consider whether it may be helpful to co-opt people from “seldom heard” groups.

6. Public involvement

- 6.1 Scrutiny provides extensive opportunities for community involvement and democratic accountability. Engagement with service users and with the general public can help to improve the quality, legitimacy and long-term viability of recommendations made by the Panel.
- 6.2 Service users and the public bring different perspectives, experiences and solutions to scrutiny, particularly if “seldom heard” groups such as young people, disabled people, people from black and minority ethnic communities and people from lesbian gay bisexual and transgender communities are included.
- 6.3 This engagement will help the Panel to understand the service user’s perspective on individual services and on co-ordination between services. Views can be heard directly through written or oral evidence or heard indirectly through making use of existing sources of information, for example from surveys. From time to time the Panel/Task Group may wish to carry out engagement activities of its own, by holding discussion groups or sending questionnaires on particular issues of interest.
- 6.4 Much can be learnt from best practice already developed in Merton and elsewhere. The Scrutiny Team will be able to help the Panel to identify the range of stakeholders from which it may wish to seek views and the best way to engage with particular groups within the community.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 A number of issues highlighted in this report recommend that Panel members take into account certain considerations when setting their work programme for 2015/16. Overview and Scrutiny Panels are free to determine their work programme as they see fit. Members may therefore choose to identify a work programme that does not take into account these considerations. This is not advised as ignoring the issues raised would either conflict with good practice and/or principles endorsed in the Review of Scrutiny, or could mean that adequate support would not be available to carry out the work identified for the work programme.

7.2 A range of suggestions from the public, partner organisations, officers and Members for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme are set out in the appendices, together with a suggested approach to determining which to include in the work programme. Members may choose to respond differently. However, in doing so, Members should be clear about expected outcomes, how realistic expectations are and the impact of their decision on their wider work programme and support time. Members are also free to incorporate into their work programme any other issues they think should be subject to scrutiny over the course of the year, with the same considerations in mind.

8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

8.1 To assist Members to identify priorities for inclusion in the Panel's scrutiny work programme, the Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for possible scrutiny reviews from a number of sources:

- a. Members of the public have been approached using the following tools: articles in the local press, My Merton and Merton Together, request for suggestions from all councillors and co-opted members, letter to partner organisations and to range of local voluntary and community organisations, including those involved in the Inter-Faith Forum and members of the Lesbian Gay and Transgender Forum;
- b. Councillors have put forward suggestions by raising issues in scrutiny meetings, via the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey 2015, and by contacting the Scrutiny Team directly; and
- c. Officers have been consulted via discussion at departmental management team meetings.

9. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the financial, resource and property issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific financial, resource and property implications.

10. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Overview and scrutiny bodies operate within the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

10.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the legal and statutory issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific legal and statutory implications.

- 11. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 11.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement. The reviews will involve work to consult local residents, community and voluntary sector groups, businesses, hard to reach groups, partner organisations etc and the views gathered will be fed into the review.
- 11.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the human rights, equalities and community cohesion issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications.
- 12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 12.1 In line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, all Council departments must have regard to the impact of services on crime, including anti-social behaviour and drugs. Scrutiny review reports will therefore highlight any implications arising from the reviews relating to crime and disorder as necessary.
- 13. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 13.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the risk management and health and safety issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific risk management and health and safety implications.
- 14. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel draft work programme 2015/16
- 14.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of topics relating to this Overview & Scrutiny Panel’s remit suggested for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme
- 14.3 Appendix 3 – Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 19th May 2015
- 14.4 Appendix 4 – Notes from discussion of topics relating to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop 19th May 2015
- 14.5 Appendix 5 – Extract from Forward Plan
- 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 15.1 None

Draft Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2015/16

Meeting Date –July 2015

Theme: Setting the work programme			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member Topic Lead	External Witnesses/Representatives in attendance
Elected Member & Departmental Portfolio Priorities	Outlining the portfolio priorities of Cabinet Members and officers' service priorities for 2015-16 to inform discussion of the Panels work programme for 2015/16	Paul Ballatt/Yvette Stanley Cabinet Members – Cllrs Whelton and Martin	
Agreeing the Work Programme 2015/16	To agree work programme and consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Panel will deliver its work programme throughout the year with a thematic approach. • appointing topic leads • how to get the best out of performance monitoring, • how shorter task groups will operate, opportunities for pre decision scrutiny • on-going monitoring of task group recommendations • Co-opted member positions. 	Cllr Katy Neep/Rebecca Redman	
Draft Final Report – Online Strategies in Schools Task Group	Panel to endorse report and recommendations for submission to Cabinet for consideration.	Rebecca Redman	
Performance Report	Discussion of proposed 'basket' of performance indicators for on-going monitoring	Paul Ballatt	

Meeting Date –October 2015

Theme: Safeguarding/Corporate Parenting			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible	External

		officer/Member Topic Lead	Witnesses/Re presentatives in attendance
CSF Budget Proposals (Round 1)			
Looked after children and corporate parenting report	This is a standard item looking at services across the borough to support looked after children, pre and post-adoption.	Paul Ballatt	Invite partners.
Annual report and business plan of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board	To enable the Panel to consider the work and performance of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board	Paul Ballatt	Invite Chair of MSCB and partner agencies.
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting for information.	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme • To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	

Meeting date – November 2015

Theme: Improving Health Outcomes for children and young people

Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member	External Witnesses/Repres entatives in

		Topic Lead	attendance
Executive Response and Action Plan – Online Strategies in Schools Task Group	To provide a response from Cabinet outlining which recommendations from the review have been agreed and how they will be implemented going forward.	TBD	
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	
Task Group - Transfer of public health functions to the local authority and broader engagement of health in provision of services for children and young people.	<p>Task Group to prepare for the meeting by examining data on health outcomes to identify key lines of enquiry and challenging questions that could be put to health professionals at the Panel meeting.</p> <p>Key Lines of enquiry: TBD</p> <p>Focus on improving health outcomes for children and on 4 priorities of the health and achievement plan.</p>	TBD	<p>Witnesses/partners to be identified.</p> <p>Public Health – Kate/Julia</p> <p>CCG</p> <p>Head of Community Health Services provision</p>

Meeting Date – January 2016

Theme: Budget Scrutiny

Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member	External Witnesses/Repres
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		Topic Lead	Representatives in attendance
CSF Budget Proposals (Round 2)	To enable the Panel to consider the councils budget and business plan proposals and forward any comments/recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny commission to compile a scrutiny response on the Budget/Business Plan to Cabinet. Focus on specific budget areas as an option and look in detail at alternative savings that may be proposed.		
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting for information.	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	

Meeting Date –February 2016

Theme: School Standards

Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member Topic Lead	External Witnesses/ Representatives in attendance
Briefing- School Standards Committee	To gain a more in depth understanding of the role and work of this Committee and to seek the view of the Chair of the School Standards Committee on areas of concern and how scrutiny might support this work.	Cllr Dennis Pearce/Rebecca Redman Jane McSherry to be included Include some pieces	

		on school admissions	
School Standards	Annual Report on Attainment and Progress of Pupils in Merton Schools for information.	Paul Ballatt	
Educational attainment for children with complex needs, SEN and disabilities	To consider the educational attainment of disabled children and young people.		
Progress Update - School leadership succession planning task group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the Panel to performance manage delivery of the recommendations resulting from its task group review. Topic leads should be appointed to champion this work through a follow up meeting with lead officers mid-year 	Head of Education/Rebecca Redman	
Progress Update – online strategies in schools task group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the Panel to performance manage delivery of the recommendations resulting from its task group review. Topic leads should be appointed to champion this work through a follow up meeting with lead officers mid-year 		
Update Report	Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting	Paul Ballatt	
Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme 	Rebecca Redman	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 		
Task Group - Educational attainment for disabled children and young people	<p>To establish a task group to examine the data in more detail with a view to identifying issues for potential scrutiny in 2016/17</p> <p>Key Lines of enquiry: TBD</p>	TBD	

Meeting Date – March 2016

Theme: Corporate parenting incorporating looked after children and transition			
Item	Purpose/intended outcome	Responsible officer/Member Topic Lead	External Witnesses/Representatives in attendance
Task Group – Housing and Health offer for care leavers and looked after children to prevent homelessness and unemployment	<p>Cross cutting review to be undertaken over 2/3 meetings to consider the housing, health, education and employment offer for older looked after children and care leavers.</p> <p>Key Lines of enquiry: TBD</p> <p>The Task Group should report back to the Panel with a final report and recommendations at its March 2016 meeting.</p>	TBD	
Looked after children and corporate parenting report	<p>This is a standard item looking at services across the borough to support looked after children, pre and post-adoption.</p>	Paul Ballatt	Invite partners.
Recruitment of foster carers and other placements for looked after children	<p>Report on the recruitment of foster carers with a view to identifying any areas for further scrutiny/or make any recommendations to Cabinet or partners.</p>		
Update Report	<p>Update on developments affecting CSF department since the last scrutiny meeting</p>	Paul Angeli	

Performance Report	Report on basket of indicators selected by Panel with commentary on areas of concern/underperformance. Members may wish to select areas for more in-depth scrutiny if there is persistent underperformance in a particular service/area.	Paul Ballatt	
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider any pre decision items on the Forward Plan that the Panel may wish to scrutinise and include in their work programme • To agree the task group key lines of enquiry and areas of investigation for topic leads in preparation for the next meeting 	Rebecca Redman	
Topic Suggestions	Panel to raise any topics for the 2016/17 work programme to consider at the Topic Workshops in May/June 2016	Rebecca Redman	
Final Report of Task Group looking at Transfer of public health functions to the local authority for children and young people.	Draft Final Report of the task group and recommendations for agreement to forward to Cabinet (and partners where appropriate) for consideration	TBD	
Final Report of Housing and Health offer for care leavers Task Group	Draft Final Report of the task group and recommendations for agreement to forward to Cabinet (and partners where appropriate) for consideration	TBD	

Description of topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The following topics were suggested by residents, Members and officers, for consideration by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, for their 2015/16 work programme.

Annual Residents Survey 2014:

The council's Annual Residents Survey undertaken in 2014 found the following, which relates to the remit of this Panel and may be of interest in prioritising the issues the Panel wishes to scrutinise:

- Concern over the standard of education is ninth priority for the borough overall, but concern about this is significantly higher than average for those aged 34-49, and those with children;
- 12% of residents stressed concerns that not enough was being done for young people; and
- There has been an increase in satisfaction with nursery and primary education, both of which are ahead of the London average

1. Topic: School Run and Travel Plans

Who suggested it?

Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage proposed that the adequacy of measures to address problems caused by the school run should be reviewed. They also feel that school travel plans are poorly prepared and rarely implemented and need to be more robust.

Summary of the issue

The overall aim of School Travel Plans is to reduce car use for school journeys or keep it at low levels in schools expecting higher numbers of pupils over coming years. Active travel campaigns and STAR (School Travel Accredited and Recognised) accreditation work are undertaken to reduce car use and increase walking, cycling and using public transport. STAR (School Travel Accredited and Recognised) is a strategic framework that encourages and rewards schools to adopt safer and active travel behaviour. The STAR accreditation recognises and rewards schools at one of 3 levels; sustainable, higher and outstanding. Participation in STAR is also an important building block towards achieving other accreditations and standards such as Healthy Schools, Eco –Schools and Sustainable Schools. Each school in Merton has a School Travel Plan Champion. They are responsible for producing their school's travel plan in conjunction with the borough's School Travel Plan Advisor.

The aims of the service are to:

- Significantly reduce the number of car trips on journeys to and from school;
- Remove the barriers, both perceived and actual, to walking, cycling and using public transport for school journeys;
- Increase the number of young people and adults choosing 'active travel' options over that of the car; and
- Increase understanding among whole school communities of the travel options that are available to them.

A School Travel Plan can result in:

- Less cars and congestion around the school site;
- Healthier and more active pupils, families and staff;
- Less pollution around the school;
- Safer walking and cycling routes around the school; and
- Improved school grounds with provision for bicycle storage.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could request a briefing report on the number of school travel plans which are meeting STAR accreditation and operating effectively to make recommendations, as appropriate, to Cabinet and schools on any improvements the Panel feel need to be made.

2. Topic: Housing and health offer for care leavers and looked after children to prevent homelessness and unemployment

Who suggested the topic?

Officers within the CSF department; Chair of the Panel.

Summary of the issue

Merton's services for looked after children form part of a comprehensive continuum of support for children and young people who may be facing difficulties at home. These range from family support to intensive community interventions or seeking permanence through permanent alternative care. In taking this approach the council remain committed to ensuring that the right children enter care and that their experiences are positive and their opportunities many. Merton's looked after children population in the last ten years has ranged from a low of 96 (2006/7) to 150 (2013/14). This increase has been reviewed and audited to establish what is behind this trend. There are a number of reasons for this increase including increased national awareness of children's safeguarding, an increasing birth rate, more general demographic changes and a change in legislation in relation to children coming into care through remand placements. Merton has a higher than average profile of looked after children at the older age range.

The Children Act 1989 and the Leaving Care Act 2000 place clear statutory duties upon the Council to protect children from suffering significant harm and to provide continued financial and transition support to care leavers aged up to 21 (or 25 if in full time education). The duty to promote the educational achievement of a looked-after child extends to looked after young people aged 16 or 17 preparing to leave care. These are referred to in the Children Act 1989 as 'eligible children'. In 2014 Merton launched a Care Leavers Strategy.

Merton has maintained and strengthened services for care leavers to support their successful transition to adulthood. The outcomes achieved by care leavers often depend on the age they become looked after, however, Merton's ambitions for all looked after children and care leavers remain high. In addition to a targeted Care Leavers Strategy, the council also formalised its commitment to all Care Leaver's by signing up to a co-developed Charter in February 2013.

Children also often enter the care system with a poorer level of physical and mental health than their peers, and their longer-term outcomes remain worse. Nationally two thirds of looked after children have at least one physical health complaint, and nearly half have a mental health disorder. Health outcomes for Merton looked after children are better than the national average, these are supported by good support from NHS Trusts with good levels of routine health surveillance and access to specialist provision where necessary e.g. CAMHs.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel may wish to undertake a task group review that would be cross cutting and review the offer for care leavers in terms of employment, education, health and housing. This would enable the Panel to engage staff internally across directorates and also external partners. Should the Panel choose to undertake a task group review then terms of reference can be drawn up to agree at the Panels July 2015 meeting when they set their work programme to agree.

3. Topic: Recruitment of Foster Carers and other placements for looked after children

Who suggested it?

Officers within the Children, Schools and Families Department suggested that the Panel may wish to scrutinise the way in which the council can meet targets for recruitment of Foster Carers and other placements for looked after children.

Summary of the issue

Local authorities provide a range of placement options to ensure that the right placement is available for every child. For many children returning home to their family after a period in care will be the route to permanence and stability. For others, returning to other family or friends under a formal or informal arrangement will be the setting they need in order to thrive. Remaining in care with a long term foster family or finding a new permanent family through adoption, special guardianship or residence orders are other routes to permanence.

While it is evident that achieving timely permanence is desirable, nationally annual data returns show that a small but substantial number of children still experience multiple placements each year. All placements for looked after children are made by the councils dedicated Access to Resources (ART) service. Merton's placement stability performance of 12.7% (3 moves or more) is in line with the national average of 11% (2013/14). Similarly placement length performance (2 years or more) on a three year rolling average is 66% this is also in line 68% (2011 – 2013). While our placement stability is broadly in line with national averages, the council continue to review the children who have undergone 2 and 3 moves or more during the year to look at options for more permanent placements.

Fostering

Fostering is a way of providing a family life to a child unable to live at home. The first port of call for children who need fostering in Merton is Merton Fostering service. Only children that we cannot find homes for with Merton's own carers are placed via other fostering agencies. Merton's foster carers are given priority and are always approached first when Merton children who need to be fostered. Children need foster care for lots of different reasons. Their parents may be ill, in prison, or having relationship problems. Some children will have been neglected or abused.

Merton's Fostering agency was rated Good by Ofsted in November 2012. Inspectors noted that "Children and young people are able to make good progress in relation to their starting points across all aspects of their care and effective arrangements are in place to support this. Children and young people have positive views about their care and their relationships with foster carers".

Merton has recently confirmed it's new fast track process for existing foster carers wishing to transfer to the London Borough of Merton. The council are receiving a number of enquiries from

foster carers who are already fostering with another local authority or an independent fostering agency wishing to transfer to Merton.

However, in some cases adoption is the best option – particularly for younger children, but also for some older children. Adoption gives vulnerable children, including many with complex needs and a history of ill-treatment, the greatest possible stability, in a permanent home with a permanent family.

Adoption

The role and functions of Merton's adoption agency are set out in statutory regulations. In summary the main purpose and functions of the Adoption and Permanence Team are:

- To family find for 'looked after' children for whom the Permanence Plan is long term fostering;
- To work with the children's social work teams to match looked after children with suitable permanent families and develop appropriate support plans;
- To recruit, assess, prepare and support domestic adopters who will match the needs of the children awaiting adoption;
- To provide assessments of inter-country adopters living in Merton (Merton have a service level agreement with the Inter Country Adoption Centre);
- To provide court reports in adoption proceedings, both for non-agency proceedings (e.g. step-parent) and for children 'looked after' by the Local Authority;
- To provide advice on adoption and permanence issues to other professionals;
- To provide a post adoption support service;
- To provide a support and counselling service for birth parents including parents relinquishing children for adoption;
- To complete viability assessments of permanent carers and special guardianship agreements in court proceedings and the associated support plans.

The performance of these services is reviewed monthly at CSF DMT and in depth reports on the specific regulatory requirements go to DMT on a quarterly basis. The services performance indicators are also reviewed by the Merton Safeguarding Children's Board and our Corporate Parenting Advisory Group, in line with Ofsted's governance requirements on the service. The agency's adoption service was inspected in January 2013. Ofsted found that overall the adoption agency provides an effective service to all affected by adoption and the overall outcome was Good.

The Panel have previously considered the outcomes of the inspection and continue to receive regular updates on this service, as well as performance data, as part of their regular performance monitoring report.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is suggested that the Panel undertake a review of the processes for the recruitment and retention of foster carers and those wishing to adopt, and of performance and challenges in this area, to determine if they wish to make recommendations to the relevant bodies for improvement, to support the council to provide stable and long term placements for looked after children.

4. Topic: Looked after children and Corporate Parenting Report Who suggested it?

This is a standard item that the Panel considers each year by looking at services across the borough to support looked after children (LAC), pre and post-adoption.

Summary of the issue

The Council's duties as corporate parent to looked after children encompass the education, health and welfare of LAC, what they do in their leisure times, how they celebrate their culture and how they receive praise and encouragement for their achievements.

Merton is focused on ensuring that children remain in care when it is right for the child or young person. Considering alternative options to care, such as through commissioned voluntary sector support and other options for permanent substitute care, are part of these duties, since these alternative methods may be better for the child than becoming Looked After.

When becoming Looked After is the best decision for the child, Merton's Strategy for LAC is focused around the needs of the child, with seven main priorities.

1. Improve placement stability by developing multi-agency support packages around care placements.
2. Ensure the most effective role and function of the Adoption and Fostering Panels in order to secure timely permanence and appropriate placement for children and young people.
3. Increase capacity and local placement choice for older children and teenagers with challenging behaviour.
4. Consolidate progress and continue to improve the timeliness of permanency for LAC including adoption and rehabilitation.
5. Increase access to good quality education in a timely way for LAC with special educational needs, including those with challenging behaviour, which may not have a statement, and those who have been out of school for some time prior to entering care.
6. Improve access to and take up of positive community activities and opportunities for LAC and Care leavers.
7. Continue to improve opportunities for care leavers to access and sustain higher and further education, employment or training.

The Government has been clear in its drive to improve services and outcomes for Looked after children in all types of permanence care, with revised statutory guidance that clearly set out the need to address the problem of delays within the adoption system. Merton shares this ambition and commitment which was endorsed in a motion to full Council. The agency's adoption service was inspected in January 2013. Ofsted found that overall the adoption agency provides an effective service to all affected by adoption and the overall outcome was Good. In order to

ensure that adopters are progressed through the assessment process in a timely manner changes have been made to the structure of the assessment.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is suggested that the Panel receive the annual Corporate Parenting Report to undertake performance monitoring of the key services the council provides to looked after children and to identify any areas of concern. The Panel may wish to request any follow up items on how the council will address any issues identified in the annual report and what remedial action will be taken and how associated strategies for service delivery and partnership working will be developed.

The Panel could continue to receive updates on progress on the Adoption and Fostering Inspection action plans.

In order to support elected members to fulfil corporate parenting responsibilities (a key expectation of regulators), the Panel could scrutinise the council's approach to achieving positive outcomes for LAC.

5. Topic: Safeguarding

Who suggested it?

This has been a standard item on the Panels work programme each year.

Summary of the issue

Safeguarding children is one of the key functions of the CSF Department and its partner agencies. Regulators expect appropriate political engagement in and scrutiny of how effectively the council is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities.

The Merton Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) is the multi-agency forum for agreeing how local child protection services are planned, delivered and monitored in the borough.

The Scrutiny Panel has received a series of reports on Merton's Children's Social Care, including safeguarding and looked after children, outlining the service's challenges in the context of rising demographics and the changes required in response to national and local drivers for change, such as: revised and more onerous inspection regimes; new statutory duties; and responding to the initial Munro findings over the past few years. The Panel also regularly monitors safeguarding and LAC indicators as part of its routine work.

Merton has had a longstanding approach to preventing children becoming looked after, involving purposeful work with families to build capacity and resilience. Merton's Children and Young Peoples Well Being Model is well used and understood by partners, however, overall services are under severe volume pressures and this has, at peak times, impacted on timeliness and caseloads.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is proposed that the panel receive an annual report on safeguarding children issues. This could be in the form of the annual report and business plan of Merton's Safeguarding Children Board and partner agencies could be invited/called to contribute/address issues raised by panel members.

6. Topic: Transfer of public health functions to the Local Authority and broader engagement of health in provision of services for children and young people

Who suggested it?

Officers suggested that the Panel should look at the public health agenda and broader community health services in relation to children's services. This could include a review of services related to early years, children's centres, breastfeeding rates, childhood immunisations, healthy weight services and school nurses and how the council is delivering public health functions transferred to the authority for children and young people.

Summary of the issue

The public health functions that the NHS was previously responsible for have been transferred to local authorities. A public health team has been established and a Director of Public Health appointed. The council now work more closely in partnership with the support of Merton Clinical Commissioning Group, which works with local health practitioners including GPs and nurses.

The Children's Trust has sought to retain a sharp focus on improving children's health outcomes during a period of major transition for health services locally and nationally. Current key commissioners and providers of children's community health services continue to be engaged in the Children's Trust arrangements and the newly established Clinical Commissioning Group is now represented.

As well as chairing the Children's Trust Board, the Director of Children, Schools and Families also has membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board, as does the Lead Member for Children's Services. This ensures that children's issues and interests are being represented appropriately.

In Merton priorities are set out in the Children and Young People's Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Strategy includes a commitment to further strengthening the existing partnership approach to preventative strategies for health and wellbeing, across all universal services and settings, and ensuring the earliest identification of health and wellbeing issues to better target services to those families that are in greatest need of support, particularly for residents living in the east of the borough.

The section of the Health and Wellbeing strategy devoted to children and young people has key themes such as: to help infants have the best start in life; support the personal, social and mental wellbeing of children and young people; promote healthy weight in children and help young people make healthy life choices. The rate of breastfeeding in Merton continues to improve ahead of target and is above the national average. Immunisation rates remain below national averages and below targets set. Health visiting services are achieving a 70% take up of the re-established universal 2 year old development checks which are being undertaken in Merton's children's centres. Levels of obesity are below national average at reception age but slightly above at year 6. Merton continues to perform relatively well in reducing the rate of teenage pregnancy which is below national average although more recent data indicates a slight rise in incidence.

CAMHs services continue to see young people in tier three settings in a timely manner and there has been strong partnership delivery of the targeted mental health in schools initiative and the nationally recognised multi-systemic therapy pilot.

The Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013-16 sets out priorities for CYP across 4 domains: wider determinants, health improvement, health protection and healthcare public health. 19 of the 66 indicators have a primary focus on maternity, children and young people and a further 21 include the younger age group alongside adults.

The Children's Trust Board have a set of high level performance indicators for prevention and early intervention and the Merton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been refreshed to ensure that it fully addresses the needs of children and young people.

The Panel have received a report on progress towards key public health outcomes for children and young people as part of their 2013/14 and 2014/15 work programmes and considered opportunities for future partnership work. The Panel have also considered the current context and priorities for public health prevention and early intervention.

The council are also in the process of re-commissioning broader community health services for children and there is a possibility that a new provider may be procured.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is proposed that the Panel receive a briefing from the Director of Public Health on public health interventions for children and young people to consider priority services and performance in these areas. The Panel may choose to undertake further, more in-depth scrutiny following this briefing.

It is also suggested that the Panel receive a performance report from the public health team covering work undertaken to date and planned work streams in relation to preventative health services for children and young people.

7. Topic: School Leadership Succession Planning Task Group

Who suggested it?

Councillors on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel requested that the Panel should maintain an overview of the delivery of the action plan resulting from the Panels task group review of school leadership succession planning.

Summary of the issue

Members established a task group to look at school leadership succession planning, in particular, with a focus on the recruitment, retention and development of BAME and female head teachers. The Panel concluded their review in June 2014 and have received updates on the delivery of the agreed recommendations from officers.

How could scrutiny look at it?

Scrutiny could request regular updates on delivery of the action plan and recommendations resulting from the review until all recommendations have been successfully implemented.

8. Topic: Educational attainment for disabled children and young people

Merton Centre for Independent Living proposed that the Panel look at how young people with disabilities are being supported to achieve academically.

Summary of the issue

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines which children are disabled. 'A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities'

(Section 1(1), Disability Discrimination Act 1995). The Code of Practice (schools), published by the Disability Rights Commission under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, states that:

'...the definition of children with learning difficulties includes children with a disability where any special educational provision needs to be made. It means that all children with a disability have special educational needs if they have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them, that is, anything that is additional to or different from what is normally available in schools in the area'. (Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Part 4:Code of Practice for Schools 3.17).

In line with SEN Code of Practice and the Education Act 1996, Merton aims that the special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings unless there are convincing reasons otherwise. Children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education.

Following the implementation of the SEN and Disability Act 2001, it is unlawful for schools, without justification to treat a child with a disability less favourably than other children. This includes discriminating against disabled children in relation to admission arrangements, education and associated services and exclusions. Schools also have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils or prospective pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers.

In addition to new duties to eliminate discrimination against individual disabled pupils, LEAs are also required to make plans to increase the accessibility of schools for current and future pupils.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could request a briefing report outlining the policy and legislative framework surrounding the provision of education to disabled children and young people and look at the statutory responsibilities of the council and its performance in this area, in the first instance, to determine if there are areas for further scrutiny by the Panel.

9. Topic: Transition between child and adult social care and health services

Who suggested it?

Merton Centre for Independent Living proposed that the Panel look at how young people are supported in the transition from receipt of children's social care and health services to adult social care and health services.

Summary of the issue

The Merton Transition Team support young people between 14 and 25 years of age with severe and complex needs and disabilities making the transition from childhood to adulthood. The team works directly with the young person and their family/carers to ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are central in the planning of their future life as an adult. The Merton Transition Team will ensure that parents/carers are involved in every step of the process by sharing knowledge and information, enabling them, along with their child, to make informed decisions

about their child's future. The service work closely with children's social care, health, voluntary organisations and adult social care, amongst others. Adult Social Services also have a commissioning strategy which seeks to change the way in which adult social care services are commissioned. This includes a focus on improving the transitions process between children's and adult services.

How could scrutiny look at it?

The Panel could review the processes in place for supporting young people in making this transition to other services by engaging with officers internally, external partners and consulting service users, with view to making any recommendations they feel are appropriate to the relevant body/organisations.

10. Topic: Performance Reports

Who suggested the topic?

Officers within the CSF department.

Summary of the issue

Routine performance reporting against a 'basket' of key indicators selected for attention by the Panel is well established.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is suggested that the Panel continue to receive their regular performance reports at each Panel meeting to maintain an overview on the department's performance. However, the Panel are asked to give consideration to the indicators they wish to review and to a thematic approach to performance management at each meeting.

11. Topic: Update Reports

Who suggested the topic?

Officers within CSF.

Summary of the issue

Routine update report received by Panel at each meeting to outline policy and legislative changes nationally and regionally, as well as local developments and any changes or updates on service provision within the CSF department.

How could scrutiny look at it?

Members should consider whether they wish to continue receiving this report or to adopt another approach, for example, update as appropriate by email to Panel or thematic update report, at each meeting, in line with the focus of that meeting.

12. Topic: Pre decision scrutiny

Who suggested the topic?

Scrutiny Team and Chair of the Panel.

Summary of the issue

Items which are due to be considered and agreed by Cabinet appear on the Forward Plan.

How could scrutiny look at it?

It is proposed that Members engage with the Director and Cabinet Members every 3 months to discuss upcoming items for scrutiny and opportunities for pre decision scrutiny. It is also proposed that the Scrutiny Officer table the relevant items on the forward plan for the Panel to determine opportunities for pre decision scrutiny.

Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 19 May 2015

The purpose of the workshop is to identify priority issues for consideration as agenda items or in-depth reviews by the Scrutiny Panels and the Commission. The final decision on this will then be made by the Panels/Commission at their first meetings.

All the issues that have been suggested to date by councillors, officers, partner organisations and residents are outlined in the supporting papers.

Further suggestions may emerge from discussion at the workshop.

Points to consider when selecting a topic:

- Is the issue strategic, significant and specific?
- Is it an area of underperformance?
- Will the scrutiny activity add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance?
- Is it likely to lead to effective, tangible outcomes?
- Is it an issue of community concern and will it engage the public?
- Does this issue have a potential impact for one or more section(s) of the population?
- Will this work duplicate other work already underway, planned or done recently?
- Is it an issue of concern to partners and stakeholders?
- Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?

Notes from discussion of topics relating to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop 19 May 2015

Attendees:

Councillors Katy Neep (Chair), Agatha Akyigyina, Edward Foley, Jeff Hanna, Joan Henry, James Holmes, Dennis Pearce, Marsie Skeete

Co-opted member Denis Popovs

Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director, CSF Commissioning, Strategy and Performance

Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services (note taker)

Councillor Katy Neep welcomed all present and thanked Councillor Jeff Hanna for his hard work and clear leadership whilst he was Chair of the Panel.

Councillor Neep suggested taking a different approach to this year's work programme through having a number of themed meetings for which member champions (or small task/sub groups) would prepare by carrying out research, consultation and/or undertaking visits and report back to the meeting. Expert witnesses and/or partner organisations would be invited as appropriate. These themed meetings would result in recommendations to Cabinet (and subsequent monitoring by the Panel to ensure these are actioned).

Following discussion, it was AGREED to have a small number of themed meetings. It was also AGREED to continue to receive those reports and performance indicators that are necessary to demonstrate to external inspection that there has been rigorous scrutiny.

It was suggested that it would be helpful to invite the Chair of the School Standards Panel (Councillor Dennis Pearce) to one of the meetings to explain the panel's role and answer questions.

Agenda items for meeting on 1 July

Noted that there would be statements from the two Cabinet Members on objectives, priorities and challenges for the year ahead. There will also be an update report from the Director of Children Schools and Families.

School Run and Travel Plans

AGREED to not take this forward for scrutiny due to the limited influence that scrutiny could have on traffic congestion via schools and parents.

Housing and health offer for care leavers and looked after children to prevent homelessness and unemployment

AGREED that this would be suitable for a sub group to examine the housing, health, education and employment offer for older looked after children and care leavers. This would be done through 2 or 3 meetings. The sub group would look at previous scrutiny reports on related issues, consider how they apply to this cohort and identified recommendations to report back to the Panel and on to Cabinet. (scrutiny officer suggestion – the sub group could report back to the themed meeting on corporate parenting).

Recruitment of foster carers and other placements for looked after children

AGREED to include a report on the recruitment of foster carers within a themed meeting on corporate parenting.

Looked after children and corporate parenting report

AGREED to continue with this standard item looking at services across the borough to support looked after children, pre and post-adoption. The item will be brought to a themed meeting on corporate parenting.

Safeguarding

AGREED to continue to receive this annual report on safeguarding children issues.

(scrutiny officer note – also need to decide whether to include the annual report and business plan of Merton’s Safeguarding Children Board and invite partner agencies to answer questions from Panel members)

Transfer of public health functions to the local authority and broader engagement of health in provision of services for children and young people

AGREED that this would be suitable for a sub-group to prepare for the meeting by examining data on health outcomes to identify key lines of enquiry and challenging questions that could be put to health professionals at the Panel meeting.

School leadership succession planning task group

AGREED that the Panel should continue to monitor the delivery of the action plan resulting from this task group review plus other recent task group reviews.

AGREED that there should be an officer update report on action plan implementation to the Panel’s July meeting and to a subsequent Panel meeting later in the year.

AGREED that a sub group should lead on championing this work through a follow up meeting with lead officers mid-year.

Educational attainment for disabled children and young people

AGREED to use the Standards Report meeting as an opportunity to consider the educational attainment of disabled children and young people.

Also AGREED that, subsequent to the Standards meeting, a sub group could examine the data in more detail with a view to identifying issues for potential scrutiny in 2016/17

Transition between child and adult social care and health services

Noted that this would be a big issue to scrutinise in full.

AGREED to use the themed meeting on corporate parenting to examine issues around the transition of looked after children between child and adult social care and health services.

Also AGREED to use the themed meeting on improving health outcomes to consider transition between child and adult health services.

Performance reports

AGREED to continue to have a report on a basket of key indicators at each Panel meeting.

Also AGREED to appoint lead members for any performance indicators causing concern at the July meeting.

Update reports

AGREED to continue to receive an update report at each panel meeting to outline policy and legislative changes nationally and regionally, as well as local developments and any changes or updates on service provision within the CSF department.

AGREED that these should include updates on:

- special needs travel budget
- free school meal uptake and impact on pupil premium
- provision of school places, especially secondary places

Pre decision scrutiny

AGREED to take the following actions to identify items that might be suitable for pre-decision scrutiny:

- to include a list of Forward Plan items on the work programme report that is received at each Panel meeting
- for the Chair, Vice Chair, Cabinet Members and Director to meet informally twice yearly
- to adopt a flexible approach to the work programme so that urgent items may be accommodated as they arise

Other

Discussed the possibility of carrying out some visioning work in future to consider the shape of services in 5, 10 and 20 years time

Length of meetings

AGREED to use the full three hours allocated for Panel meetings if needed.

Forward Plan items relating to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

None.

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