

Committee:	Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date:	26 June 2019
Wards:	All
Subject:	Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2019/20
Lead officer:	Rosie Mckeever Scrutiny Officer
Lead member:	Cllr Sally Kenny, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
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Recommendations:

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

- i. Consider their work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion (see draft in Appendix 1);
 - 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 (Appendix 5);
 - vi. Consider the appointment of co-opted members for the 2019/20 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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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 2019/20 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 the discussion by councillors at a topic selection workshop held on 20 May 2019 and

e) Support available to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel to determine, develop and deliver its 2019/20 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 2019/20 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, youth services and performance monitoring that should automatically be built into their work programme.
- 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 2019/20, 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 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 ways 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:

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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 it 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.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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. |
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2.8 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

2.9 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.

2.10 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 2019/20.

2.11 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. Additionally, Members may wish to seek the input of acknowledged subject experts.

2.12 The Scrutiny Team will take on board the views of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel when developing the support that is provided.

3. **Selecting items for the Scrutiny Work Programme**

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:

- Education, children’s social care, child protection, youth services and performance monitoring.

3.1 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 Merton Voluntary Service Council. 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 20 May 2019 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.
- 3.4 A note of the workshop discussion relating to the remit of the Panel is set out in Appendix 4.
- 3.5 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. Topics identified for potential task group review at the workshop on 20 May 2019 are set out for further review and discussion in Appendix 5.
- 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 members 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 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 2019/20. 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, request for suggestions from all councillors and co-opted members, email correspondence 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, publicity in libraries and on social media;
 - b. Councillors have put forward suggestions by raising issues in scrutiny meetings, via the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey 2019, 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 2019/20
- 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
- 14.4 Appendix 4 – Notes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop on 20 May 2019
- 14.5 Appendix 5 – Task group options as identified at the workshop on 20 May 2019.
- 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 15.1 None

DRAFT CYP Work programme 2019/20

26 June 2019 (agenda deadline: 12pm 17 June 2019)

Item/Issue
• Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-24
• Cabinet Member and Director: Key Challenges and issues for the coming year
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Setting the work programme for 2019-20 (plus agree task group)

7 October 2019 (agenda deadline: 12pm 27 September 2019)

Item/Issue
• School maintenance costs
• Troubled families
• Task group (TBC): approval of terms of reference
• Report of the Children's' Mental Health Task Group
• Cabinet Member priorities
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

6 November 2019 (agenda deadline: 12pm 28 October 2019)

Item/Issue
• Pre-decision scrutiny: Budget/business planning (round 1)
• Support for failing schools
• Cabinet Member priorities
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

15 January 2020 (agenda deadline: 12pm 6 January 2020)

Item/Issue
• Pre-decision scrutiny: Budget/business planning (round 2)
• Corporate parenting report
• Cabinet Member priorities
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

12 February 2020 (agenda deadline: 12pm 3 February 2020)

Item/Issue
• Harris Wimbledon
• Merton Safeguarding Children Board - Annual report
• Cabinet Member priorities
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

11 March 2020 (agenda deadline: 12pm 2 March 2020)

Item/Issue
• Schools standards - Annual report
• Cabinet Member priorities
• Departmental update
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

Topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel 2019/20

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

Recommended Must Do's (Due to DMT recs, standing items, Member and resident interest)

- Air Quality around schools
- Budget/Business planning
- Cabinet Member priorities
- Corporate parenting report
- Department update report
- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)
- Harris Wimbledon
- Merton Safeguarding Children Board annual report
- Performance monitoring
- School Standards annual report

Other suggestions (Recommended to accept a max of 4)

- Health and wellbeing strategies for children and young people
- How are the Council helping schools that are not rated good or outstanding
- Personal technology in the classroom
- School Standards Panel
- Troubled families
- Transition to adulthood
- Universal Credit

AIR QUALITY AROUND SCHOOLS	
Who suggested it?	Members through the topic suggestion process
Summary	<p>At the November meeting a panel member expressed concern about high levels air pollution surrounding the Harris Wimbledon School site. Therefore the Panel agreed to include a report on air quality around schools to the work programme. Points to consider;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of publically available monitoring statistics on the boroughs air quality • Air filtration systems which will include carbon filters. • Considering ways to reduce idling traffic. • When results of the Mayor's air quality monitoring backpacks trial are published, they may provide insight into other ideas to explore. <p>Representatives from Public Health and Environmental Health have a number of joint projects that are underway and planned for schools they would like to report on at the June meeting.</p> <p>This is a broad issue which crosses over with multiple other topics, E.g. the road safety task group – anti idling (OSC Panel), diesel levy implementation, and results of the public consultation on parking charges report (SC Panel), Harris Wimbledon (CYP).</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight
Timing	26 June 2019
Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miar Crutchley, Principal AQ Officer, Dagmar Zeuner, Public Health. • Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk (set up on behalf of DEFRA) could attend with information and guidance on improving air quality and answer Members questions on air quality monitoring. • Breathe London project, the most comprehensive city-wide network of air quality monitors of its kind in the world, devised by City Hall.
Guests	As reflected on social media, there has been a high resident interest in air quality of the borough. It is likely that should this item proceed, there will be a number of residents interested in making representations.

BUDGET/BUSINESS PLANNING	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item.
Summary	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: <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.
Scrutiny type	Pre-decision scrutiny
Timing	This takes place in two rounds; 6 November 2019 and <u>15 January 2020</u>

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	Every meeting (agreed)

CORPORATE PARENTING REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item (part of Ofsted's requirements).
Summary	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.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	<u>15 January 2020</u> (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
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	Kathy Bundred, Children's Improvement Adviser for the Local Government Association could 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. 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	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.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	<u>Every meeting (agreed)</u>

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 has taken a lead over the last year on scrutinising the progress being made with the transfer to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs);</p> <p>Following the introduction of EHCPs, all existing statements of educational need (1,023) had to be transferred. This was a big process that had to be done in parallel to meeting requests for new EHCPs.</p> <p>The Government introduced a deadline of 20 weeks between the initial request for an EHCP being accepted and production of the resulting plan.</p> <p>There has been a significant improvement in performance with 52% of EHCP's completed within the 20 week target. Of the remaining 48%, 70% are completed within 26 weeks.</p> <p>This is in comparison to the previous year results of 37% of new EHCP's being achieved within the target timescale.</p> <p>It is recommended that this is further reviewed through the performance monitoring report with the scope for members</p>

	to request a more detailed update should they consider it necessary.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	Every meeting (through the performance monitoring report)
Expert	Performance Monitoring Lead

HARRIS WIMBLEDON	
Who suggested it?	Continuation of the Panel's role in scrutinising the on-going development of the new secondary school.
Summary	An update report was received by the Panel during the last municipal year. It is recommended that members take an update report during the coming municipal year with other updates being provided through the departmental report and/or Cabinet Member updates.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	<u>12 February 2020</u> (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
Guest(s)	Representative(s) of the Harris Federation 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

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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In addition to this, the Panel may wish to receive an opportunity to comment on Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-24 particularly in relation to the 'Start Well' children and young people's theme. Officers were in the process of updating this strategy in February and working closely with partners, stakeholders and the wider community</p>

	and voluntary sectors.
Scrutiny type	Update report
Timing	26 June (before the strategy proceeds to Cabinet in July)
Expert	Public Health Officers

HOW THE COUNCIL ARE HELPING SCHOOLS THAT ARE NOT RATED GOOD OR OUTSTANDING	
Who suggested it?	Members through the topic suggestion process
Summary	<p>5 schools currently rated as 'requires improvement' in Merton.</p> <p>The Council offers a Merton School Improvement (MSI) service. The team are dedicated to improving outcomes for children and young people in Merton schools where standards are declining or where significant groups of pupils are underperforming.</p> <p>Case study: Hall School, Wimbledon (Inadequate - June 2017 to Good – February 2019)</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight
Timing	Seek member suggestions
Expert	Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, Head of School Improvement Service (MSI)

MERTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item (part of Ofsted's requirements).
Summary	<p>The MSCB annual report provides members of the panel with an overview of performance of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board for the past year. The report presents an annual update on what is going well, the key challenges and the actions that the Council will take to address these challenges.</p> <p>This item gives members the opportunity to question the independent chair of the Merton Safeguarding Children Board, a suitable police representative, and the Directors and Cabinet Member about safeguarding provision for Merton's children and young people.</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring

Timing	<u>12 February 2020</u> (suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
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.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item, taken at every meeting.
Summary	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.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	<u>Taken every meeting (agreed)</u> .
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. It is within the Panel's gift to determine whether or not to appoint a performance lead for this year and then for them to determine how they may wish to work in order to support the Panel in this aspect of its work.

PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM	
Who suggested it?	A Member through the topic suggestion process
Summary	<p>The Panel could explore the benefits of the rise in technology in the classroom, how it's being used in other Local Authorities and whether Merton can grow in this area.</p> <p>Studies show that with countless online resources available, technology can help improve teaching. Teachers can use different apps or trusted online resources to enhance the traditional ways of teaching and to keep students more engaged.</p> <p>Consider;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the rise in technology lead to a loss of core skills i.e. handwriting and spelling • What subjects show the most benefit from the use of technology

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunity for children who do not have access to computers at home • Cost implications - how will it be funded? • Is it a distraction? • Virtual reality • Impact of technology glitches/fails/Wi-Fi problems • Online safety / safeguards • Could it provide different tools for teaching SEND students <p>This is an area of interest for the Member who suggested it and they are keen to share research about this topic should it be added to the work programme.</p>
Scrutiny type	Potential task group
Timing	Seek member suggestions

SCHOOL STANDARDS ANNUAL REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item (part of Ofsted's requirements).
Summary	<p>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.</p> <p>As a result of the presentation of the school's 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.</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	11 March 2020_(suggested to occur a full year after the last report was received)
Guest(s)	Representatives of Merton head's group (i.e.: one primary, secondary and special) to provide members with first hand insight into the information contained in the annual report.

SCHOOL STANDARDS PANEL	
Who suggested it?	The CYP Departmental Management Team
Summary	How effective is the link between the School Standards Panel and Scrutiny. Could we review the effectiveness and structure of the Panel? Would a Cabinet Member on the Panel add value?
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review
Timing	7 Oct 2019

TROUBLED FAMILIES	
Who suggested it?	The CYP Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>The Panel noted that although there was no formal performance monitoring target for Troubled Families, the number was increasing and the funding for this programme was due to end in 2020.</p> <p>The Head of Social Care and Inclusion said the department was waiting to see if this program would continue to be supported by The Government.</p> <p>Would the Panel want to be kept informed on this subject and updated on the funding arrangements?</p>
Scrutiny type	Update report
Timing	Seek Member suggestions

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>During the March meeting, the Panel noted the proposal of the Director of Children, Schools and Families, for a Task Group based on a study of individual young people with EHCPs as they transition from Children's to Adult Services.</p> <p>She explained that some would have needs that would be eligible for Adult services, and some not. She proposed that such a study would last for longer than one year and would give the panel an opportunity to explore how the system worked.</p> <p>The Panel may wish to work in partnership with members of the Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, officers from housing, adult services, mental health services, SEND etc. 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>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review/task group
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.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT	
Who suggested it?	Departmental Management Team and Officers through the topic suggestion process
Summary	<p>The CYP Departmental Management Team suggested the Panel scrutinise the Department for Work and Pensions over the roll out of Universal Credit, why Merton were not briefed and what is the impact of this change on families.</p> <p>A suggestion was also received from a Housing Needs Officer through the topic suggestion process that the Panel explore the link between Universal Credit and how it has implications for families, child poverty and tenancies.</p> <p>Universal Credit aims to simplify the benefits system by replacing six existing benefits into a single monthly payment.</p> <p>Housing Benefit is now part of Universal Credit and helps pay for rent for residents on a low income or benefits. With the roll-out of Universal Credit, tenants no longer receive Housing Benefit and instead receive a rent element in their monthly Universal Credit payment which is paid directly into their bank rather than having their rent paid for them.</p> <p>Report by the Smith Institute found that a quarter of all new UC claims in 2017 were paid late, with one in five of these claimants waiting 5 months or more which has had a huge impact on rent arrears due to late payments.</p> <p>Nationwide there is a strong reluctance of private landlords to house tenants in receipt of Universal Credit due to a lack of assurance that they will receive payments on time, or at all, in the case of tenants with complex needs.</p> <p>The Panel can choose to look at this in great depth; to explore what impact the roll out of Universal Credit has had on children and young people in Merton and whether it has contributed to levels of child poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many residents in the borough have been affected by the roll out • Contact Merton Citizens Advice Bureau for details on

	<p>how many UC applications they have assisted with / provided information and advice for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey/invite Merton residents in receipt of UC to ask first-hand how the change is affecting them – including the need for emergency food aid and dealing with rent arrears and debt. • What help and support is available for those claiming benefits. • What more can we do to support families
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review/Task Group
Timing	Seek suggestions from Members
Expert	David Keppler, Head of Revenues and Benefits. Richard Jackman, DWP. Housing Needs. Merton CAB.

Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 20 May 2019.

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 2019.

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 of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel topic selection meeting on 20 May 2019

Attendees:

Councillors Sally Kenny (Chair), Hina Bokhari, Omar Bush, Pauline Cowper, Ed Foley, Joan Henry, James Holmes, Russell Makin, Hayley Ormrod, Emma Lemon (Co-opted member)
 Cabinet Members – Kelly Braund and Eleanor Stringer
 Rachael Wardell (Director for Children, Schools and Families)
 Karl Mittelstadt (Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships)
 Mike Robinson (Consultant in Public Health)
 Julia Regan (Head of Democracy Services)

Summary of agreed actions

Agreed to have three standing agenda items – departmental update report, cabinet member priorities and performance monitoring.

Also agreed:

Agenda items	Departmental update	Potential task group
Budget and business plan	Education, Health & Care Plans	Educational technology in the classroom
Corporate parenting	Harris Wimbledon	Child poverty
Harris Wimbledon	PFI contracts	Home-schooled children
Health & Wellbeing Strategy	Knife crime	
Support for failing schools	SEN funding	
Safeguarding	Early years provision	
Standards annual report		
Troubled families		
School maintenance costs		

Air quality around schools

AGREED to refer this issue to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel and to ask the Panel to take into account the particular impact that poor air quality has on children's health and wellbeing. Requested that the Sustainable Communities Panel invite members of the Children and Young People Panel to attend for agenda item discussion or to join any task group scrutinising this issue.

AGREED to ask the road safety around schools task group to include recommendations on anti-idling and enforcement of anti-idling in its report.

Budget and business planning

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

Members expressed an interest in finding out more about how school budgets are financed and how value for money is ensured. The Director explained that school budgets are overseen by the Schools Forum (a representative group of headteachers) and that the council has no say over the funding decisions that schools make, though it does offer advice and support. The Director undertook to talk to finance colleagues to identify whether there is scope for scrutiny to add value.

Cabinet Member priorities

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

Corporate parenting report

AGREED to continue to receive this agenda item on an annual basis at the Panel's January meeting. Also AGREED to invite an expert witness (Kathy Bundred, Children's Improvement Adviser, Local Government Association) and to consult the Children in Care Council to gather views in advance of the meeting.

Department update report

AGREED to continue to take this as a standing item at each meeting.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

AGREED to continue to monitor through the performance monitoring report.

The Director said that she would advise on when she would be able to provide a more detailed update following the implementation of a new web-based tool that should help to speed up processes. This could be included within the departmental update.

Harris Wimbledon

AGREED to include as a standing item in the departmental update.

Also AGREED to receive a fuller report in February 2020 and to invite the Principal or Executive Principal of Harris to attend to discuss progress and proposed operation of the new school.

Health and wellbeing strategies for children and young people

AGREED to receive Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-24 on 26 June 2019 so that the Panel's views could be taken into account when it is presented by the Health and Wellbeing Board to Cabinet on 15 July.

Members expressed a wish to be sighted on agenda items for future meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board. ACTION: Scrutiny Officer to include in the work programme item that is received at each meeting of the Panel.

Support for failing schools that are not rated good or outstanding

AGREED to receive a report to provide information on the work of the school improvement service, the support that the council is providing to the 5 schools that are not good or outstanding and what those schools are doing to improve.

Members expressed an interest in visiting schools to increase their understanding of how they work and what support is provided by the council. The Director offered to invite members to accompany her on her programme of school visits – one member per school - so that they can observe successful and less successful schools in operation. ACTION: Director of Children Schools and Families; Scrutiny Officer

Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership annual report

The Director explained that the Merton Safeguarding Children Board has been reconfigured and, from September, will become the Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership. An Independent Person chairs the Partnership and there will also be an Independent Scrutineer and a Young Scrutineer. In addition to council and police representative there will now be a health representative on the partnership.

AGREED to continue to receive an annual report – the Director suggested the February meeting. The Chair, health and police representatives will be invited to attend.

Performance monitoring

AGREED to continue to take this as a standing item. Also AGREED that Councillor Hayley Ormrod should continue to be the Panel's lead on performance monitoring.

Educational technology in the classroom

AGREED to consider this as a potential task group review – terms of reference to be drafted for consideration by the Panel at its meeting on 26 June. Members would like the review to consider the advantages and disadvantages of using technology in the classroom. Background documents would include the DfE's Education Technology Strategy and a report from the Education Endowment Foundation "using digital technology to improve learning".

Schools standards annual report

AGREED to continue to receive this item on an annual basis.

School Standards Panel

AGREED that this was not a priority for inclusion in the 2019-20 work programme.

Troubled families

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services said that funding for this programme will end in 2020 and it would be very helpful if the Panel could scrutinise performance and comment on options for the future.

AGREED to receive a report at the Panel's meeting in September and to invite the lead officer (Roberta Evans) and the Assistant Director of Youth Inclusion (Elle Mayhew) to the meeting.

Transition to adulthood

Noted that a task group review by the Healthier Communities and Older People Panel on transition between children's and adults' services for children with special educational needs and disabilities is just concluding. Also noted that the Children and Young People Panel had conducted a task group review in 2016-17 of routes into employment for vulnerable cohorts in Merton.

AGREED that this would not therefore be a priority area for scrutiny in 2019-20. ACTION: Scrutiny Officer to send both task group reports and implementation plans to all Panel members.

Universal Credit

AGREED to refer to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for consideration.

Also AGREED to consider a potential task group review on child poverty. Terms of reference to be drafted for consideration by the Panel at its meeting on 26 June

Additional topic suggestions made by members at the workshop:

Review of PFI contracts

The Director advised that the PFI contracts for a number of schools would come to an end within the next 10 years and that the council would need to ensure premises were returned in good repair.

AGREED that the Director should provide information on this in the departmental update in the first instance and then the panel would consider inviting providers to a meeting to discuss the issues.

Knife crime

ACTION AGREED:

- Director to include in the departmental update
- Head of Democracy Services to circulate the knife crime action plan on a confidential basis to all members of the Panel.

School maintenance costs

AGREED to receive an information report itemising the council's spending on school maintenance and how this is prioritised. The Director will advise on whether this would be ready in time for the Panel's June meeting.

Spend on agency staff in schools

AGREED not to take further action on this because the Overview and Scrutiny Commission carried out a task group review of the recruitment and retention of teachers in 2017-18 and the actions have now been implemented by Cabinet (with the exception on one on rent deposit loan which is awaiting further response).

ACTION: Head of Democracy Services to send task group report and action plan to Councillor Makin.

SEN funding

AGREED to include information in the departmental update on how the council spends its SEN budget allocation (information on each how school spends the pupil premium grant is published on the school's website).

Noted that the DfE had required a deficit reduction plan for our overspend in the High Needs Block of the DSG, and we agreed that the deficit reduction plan should come to scrutiny.

Home-schooled children

Noted that there had been an increase in the number of children being home schooled in Merton. Expressed interest in finding out why and what the council is doing to support these families and to monitor the quality of the education provision.

AGREED to consider as a potential task group review - terms of reference to be drafted for consideration by the Panel at its meeting on 26 June.

Early years provision

AGREED that information on this should be included in the departmental update in the first instance, describing the provision and commenting on the performance indicator on the take-up of funded nursery hours for 2 and 3 year olds.

Task group options as identified at the workshop on 20 May 2019

1. Educational technology in the classroom

A dedicated task group review would allow the Panel to explore the advantages and disadvantages of using technology in the classroom, how it's being utilised in Merton and other Local Authorities and whether Merton could grow in this area.

Studies show that with countless online resources and platforms available, technology can be an effective tool to help reduce teacher workload, increase efficiencies, engage students and provide tools to support excellent teaching.

However, there may also be cons to this tools such as slow internet connections and outdated networking and devices, the impact of increasing screen time and privacy, safety and data security issues.

Broadly, a task group could explore the benefits and disadvantages of Educational Technology, including personalised learning, look at what Merton Schools are already offering, explore best practice/results/available studies and consider alternatives.

Task group members could undertake visits to schools to observe lessons.

Consult with Head teachers, governors, parents and DfE.

The draft terms of reference are:

- To scrutinise the technology already in place in local schools and receive information about the alternatives that are available;
- To identify existing best practice in Merton and elsewhere that could inform the council's future approach to Education Technology, make comparisons with the Ed tech offered by our neighbouring boroughs;
- To consider how technology impacts children with behavioural issues, SEND and
- To make recommendations on how the Educational Technology tools and Personalised Learning support offered by Merton Schools might be enhanced with an estimation of the impact. This would need to be accompanied by an understanding of the cost implications of any recommendations and how these will be funded.

Background documents

Education Endowment Foundation report: Using digital technology to improve learning.

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/using-digital-technology-to-improve-learning/>
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/using-digital-technology-to-improve-learning/>

DfE's Education Technology Strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/realising-the-potential-of-technology-in-education>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/realising-the-potential-of-technology-in-education>

2. Home schooled children

There has been an increase in the number of children being home schooled in Merton with 2018's figure standing at 169 children electively home educated.

The draft terms of reference are:

- To identify the key issues that result in elective home education
- To scrutinise what the schools do to resolve those issues
- To review what the Council is doing to support these families
- To scrutinise how the quality of the education provision is being monitored and whether results are impacted
- To make recommendations on how the support offered by might be enhanced

Task group members could consult with the Education Welfare Service, Home Education Advisors and parents that home educate.

3. Child Poverty and Universal Credit

The CYP Departmental Management Team suggested the Panel scrutinise the Department for Work and Pensions over the roll out of Universal Credit, why Merton were not briefed and what the impact of this change is on families.

The task group could explore what impact the roll out of Universal Credit has had on children and young people in Merton and whether it has contributed to levels of child poverty, including the need for emergency food aid, dealing with rent arrears and debt caused by late payment and the implications it has had on tenancies.

A task group would want to understand these issues fully and might use a variety of means including:

- Talking to Housing Needs Officers about the variety of issues raised with them;
- Desk research to investigate how many residents in the borough have been affected by the roll out
- Directly consulting with residents in receipt of UC about the issues they face - Ask first-hand how the change is affecting them, including the need for emergency food aid and dealing with rent arrears and debt.
- Contact Merton Citizens Advice Bureau for details on how many UC applications they have assisted with/provided information and advice for.
- Task group members could also consult with the Head of Revenues and Benefits and the DWP.

The draft terms of reference are:

- To scrutinise the Merton roll out of Universal Credit, hold the DWP to account for not briefing the Local Authority
- Examine the impact locally and how it compares nationally
- The possibility of influencing any change on the DWP system is limited, but the task group could look at what recommendations could encourage more help and support being made available for those claiming benefits in Merton

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