

Committee:	Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date:	27 June 2018
Wards:	All
Subject:	Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2018/19
Lead officer:	Annette Wiles, Scrutiny Officer
Lead member:	Cllr Sally Kenny, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Contact officer:	Annette Wiles: annette.wiles@merton.gov.uk , 020 8545 4035

Recommendations:

That members of Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

- i. Consider their work programme for the 2018/19 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion (see draft in Appendix 1) – please note the additional two items;
 - 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;
 - vi. Consider the appointment of co-opted members for the 2017/18 municipal year, to sit on the Panel and/or on the Task Group;
 - vii. Consider whether they wish to make visits to local sites and engage with topic experts; and
 - viii. Identify any training and support needs.
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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 2018/19 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 Councillors and co-opted members, Council senior management, voluntary and community sector organisations, partner organisations and Merton residents;
 - d) A summary of discussion by Councillors and co-opted Members at a topic selection workshop held on 4 June 2018; and
 - e) Support available to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel to determine, develop and deliver its 2018/19 work programme.

2. Determining the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Work Programme

- 2.1 Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2017/18 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 Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel has a specific role relating to children and young people. This includes education, children's social care, child protection and youth services which should automatically be built into their work programmes.
- 2.3 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel 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 corporate calendar as required.
- 2.4 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2018/19, including the scheduled budget meeting (representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming three hours per meeting). Members will therefore need to be selective in their choice of items for the 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 Council 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** – The Panel 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 question 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 Children and Young People 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"> ■ The 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 one-day seminar-scrutiny of issues that, although important, do 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 Commission with their findings to endorse the submission of their recommendations to Cabinet/Council ■ This is the method usually used to carry out policy reviews
The 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 – either from the service department or from the Scrutiny Team – 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 they take 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. ■ A new model of scrutiny review has recently been developed and trialled; a rapporteur review where an individual member undertakes a review with the endorsement of the Panel.

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 the 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 Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel will need to assess how it can best utilise the available support from the Scrutiny Team to deliver its work programme for 2018/19.

2.10 The Panel is also invited to comment on any briefing, training and support that is 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 Children and Young People 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 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel sets its own agenda within the scope of its terms of reference. It 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 Centres; and
- The Children's Trust.

3.1.2. The Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for issues to scrutinise either as agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions have been received from members of the public, Councillors and partner organisations including the police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council. 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. A description of all the suggestions received is set out in Appendix 2.

3.2 The councillors who attended a "topic selection" workshop on 4 June 2108 discussed these suggestions. 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.

3.3 A note of the workshop discussion relating to the remit of the Panel is set out in Appendix 4.

3.4 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.

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 2018/19. The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel is free to determine its work programme as it sees 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 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, letters to partner organisations and to a 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 2018, and by contacting the Scrutiny Team direct; 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 2017/18
- 14.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of topics relating to the Children and Young People Overview and 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 20 June 2017
- 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 on 20 June 2017
- 14.5 Appendix 5 – Task group options as identified at the workshop on 4 June 2018
- 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 15.1 None

Draft work programme 2018 - 2019

Meeting date – 27 June 2018

Item/Issue
Cabinet Member priorities
Children, schools and families glossary
Briefing for new members: EHCPs
Performance monitoring (selection of a performance monitoring lead/discussion of data provision)
Department update report*
Monitoring task group recommendations: employment for vulnerable cohorts
Scrutiny review: user voice (agreeing resulting actions)
Task group selection: mental health/parenting support/school travel plans/youth violence
Additional topic suggestions: school volunteers/eLearning and assessment/youth violence
Work programme approval

Meeting date – 9 October 2018

Cabinet Member priorities
Performance monitoring
Department update report*
Pre-decision scrutiny: Regional Adoption Agency
Pre-decision scrutiny: Children and Young People Plan
Monitoring progress: care leaver accommodation reference
Presentation of task group action plan: implementation of the <i>Prevent</i> duty
Proposal: transitions tracking study
Task group (TBC): approval of terms of reference
Work programme

Meeting date – 7 November 2018

Pre-decision scrutiny: budget/business planning (round 1) – inclusive of 5 – 10 year MTFS
Cabinet Member priorities
Annual report: corporate parenting (visit to the Children in Care Council prior to meeting)
Annual report: Merton Safeguarding Children Board (including Think Family)

Performance monitoring
Department update report*
Work programme

Meeting date – 16 January 2019

Pre-decision scrutiny: budget/business planning (round 2) – inclusive of 5 – 10 year MTFS
Update report: Harris Wimbledon (school visit prior to meeting + invite Daniel Moynihan)
Cabinet Member priorities
Performance monitoring
Department update report*
Work programme

Meeting date – 13 February 2019

Cabinet Member priorities
Update report: health and wellbeing strategies for children and young people
Briefing: welfare benefit reports (Head of Revenue and Benefits)
Task group (TBC): presentation of draft final report
Performance monitoring
Department update report*
Work programme

Meeting date – 13 March 2019

Cabinet Member priorities
Schools annual report (key stage 5 visits prior to the meeting + invite chair of the school effectiveness partnership)
Care leaver accommodation reference update (provisional)
Prevent task group: monitoring implementation of recommendations
Performance monitoring
Department update report*
Topic suggestion for 2019/2020s

*Items to be included in the Department Update Report as appropriate: corporate parenting, the Family Drug and Alcohol Court, Harris Wimbledon, Ofsted inspection outcome, the Social Impact Bond.

**Partner engagement to be taken thematically and as a feature of all other items.

Topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel 2018/19

The following topics have been suggested by residents, members and officers:

- Budget/business planning
- Care leavers and young people accommodation
- Cabinet Member priorities
- Children, schools and families glossary
- Children and Young People Plan
- Corporate parenting report
- Department update report
- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)
- Family Drug and Alcohol Court
- Harris Wimbledon
- Health and wellbeing strategies for children and young people
- Key Stage 5 progress
- Merton Safeguarding Children Board annual report
- Ofsted inspection outcome
- Parenting support
- Partner engagement
- Performance monitoring
- Rapporteur scrutiny review of user voice
- Regional Adoption Agency
- Routes into employment for vulnerable cohorts task group
- Schools annual report
- School travel plans
- Social Impact Bond
- Teacher/key worker recruitment (see the section for the Commission)
- Think Family
- Transition to adulthood
- Youth violence
- Welfare benefit reforms

BUDGET/BUSINESS PLANNING	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item.
Summary	<p>Members are asked to consider and comment on all aspects of the budget that relate to the Children, Schools and Families Department. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to previously agreed savings; • New departmental saving proposals; • Budget growth proposals; • The resulting impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy; and • Relevant service plans.

	<p>Any reference made will progress to the Commission which takes the lead on reviewing all budgets and summarising the views of all Panels.</p> <p>During the last municipal year, members of the Panel asked to be kept better informed on a routine basis of financial information. It was thought that this might be best achieved through the Department Update Report.</p>
Scrutiny type	Pre-decision scrutiny
Timing	This takes place in two rounds; <u>7 November 2018 and 16 January 2019 (agreed)</u>
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services, will provide training before the January meeting giving a detailed guide to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. <u>All members are encouraged to attend.</u> This includes those who have attended previously as guidance is provided on the current financial position. • Scrutiny of finance – Councillor workbook (the Local Government Association).
Expert	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services, will attend both meetings.

CARE LEAVERS ACCOMMODATION	
Who suggested it?	This is a continuation of the work the Panel undertook in the last municipal year on care leaver accommodation.
Summary	<p>At its meeting in September 2017, the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, working in partnership with members of the Children and Young People Panel, looked in depth at the issue of care leaver accommodation.</p> <p>This resulted in a detailed reference to Cabinet focusing on issues such as increasing the range of independent accommodation options, piloting the use of <i>Houses of Multiple Occupation</i>, the 'lead tenant model', greater use of the <i>Shared Lives</i> model and exploration of <i>Housing First</i>. The Panel was pleased to learn recently that a <i>House of Multiple Occupation</i> is now being piloted for care leaver accommodation. The full reference is here and the minutes of the full discussion are here. A first review of progress against the recommendations in the reference was taken during the last municipal year (rpt and mins – item 9).</p> <p>Whilst it was working in partnership with members of the Sustainable Communities Panel, it is this Panel that has taken the lead in monitoring progress against the reference made to Cabinet. It is recommended that the Panel continue in this</p>

	role and take six monthly updates up until such time as it is satisfied with what has been achieved and no more updates are required.
Scrutiny type	Monitoring of progress against a reference made.
Timing	9 October 2018 and 13 March 2019 (suggested)
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guide with key questions for councillors on care leavers' accommodation (Barnardos) • Engaging Young People – Councillor workbook (Local Government Association)
Guests	In addition to officers from the Children, Schools and Families Department it may be necessary to invite officers from Housing to attend given this is a cross departmental initiative.

CABINET MEMBER PRIORITIES	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item, taken at every meeting.
Summary	The Cabinet Members for Education and Children's Services are asked to present their current priorities to Panel members who are then given the opportunity to ask questions.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight
Timing	<u>Every meeting (agreed)</u>

CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES GLOSSARY	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	To provide members with a glossary of commonly used terms in education and children's service. This is to assist members when reading, commenting on and discussing Departmental reports.
Scrutiny type	(Member support)
Timing	<u>27 June 2018 (suggested)</u> . This is to coincide with any new members joining the Panel.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>This is the plan of the Merton Children's Trust and details the how the partners operating the trust will work together to achieve its priorities. The last plan ran from 2016 to March 2019 and can found here.</p> <p>As this comes to the end of its lifespan, the Department is beginning to work on its replacement including consulting on what it priorities should be going forward and how these are</p>

	going to be achieved. This provides an opportunity for the Panel for some pre-decision scrutiny.
Scrutiny type	Pre-decision scrutiny.
Timing	9 October 2018 (suggested) in order that members can be consulted before the plan is agreed.

CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT (INCLUDING THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ANNUAL SUFFICIENCY STATEMENT, LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGY AND CARE LEAVER STRATEGY)	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item (part of Ofsted's requirements).
Summary	<p>To review the provision of services for looked after children and care leavers against a number of benchmarks (including statutory requirements and outcomes for all Merton pupils and similar cohorts nationally). To identify and recognise areas of good service as well as where there needs to be additional and on-going focus on service development.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous review of corporate parenting are here – item 7. This highlighted the following as areas for continued focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement stability; • Recruitment of foster carers; • Embedding adult mental health and CAHMS services as part of corporate parenting provision; • Child sexual exploitation; and • The educational attainment of older children in care (specifically Key Stage 4). <p>Ofsted's inspection of Children's Services in June/July 2017 resulted in a good judgement with the following recommendations made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all plans, including child in need, child protection, care plans for children looked after and pathway plans, consistently contain specific actions, achievable timescales and clear, measurable outcomes; • Improve the use of return home interviews for each episode of missing for children missing from home or care and ensure that risks are understood and reduced for individual children; • Ensure that 'staying put' is made available to all care leavers who would benefit from this; and • Ensure that all former relevant care leavers receive information on their health histories.

	<p>Members will want to take this into account when reviewing the service performance through the annual report. It is also recommended that an interim update is taken on progress against Ofsted's recommendations mid-year (which can be achieved through the Departmental update report).</p> <p>As part of its review of Ofsted's inspection report, the Panel sought the advice of Kathy Bundred, Children's Improvement Adviser for the Local Government Association who advised on the shared features of authorities with children's services judged good or higher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relentless in their pursuit of the best for their children; • Stability in their services and their management; • No playing politics with children's services. Rather members are interested in services and are keen to learn; • Focus on what's happening for children and drill down into individual cases; • Good self knowledge often built on a self audit which is challenging; • Workforce strategy in place to lessen the effect of workforce turnover. This means there is a continual focus on training, performance and support. Spans of control are not extended and allow managers to have sight of individual cases; and • Partner engagement is effective in helping to deliver services.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	<u>13 February 2019</u> (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received). A mid year update against Ofsted's recommendations through the departmental report to happen at <u>7 November 2018</u> is recommended.
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Questions to ask if you're scrutinising services for looked-after children (Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Safeguarding Children – a practical guide for overview and scrutiny councillors (Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Engaging Young People – Councillor workbook (Local Government Association)
Guest(s)	A representative from the Looked After Children's Health team at Epsom and St Helier, to provide the opportunity to scrutinise LAC health services provided by partners. This has been attempted two years in a row without success. This would also address the Ofsted recommendation on health histories.
Expert	There remain only three services in the country that have a higher Ofsted judgement than that received by Merton:

	Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and North Lincolnshire. It is questionable whether any of these lend themselves to be a suitable comparator for Merton's service. However, there are other authorities where parts of the service have received a higher judgement than Merton. For example, the experiences and progress of care leavers in Bracknell Forest was judged outstanding compared to Merton's being judged good at the same point in time. Also, it may be appropriate that Kathy Bundred, Children's Improvement Adviser for the Local Government Association, be invited to return to the Panel.
Visit	The Children in Care Council could be consulted in advance. Delegated members may attend a meeting of the Council to gather views (please see the item on Rapporteur scrutiny review of user voice). Alternatively, representatives of the Children in Care Council may be invited to attend the Panel and provide first hand insight/make a direct representation.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item, taken at every meeting.
Summary	<p>This gives the Department the opportunity to update members on key developments that have occurred since the last meeting. This might include forthcoming changes in Government policy and legislation, service successes and/or changes, Ofsted inspection outcomes etc. The report is not presented by officers but members are encouraged to read it in advance of the meeting and ask questions on the information provided.</p> <p>During the last municipal year, members of the Panel asked to be kept better informed on a routine basis of financial information. It was thought that this might be best achieved through this update report.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	<u>Every meeting</u> (agreed)

EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLANS (EHCP)	
Who suggested it?	This is a continuation of the Panel's focus on Education Health and Care Plans during the past municipal year.
Summary	<p>The Panel requested an update report on EHCPs at the beginning of the last municipal year following a decline in performance; the number of new EHCPs being completed within the 20 week target fell from 27% in June 2016 to 20% in December 2016 (rpt and mins).</p> <p>A subsequent update at the end of the last municipal year</p>

	<p>established that 37% of new plans were being achieved within the target timescale which is an improvement on previous performance. Also, that most are achieved within 26 weeks which is only just passed the target, despite a continued significant increase in demand for new EHCPs (increased by 34% over the past four years).</p> <p>It was also highlighted that Department had done well on the other objective of transferring all existing statements to EHCPs by the 31st March 2018 deadline (rpt and mins – item 6). Once the transfer of existing statements to EHCPs had been completed it was planned that the team would be reconfigured to focus on new applications for EHCPs.</p> <p>It is recommended that this is further reviewed through the performance monitoring report with the scope for members to request a more detailed update should they consider it necessary. Whilst there were difficulties that prevented the Panel receiving its performance monitoring report in the latter half of the last municipal year as a result of the implementation of a new information management system (Mosaic), it is hoped these difficulties will have been overcome and information will be reinstated with the start of the municipal year.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	<u>Every meeting</u> (through the performance monitoring report)
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merton's guide to EHCPs • Putting financial and performance management information to good use (Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Performance management – councillor workbook (Local Government Association)
Expert	Councillor Brunt, as the performance monitoring lead for Panel during the last municipal year, has built up his knowledge and understanding of this performance measure.

FAMILY DRUG AND ALCOHOL COURT (FDAC)	
Who suggested it?	This is a new initiative which has been reported to scrutiny over the last year.
Summary	Working with Croydon County Court, the West London Family Court and the Inner London Family Court, the partnership will offer an alternative form of care proceedings for parents and children in those cases where substance misuse is a key factor in the decision to bring proceedings. Referrals will be made by children's social care and will be agreed internally to ensure referrals meet the criteria for the service

	<p>Merton is leading, across nine boroughs and awarded the contract to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust which has been working the Cross Borough Operational Group and the FDAC Board to mobilise the service from January 2018.</p> <p>Updates on plans and mobilisation of the service have been provided to the Panel during the last municipal year through departmental reports. The Panel will wish to continue to receive updates during this municipal year which can continue to be achieved through the departmental report. It may be too early during this municipal year to receive a more substantive officer report on performance.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	As required through the departmental report
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introducing the main findings from: Changing Lifestyles, Keeping Children Safe: an evaluation of the first Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) in care proceedings - Conclusions and recommendations 5.Challenges in maximising the benefits of FDAC</i> (Brunel London University & The Nuffield Foundation) • <i>Putting financial and performance management information to good use</i> (Centre for Public Scrutiny) • <i>Performance management – councillor workbook</i> (Local Government Association)

HARRIS WIMBLEDON	
Who suggested it?	Continuation of the Panel's role in scrutinising the on-going development of the new secondary school.
Summary	<p>In July 2016, Cabinet gave its approval for the location of the new Harris Wimbledon school to achieve the additional secondary provision needed in the borough. The school is scheduled to open in September 2018 in its temporary location with the newly build school opening at its permanent location in September 2020. The Panel will want to monitor progress against this objective in line with its reference to Cabinet in June 2016: 1) ensuring the opening date for the new school is optimised to not destabilise existing Merton secondaries, 2) maximising the design to give pupils the same advantage enjoyed by children at other Merton secondaries, 3) supporting Merton Abbey Primary in agreeing shared use of the site, 4) protecting the financial interests of the borough during the development of the site, 5) sustaining the level of community rental space, and 6) ensuring the safety of pupils using the site.</p> <p>An update report was received by the Panel during the last municipal year (rpt and mins).</p>

	It is recommended that members take an update report during the municipal year with other updates being provided through the departmental report and/or Cabinet Member updates.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	7 November 2018 (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
Guidance	Free schools: challenges and opportunities for accountability : Centre for Public Scrutiny
Guest(s)	Representative(s) of the Harris Academy Chain to update members directly on the operation of the school and plans for its future.
Visit	Visit Harris Merton, to see the expansion project and to hear from the provider of the new school first hand and in situ.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	
Who suggested it?	With local authorities now having responsibility for public health in localities, the Panel has embraced its responsibility for scrutiny of health and wellbeing strategies for children and young people.
Summary	<p>The remit of the Panel embraces all services for children and young people including health and wellbeing outcomes. During the last municipal year, the Panel took a report from the public health team looking at childhood obesity and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) with the latter supported by colleagues from the Merton Clinical Commissioning Group (rpt and mins).</p> <p>It is recommended that the Panel take a further report during this municipal year focused on delivery of the autism strategy. Members have previously expressed interest in the support offered by the authority for families who have an autistic child. Due to lack of time during the last municipal year, the Panel was unable to look at the strategy in much depth and it was agreed that this should return to the Panel once the public consultation was complete.</p> <p>The strategy is being developed by the authority working with a wide range of partners including the Merton NHS CCG. It aims to make the borough autism friendly in response to a number of key drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of children in Merton with autism recorded as their primary type of educational need, indicating an increasing need for local education, health and other resources.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of adults with autism is projected to rise, with an associated increase in the need for care and support for independent living. • Recognition that Merton needs to improve its diagnosis pathway for children and young people (as set out above). • Stakeholders have told us they want to see improvements in support and services locally. • There are statutory guidance and legal duties for local authorities and the NHS, along with evidence-based quality standards. • Public sector services are all facing financial pressures and there is a need to work in partnership to ensure local resources most effectively. <p>It has been notionally agreed with the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel that if this Panel does focus on the autism strategy it will do so on behalf of the whole of scrutiny and therefore will also need to consider how the strategy works for older people.</p> <p>A topic suggestion has been received on the developing autism strategy, it is assumed from a resident although the submission was anonymous. This calls for more autistic children/people to be involved in developing the strategy.</p> <p>Additionally, the Panel may wish to receive updates on childhood obesity, immunisation and child mental health services. A topic suggestion has been received from Merton Abbey School that flags the waiting time it experiences in trying to access mental health services.</p> <p>Please note, that the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel has also offered to pick-up the review of immunisation figures with its review of other data supplied by the NHS. This might be useful to accept given the Panel's limited time.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review
Timing	TBC to fit with the timing of the developing autism strategy.
Guidance	<p>No specific guidance is available on scrutiny of autism. However, a number of other councils have undertaken a scrutiny review of their autistic services which may be informative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brighton & Hove City Council: Services for Children with Autism Scrutiny Panel (April 2014) • North East Lincolnshire Council: Report into the findings of the Autism Spectrum Conditions diagnosis pathway scrutiny working group (January 2018)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council: Scrutiny review – Autistic Spectrum Disorder (November 2012)
Guest(s)	People with an autistic diagnosis and their families. Suitable organisations to contact include the National Autistic Society Merton Group and Talk Autism Merton Parent Forum.
Expert	Potentially a professional from The National Autistic Society or a member of its national forum.

KEY STAGE 5 PROGRESS	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>In consulting on scrutiny topic suggestions, the Children, Schools and Families Departmental Management Team suggested looking at progress in Key Stage 5 and specifically the impact of 6th forms on student retention and progress.</p> <p>At the end of the last municipal year, during its scrutiny of the school's annual report, it was established that all assessments at Level 3 are achieving just above the national average. As a result, the focus is now on improving academic outcomes for A Levels where performance is not so strong.</p> <p>It was also highlighted during the last municipal year that work has been ongoing to find and identify members of the Not in Educational, Employment or Training (NEET) population. This year has seen the lowest ever level of NEETs achieved in Merton, with an 8th ranking nationally. This has required lots of data sharing between educational providers. There has been a slight increase in the Raising Participation Age figure reflecting that more and more students are staying on in Merton's 6th forms and colleges;</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review (possibly a task group?)
Guest(s)	Members of the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership
Visit	There is scope to visit a sixth form in Merton to see this in action.

MERTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item (part of Ofsted's requirements).
Summary	To give members the opportunity to question the independent chair of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board, a suitable police representative, the Director and Cabinet Member about safeguarding provision for Merton's children and young people. This will focus on strengths, areas for review during the coming period and work with schools as well as areas

	<p>which were highlighted as priorities from last year including <i>Think Family</i>, supporting the growing number of looked after children who are older, the quality of early help, prevention partnerships and early entry points.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous review of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board are here (annual report here).</p> <p>Additionally, a topic suggestion has been received from Merton Abbey School highlighting difficulties it has experienced in accessing a cluster social worker which Panel members may want to address through this item.</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	13 February 2019 (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Children – a practical guide for overview and scrutiny councillors (Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Engaging Young People – Councillor workbook (Local Government Association)
Guest(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keith Makin, the Independent Chair of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board; and • A suitable police representative.
Expert	A representative from the Association of Independent LSCB Chairs is suggested. For example, David Ashcroft, chair of the Association and currently Independent Chair of the Norfolk Board or Chris Miller, Greater London Regional Director and currently Independent Chair in Barnet. Either would be able to provide context for the working of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board.
Visit	To Jigsaw4U, provider of Merton commissioned services including return home interviews for missing children. This will allow councillors to see the provider in action.

OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOME	
Who suggested it?	Ofsted's inspection of Children's Services in June/July 2017 resulted in a good judgement. The Panel has a remit in scrutinising the response to Ofsted's recommendations.
Summary	<p>Ofsted made the following recommendations as a result of its inspection of Merton's Children's Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all plans, including child in need, child protection, care plans for children looked after and pathway plans, consistently contain specific actions, achievable timescales and clear, measurable outcomes; • Improve the use of return home interviews for each episode of missing for children missing from home or care and ensure that risks are understood and reduced for individual children;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that 'staying put' is made available to all care leavers who would benefit from this; and • Ensure that all former relevant care leavers receive information on their health histories. <p>Members will want to consider these when scrutinising the annual Corporate Parenting Report (which is suggested for the February 2019 meeting). In advance of this, the Panel may want to take a brief progress update through the Department report or to focus on any of these recommendations in greater depth.</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring (potentially leading to a scrutiny review)
Timing	An update is recommended for the meeting on 7 November 2018.

PARENTING SUPPORT	
Who suggested it?	A resident through the topic suggestion process.
Summary	The suggestion highlights a lack of activities for mothers and babies in addition to insufficient activities for toddlers and young children, such as play groups. Members may wish to explore this further to understand the current level of provision, where there might be gaps and consider how this might be addressed. However, the Council has no remit in this area and therefore there may be limited opportunity for the Panel's scrutiny to have an impact.
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review

PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	In consulting on scrutiny topic suggestions, the Children, Schools and Families Departmental Management Team suggested looking at how, in a climate of changing service delivery, it is possible to encourage partners to continue to participate and work in partnership with Merton. The examples given were of the police and the CCG both of which are seeking to deliver service reconfiguration in the face of reducing budgets. The Panel has itself experienced the effect of this with difficulties engaging the police around its review of safeguarding that happened in the previous municipal year. There is scope to examine different forms of engagement and service delivery that will allow partners to sustain their involvement. This could be informed by what has been achieved by other councils.
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review (scope for a potential task group?)

PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item, taken at every meeting.
Summary	<p>The performance report features a range of key performance indicators. This therefore acts as a health check for the Panel and as such is over and above the more detailed thematic reports scheduled to the Panel.</p> <p>Whilst there were difficulties that prevented the Panel receiving its performance monitoring report in the latter half of the last municipal year as a result of the implementation of a new information management system (Mosaic), it is hoped these difficulties will have been overcome and information will be reinstated with the start of this municipal year.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	<u>Taken every meeting (agreed).</u>
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Putting financial and performance management information to good use</i> (Centre for Public Scrutiny) • <i>Performance management – councillor workbook</i> (Local Government Association) • <i>Using evidence in scrutiny</i>: Centre for Public Scrutiny • Dedicated officer led workshop to closely examine the basket of indicators.
Expert	Every year the Panel can decide to appoint a lead member for monitoring performance data who will work closely with officers to build their understanding of the data and drive the effectiveness of performance monitoring. Last year this involved officer provision of additional information and pre-meets before Panel meetings to discuss the data provided and highlight points to be addressed at the meeting. It is within the Panel's gift to determine whether or not to appoint a performance lead for this year.

PREVENT TASK GROUP	
Who suggested it?	It is a requirement of the remit of the Panel that it will monitor the implementation of task group recommendations.
Summary	<p>The decision to form this task group was set against the background of the four terror attacks that happened between March and June 2017; the Panel wanted to reassure itself that Merton's schools are successfully implementing the duty and doing everything possible to prevent Merton's young people from becoming radicalised and doing so in a way that doesn't cause stigmatisation of individuals or communities.</p> <p>Recommendations include looking at the role of the wider Merton community in helping prevent radicalisation amongst Merton's young people and Merton's schools continuing to share their best practice to support each other in fulfilling the</p>

	<p>duty. The report will be presented to Cabinet in the new municipal year before the action plan comes to the Panel.</p> <p>There is a specific recommendation for which the Panel is responsible. It calls on this Panel to under take work to be sure that other organisations that interact with young people such as sports groups, youth groups, training providers and social landlords etc feel comfortable dealing with safeguarding referrals.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review (task group – implementation of recommendations)
Timing	Post the report being presented to Cabinet and it agreeing the action plan can come directly to the Panel.

RAPPORTEUR SCRUTINY REVIEW OF USER VOICE	
Who suggested it?	This is the completion of an item from last year’s work programme.
Summary	<p>The user voice rapporteur report (here in full) focussed on how the Panel should receive more feedback from looked after children and wider groups of young people to inform its perspective. Various ideas were discussed that might be employed to achieve this objective such as those summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving regular updates from the Children in Care Council as part of the departmental update. A panel member might also join the statutory Lead Member once or twice per year in attending Children in Care Council meetings. • For the CSF department to consider what user voice information it would be possible to share with the Panel. It is evident that there is a lot of user voice activity ongoing throughout the year but currently none of this is shared with the Panel; • For the Panel, either via the lead member or via a champion, to seek feedback on specific issues. This would have to be agreed with the CICC and would need to reflect its planned programme; • That the Panel should write annually to the Children in Care Council to explain the work it has undertaken on matters relating to LAC and Care Leavers to make this transparent and accessible to looked after children. <p>It is recommended that the Panel address this early in its work programme and agree if it wants to receive more feedback from looked after children and how this will be achieved. This might be trialled for a period of time, after which this can be evaluated and a longer term plan agreed.</p>
Scrutiny type	Rapporteur scrutiny review

Timing	<u>27 June 2018</u> (recommended in order that any decision made can be effectively trialled during the remainder of the municipal year)
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REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY	
Who suggested it?	This is a new initiative which has been reported to scrutiny over the last year.
Summary	<p>London boroughs are working together to establish a regional adoption agency from September 2018. This required a business case to be presented to the DfE for approval in December 2017 enabling mobilisation of the new agency from September 2018. The new format will see Merton as part of the South London hub.</p> <p>Updates on plans and mobilisation of the service have been provided to the Panel during the last municipal year through departmental reports. The Panel will wish to continue to receive updates during this municipal year which can continue to be achieved through the departmental report. It may be too early during this municipal year to receive a more substantive officer report on performance. (NB: Performance of Merton's adoption service for the three year rolling average was reported in February 2018 as better than the DfE prescribed thresholds using the provisional figures then available. It should also be noted that Merton's adoption service received an outstanding judgement from Ofsted as a result of the combined inspection conducted in July 2017.)</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	As required.
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regionalising adoption June 2015 - Potential delivery models for regional adoption agencies (DfE) • Putting financial and performance management information to good use (Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Performance management – councillor workbook (Local Government Association)

ROUTES INTO EMPLOYMENT FOR VULNERABLE COHORTS TASK GROUP	
Who suggested it?	This is a continuation of the Panel's role in monitoring the implementation of the recommendations made by this task group.
Summary	The task group's report (here) was accepted by Cabinet in March 2017. The Panel received the action plan for the implementation of the recommendations (here – item 10) and started monitoring progress against this at its meeting in January 2018.

	This has already highlighted that Panel members want to understand why it is not thought possible to ensure through standard contract terms that contractors and service providers offer apprenticeship for Merton residents. This was raised by members at the meeting and through the topic suggestion process. To this ends, it is being recommended that the Panel invite Dawn Jolley, the Head of Commercial Services to discuss this directly. Given the focus on Merton offering work experience placements and apprenticeships, it is also recommended that Kim Brown, Head of Organisational Development and HR Strategy, also be invited to attend the Panel and discuss how this is progressing. It is also recommended that the Panel receive a representation from Melissa Stewart who as part of the CSF team has been working hard with the Council's suppliers and providers of outsourced services to obtain work experience placements. This includes Veolia as previously mentioned at Panel.
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review: task group
Timing	<u>27 June 2017</u> (recommended) and then potentially six months later (at the 16 January 2019 meeting).

SCHOOLS ANNUAL REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item (part of Ofsted's requirements).
Summary	Members receive the detailed annual schools report giving them the opportunity to focus on attainment for all key stages as well as at foundation stage and for post 16. As a result of the presentation of the schools annual report during the last municipal year, members noted the need to retain their focus on the attainment and progress of children on SEN support as well elective home education. The minutes of this review are here .
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	13 March 2019 (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
Guidance	<i>Back to School – Ways for scrutiny to influence local education and support school leaders to improve results</i> (Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny)
Guest(s)	Representatives of Merton head's group (ie: one primary, secondary and special) to provide members with first hand insight into the information contained in the annual report.

SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

Who suggested it?	A resident – this was also suggested by residents last year.
Summary	<p>A resident through the topic suggestion process has again highlighted the issue about the impact of the school run and has requested scrutiny ensure travel plans are robust and implemented. School Travel Plans seek to reduce car use for school journeys. There may be potential to look at this in partnership with the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel and officers from Environment & Regeneration as part of its consideration of action to address air quality and new measures being used to improve parking control. A trial of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition system to enforce parking restrictions outside schools is in plan.</p> <p>Two resident topic suggestions about road safety outside certain of Merton's schools have been passed on to be picked-up by Overview and Scrutiny Commission.</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance management
Timing	TBC
Guidance	<p>No specific guidance is available on scrutiny of school travel plans. However, a number of other councils have undertaken a scrutiny review of this area which may be informative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of York Council: School Travel Plans Ad Hoc scrutiny Committee Final Report. • Leicestershire County Council: Final report of the scrutiny review panel on home to school transport
Guest(s)	Identified officers from Environment and Regeneration.
Visit	Members could visit an affected school at school run time to see this for themselves and talk directly with parents.

SOCIAL IMPACT BOND	
Who suggested it?	This is a new initiative which has been reported to scrutiny over the last year.
Summary	<p>The Pan-London Care Impact Partnership involving Merton, Tower Hamlets, Bexley, Newham and Sutton councils was launched during January 2018 to deliver Multi-Systemic and Functional Family Therapy services for councils within the partnership, leveraging in financial resources using a (SIB). The aim of the programme is to keep vulnerable families together and prevent children from being taken into care.</p> <p>An interim Panel has been established and is meeting every two weeks to discuss existing cases and new referrals. Senior staff of safeguarding, youth justice, CAMHS and education are regular members of the Panel as well as staff from MST and FFT and PFP services. Formal agreement is now in place for the referral pathway and what does or does not constitute care</p>

	<p>to aid the identification of outcome payments.</p> <p>Performance reporting is being established to enable monitoring of referrals to track the child post service intervention. Formal agreement is also in place for information governance and data sharing protocols have been established. A commissioning officer has been appointed in Sutton Council to administer payments and provide quality assurance.</p> <p>Updates on plans and mobilisation of the service have been provided to the Panel during the last municipal year through departmental reports. The Panel will wish to continue to receive updates during this municipal year which can continue to be achieved through the departmental report. It may be too early during this municipal year to receive a more substantive officer report on performance.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	As required.
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance on developing a Social Impact Bond (DfE) • Putting financial and performance management information to good use (Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Performance management – councillor workbook (Local Government Association)

THINK FAMILY	
Who suggested it?	This is a new initiative which has been reported to scrutiny over the last year. Additionally, a member has suggested a topic through the annual consultation process that looks at the affect of divorce and separation.
Summary	<p>The <i>Think Family</i> approach is about securing better outcomes for children, young people and families with additional needs by co-ordinating the support they receive from services for children, young people, adults and families. It is a key priority for the Merton Safeguarding Children Board over this municipal year and was previously the subject of a detailed briefing for Panel members (here). The approach has also led to joint children’s and adults’ commissioning.</p> <p>The Panel will wish to continue to receive updates during this municipal year which can continue to be achieved through the departmental report and/or the Merton Safeguarding Children Board. It may be too early during this municipal year to receive a more substantive officer report on performance.</p> <p>The related member topic suggestion is on the affect of divorce/separation on children, their education and health. Whilst this doesn’t lend itself to scrutiny review, looking at support for vulnerable families would be part of this item.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring

Timing	As required.
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think Family Toolkit (DfE) including information on measuring success • Putting financial and performance management information to good use (Centre for Public Scrutiny) • Performance management – councillor workbook (Local Government Association)

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>In consulting on scrutiny topic suggestions, the Children, Schools and Families Departmental Management Team suggested looking at how the authority is supporting young people to transition into adulthood.</p> <p>Merton's growing population means there is an increasing number of young people living in the borough who will shortly be transitioning to adulthood. Working across Departments, the Panel could look at what support is currently offered and needs to be offered to support Merton's young people to become independent. This might involve a range of officers from housing, adult services, mental health services, SEND etc. As demonstrated last year on the care leaver accommodation item, working across Departments and bringing together a range of officers to look collectively at a specific issue, is a real benefit that can be provided by the scrutiny process.</p> <p>The Panel may wish to work in partnership with members of the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review (potentially in-depth or possibly through a task group)
Guidance	<p>No specific guidance is available on scrutiny of school travel plans. However, a number of other councils have undertaken a scrutiny review of this area which may be informative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derbyshire (November 2016) • Haringey (March 2010)
Expert	<p>A representative from UK Youth (here). This is a national charity working to with young people to help them secure bright futures. Its focus is on providing all young people with access to appropriate, high quality services in their local community or online. This year it launched the first ever UK Youth State of the Membership report, which summarises the findings of its national member consultation and research with organisations working with young people across the country. The annual report highlights current youth sector workforce trends, the changing financial positions of organisations and the challenges facing the sector.</p>

Visit	It would be good for Panel members to engage with Merton's young people to help inform them on this issue. This might be done through the youth clubs operating in the borough. For example, in Pollards Hill.
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YOUTH VIOLENCE	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>In consulting on scrutiny topic suggestions, the Children, Schools and Families Departmental Management Team suggested looking at youth violence.</p> <p>During the last municipal year, the Panel heard how 20% of knife crime incidents in London have a connection to Merton even though these occur outside of the borough. Additionally, members were informed of an assessment of the impact of <i>County Lines</i> in Merton, where gangs are using children as young as 12 to traffic drugs in rural towns and cities.</p> <p>This is at a time when Merton's police provision is subject to a major reorganisation. The new Basic Command Unit will become effective from 23 May and result in the formation of an organisational unit covering four boroughs. This will comprise five functions: emergency response, neighbourhood policing, CID investigation, safeguarding and a headquarters function.</p> <p>There remains concern amongst members and officers about how well Merton's safeguarding will be prioritised within this new structure and whether it will be competing for attention with the needs of other boroughs. At the end of the last municipal year, the then Chair of this Panel had the opportunity to question a police representative at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. This established that Chief Inspector Rob Applegarth would be the lead officer for safeguarding in the unit which will be better resourced than the other functions.</p> <p>This item would give members the opportunity to focus on youth violence in Merton, its causes and how it is being addressed.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review
Timing	TBC
Guidance	<p>No specific guidance is available on scrutiny of school travel plans. However, a number of other councils have undertaken a scrutiny review of this area which may be informative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hamlets (March 2018) • Lambeth (2017)
Guest(s)	Chief Inspect Rob Applegarth, lead officer for safeguarding in Merton (and for the other authorities in the shared Basic Command Unit.

Expert	
Visit	It would be good for Panel members to engage with Merton's young people to help inform them on this issue. This might be done through the youth clubs operating in the borough. For example, in Pollards Hill.

WELFARE BENEFIT REFORMS	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>In consulting on scrutiny topic suggestions, the Children, Schools and Families Departmental Management Team suggested looking at welfare reforms and the effect of these on children and young people in Merton.</p> <p>Merton globally isn't regarded as an area with high levels of deprivation (it is ranked 103 out of 152 for income deprivation affecting children with 1 being the most deprived). However, it does have pockets of deprivation with 3.23% of the population regarded as being in the second most deprived quintile (located in four areas), 9.68% in the third most deprived quintile (12 areas) and 11.29% in the fourth most deprived quintile (located in 12 areas).</p> <p>The Panel can choose to look at this in great depth; to explore what impact welfare reform has had on children and young people in Merton and levels of deprivation. This could also look at what help and support is available for those claiming benefits.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review

Additional topic suggestions

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS	
Who suggested it?	The Panel at the topic suggestion workshop.
Summary	<p>Having expressed an interest, the Panel could request a briefing from the Governor Support Team which is part of the Children's Schools and Families Department. This could look at recruitment of School Governors and the support offered. This might be used to highlight issues, look at safeguarding, the training provided, the extent to which this is taken-up and how it is rated etc. Members explicitly want to understand the role of Merton Voluntary Service Council.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review
Timing	This might be taken at any point during the municipal year.

e-LEARNING AND ELECTRONIC ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Who suggested it?	The Panel at the topic suggestion workshop.
Summary	The Panel could request a briefing from officers in the school improvement team to understand more about the use of e-learning and electronic assessment tools in Merton's schools (including the Virtual School). This could look at how Merton's schools are currently using these systems, their impact, how this is assessed, how such systems are commissioned and how knowledge on best practice is maintained and used to inform usage.
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review
Timing	This might usefully be taken at the same point or close to the item on the schools annual report.

Appendix 3

Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 4 June 2018

The purpose of the workshop is to identify priority issues for consideration as agenda items or in-depth reviews by the Panel. The final decision on this will then be made by the Panel at its first meeting on 27 June 2018.

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?

Note of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel topic selection meeting on 4 June 2018

Attendees:

Councillors Sally Kenny (Chair), Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Ed Gretton, Natasha Irons, Mark Kenny, Hayley Ormrod, Dickie Wilkinson

Emma Lemon (Co-opted member)

Rachael Wardell (Director for Children, Schools and Families)

Mark Gwynne (Head of Policy, Planning and Performance)

Julia Regan (Democracy Services)

Budget and Business Planning

AGREED to continue with this standing item at the November and January meetings.

Care leavers accommodation

AGREED to monitor progress against a reference previously made to Cabinet by the Panel. Timing – 9 October 2018 and, if required, 13 March 2019.

Cabinet Member priorities

AGREED to continue to invite the Cabinet Members for Education and Children's Services to present their current priorities and answer questions at each Panel meeting.

Children, schools and families glossary

AGREED to receive a glossary to use as a reference document.

Children and Young People Plan

The Director explained that the current plan is coming towards the end of its lifespan and that, because it is no longer a statutory requirement, the timescale for its replacement can be extended to enable further work to be done following challenge and input from scrutiny.

AGREED to receive the draft plan at Panel meeting on 9 October 2018.

Corporate parenting report

AGREED to continue to receive this item on an annual basis, as well as receiving more regular updates as part of the departmental update report. Also AGREED that a small group of members should attend a meeting of the Children in Care Council to gather views.

Department update report

AGREED to continue to take this as a standing item at each meeting. Also AGREED that the update should include, where appropriate, updates on:

- Corporate parenting
- Family drug and alcohol court
- Harris Wimbledon (AGREED to invite a representative from Harris from time to time to respond to questions)
- Ofsted inspection outcome
- Social impact bond

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

AGREED to receive a briefing report on EHCPs on the background, purpose, process and what has been achieved. The report will include category data and comparative data where available.

Harris Wimbledon

AGREED to address through departmental update report and to visit the new school to see the expansion project. Would like to invite the CEO, Daniel Moynihan, to discuss the Harris model of working.

Health and wellbeing strategies for children and young people

The Director advised that the autism strategy is very close to being finalised therefore not suitable for pre-decision scrutiny and suggested instead that it would be helpful for the Panel to scrutinise its implementation mid 2019. Members AGREED with this suggestion.

Members expressed a particular interest in the autism strategy and AGREED that it should be circulated to Panel members for information and followed up as an agenda item in 12 months time.

Members were very keen to undertake at least one task group review on mental health issues, with a particular focus on prevention. AGREED that two potential task group reviews should be scoped for consideration by the Panel at its June meeting – one on younger children and prevention and the second on the transition to adulthood.

Key stage 5 progress

Members expressed interest in looking not just at A Levels but the wider offer at Key Stage 5, including Level 2 English and Maths.

AGREED that a small group of members should visit a school sixth form and a sixth form college to view the Key Stage 5 offer in different settings in preparation for the Panel's discussion of the School Standards annual report in March 2019..

Merton Safeguarding Children Board annual report

AGREED to continue to receive this item on an annual basis. Noted that the Director would be able to bring this report to the November meeting rather than in March if required.

AGREED that the report should include information on the Think Family initiative.

Parenting support

AGREED that this should be scoped as a potential task group review for the Panel to consider at its June meeting. Members expressed interest in identifying what activities are

available in Merton, how these are publicised and targeted and how other councils have shaped their offer in response to budget pressures.

Members noted that this is an area in which the Council has no current duties, and that therefore the capacity for the Children, Schools and Families Department to support the review may be limited. There may be a need to commission research in order to provide information that members seek.

Partner engagement

AGREED to scrutinise partner engagement as a thread running through other items on the Panel's work programme, and by inviting partners for those items which relate to partnership or multi-agency service delivery – for example, the relationship with Harris would be scrutinised through the item on the new school.

Prevent task group

AGREED to monitor Cabinet's progress with implementation of the scrutiny task group's recommendations.

Rapporteur scrutiny review of user voice

Agreed to implement the recommendations of the review, starting with a report to the Panel on 27 June 2018

Regional adoption agency

AGREED to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of this new initiative, with a report to the panel's meeting in October 2018

Routes into employment for vulnerable cohorts task group

AGREED to monitor Cabinet's progress with implementation of the scrutiny task group's recommendations at the Panel's meeting on 27 June 2018 and, if require, six months later in January 2019.

Schools annual report

AGREED to continue to receive this item on an annual basis. AGREED to the Director's suggestion to invite the Chair of the School Effectiveness Partnership to the meeting rather than inviting headteacher representatives.

School travel plans

AGREED that this should be scoped as a potential task group review for the Panel to consider at its June meeting. This work would be undertaken in conjunction with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission as road safety is within its portfolio and it has received a suggestion pertaining to the safety of pupils crossing roads whilst walking to and from school. This may also encompass consideration of 20 MPH zones.

Transition to adulthood

AGREED that the Panel should track a cohort of young people with education health and care plans (EHCPs) and multiple needs through an anonymised case study approach that would start at age 16 and follow them for two to three years to see how their various needs are being met and to illustrative how service provision for this group of young people is working in practice as they move into adulthood.

ACTION: Scrutiny Officer to discuss the timeline with the Director.

Youth violence

AGREED to take this forward either as a potential task group review in collaboration with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (being mindful of topic suggestion on knife crime

and gangs to be considered by the Commission) and/or through visits to engage with Merton's young people on this issue. Members expressed a particular interest in prevention.

Welfare benefit reforms

Members expressed an interest in examining the impact that welfare benefit reforms have had on children's wellbeing and school performance. As this would potentially a very wide remit for scrutiny it was AGREED to start with a report to the Panel from the Head of Revenue and Benefits on the number and profile of families who have been/will be impacted by the introduction of Universal Credit in Merton.

Additional topic suggestions made by members at the workshop:

Role of volunteers in schools and how to promote this – consider governors and role of Merton Voluntary Service Council

E-learning and electronic assessment tools – are they beneficial? How are they deployed in schools? How can the council encourage good practice?

Medium term financial strategy – ask the Director of Corporate Services to provide forecasts for 5 and 10 years ahead at the November meeting

AGREED to ask the Scrutiny Officer and Director to bring proposals on these topics to the Panel's meeting in June

Task group options as identified at the workshop on 4 June 2018

Mental health: younger children and prevention

Members are concerned about the mental health of children and young people in Merton. They have expressed their desire to consider what might be done to proactively protect and support Merton's younger children to develop resilience. They are keen to focus on prevention. To do this a task group might work with the Merton Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to understand the nature of referrals and whether there are contributing factors that might be alleviated. Additionally, a task group could look at the work CAMHS is doing to improve access to services with a focus on early intervention and improving support for the most vulnerable. The task group will be interested in the work being done to consult with children and young people on their mental health and emotional wellbeing needs and what support services they need.

A task group might look at what CAMHS does to support parents and how schools work to develop emotional resilience and how good practice is shared.

Mental health: transition to adulthood

Members are concerned about how young people with mental health and emotional wellbeing needs transition to adulthood. Again, this would involve task group members working with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to review how it works with adult mental health services and what support is offered to those that are progressing from one service to the other.

Parenting support

The council has no statutory remit with regard to parenting support. Members will therefore need to think carefully before proceeding further with a task group. They will need to consider the degree to which they will be able to influence and effect change.

Task group members could undertake a review of the parenting support that is available within Merton both generically and for those with a specialist need and consider the degree to which this is accessible to all. They may also wish to consider gaps in provision. This may involve consulting parents either through the services already available or by inviting parents to submit their views in writing or directly through an evidence-gathering meeting. Members may wish to visit provision such as that offered through Children's Centres.

School travel plans

Schools are required to have travel plans. Overall, these aim to reduce car use for school journeys or keep it at low levels in schools expecting higher numbers of pupils over coming years. The latter point is particularly pertinent in Merton; as to meet demand for primary school places a primary schools expansion programme is ongoing.

Active travel campaigns and STAR (School Travel Accredited and Recognised) accreditation work to reduce car use and increase walking, cycling and using public transport. However, as reflected in the annual scrutiny topic suggestion process, these have limited success with complaints often received about the impact of the school run on the local community and concerns expressed about road safety especially for pupils walking to school.

A task group could look at the steps taken by the council and individual schools to encourage parents to avoid using cars to get their children to and from school. Task group members could visit schools during peak drop off and collection times to see these issues for themselves and talk to parents about their experiences. Working in partnership with the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel, task group members could see how the Automatic Number Plate Recognition System can be used outside Merton's schools to enforce restrictions and deter car usage. Members may also want to look at best practice in other areas and compare this to action being taken in Merton.

Youth violence

Members are particularly interested in youth violence and preventative action that might be taken. As this is a cross cutting topic, the task group might find it beneficial to work in partnership with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission which has a remit on community safety. Members will want to understand youth crime statistics and what is understood about contributing factors by consulting with the Safer Merton Team. Interestingly, this links to the task group suggestion on mental health as children and young people in contact with the youth justice system are more like to have mental health problems than those who are not, and to have more than one mental health problem alongside a range of other challenges. There are opportunities to look at initiatives that have had a positive impact on youth crime prevention and reduction both inside and outside of the borough. Improvements have been achieved by identifying children and young people at risk of offending or being involved in anti-social behaviour through a multi-agency Youth Inclusion approach. This has included accredited parenting programmes.

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