

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**5 AUGUST 2021**

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

Report from/author: Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer

#### Summary

This item advises Members of the current work programme and allows the Committee to adjust it in the light of latest priorities, issues and circumstances. It gives Members the opportunity to shape and direct the Committee's activities over the year.

1. Budget and policy framework
  - 1.1. Under Chapter 4, Part 5 of the Constitution – Overview and Scrutiny Rules, paragraph 21.1 (xv) General terms of reference, each overview and scrutiny Committee has the responsibility for setting its own work programme.
2. Background
  - 2.1. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the proposed work programme for the Committee during the current municipal year.
3. Agenda planning meeting
  - 3.1. Members will be aware that Overview and Scrutiny Committees hold agenda planning meetings on a regular basis. These give officers guidance on information that Members wish them to provide when scrutinising an issue. An agenda planning meeting took place on 9 July 2021.
  - 3.2. At the meeting, Members made the following suggestions:
    - 3.2.1. The item regarding missing children be deferred to the meeting scheduled for 1 December 2021 in order for officers to undertake an in-depth piece of work on this issue and include the findings of that in the report.
    - 3.2.2. It was noted that at the request of the Regional Adoption Agency, the Annual Adoption Report was being rescheduled for the January 2022 meeting

- 3.2.3. It was also agreed to recommend the Committee to reschedule the item on Supporting Families from 30 September to the 1 December meeting, to alleviate pressure on the agenda for the September meeting.

#### 4. Cabinet Forward Plan

- 4.1. The latest Forward Plan of forthcoming Cabinet decisions was published on 10 May 2021 and can be viewed using the following link:  
<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=397&RP=115>
- 4.2. Set out below is a list of items featuring on the Forward Plan that fall within the terms of reference of the Children and Young People (CYP) Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is asked to identify any items it wishes to consider before the Cabinet decision is taken (where dates permit), other than those already programmed in Appendix 1.

Title: Proposal to amend the current payment scheme for Medway Local Authority Foster Carers
Description: This report will provide details of a review of Medway's Fostering Service and the proposed fostering offer.
Anticipated Cabinet Decision Date: 3 August 2021

Title: Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy for Children and Young People
Description: This report will ask the Cabinet to approve the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy for Children and Young People on behalf of the Local Authority.
Anticipated Cabinet Decision Date: 21 September 2021

Title: Annual Review of School Place Planning Strategy 2018-22
Description: This report will outline the progress made against Medway's School Place Planning Strategy and will highlight any emerging need for school places and recommendations for Cabinet to consider to ensure that a sufficient supply of school places is maintained.
Anticipated Cabinet Decision Date: 19 October 2021

Title: Annual Fostering Report
Description: This report will provide detail on the Performance of the Council's Fostering Service.
Anticipated Cabinet Decision Date: 19 October 2021

Title: Provisional Funding Formula for Mainstream Schools and Academies 2022/23
Description: This report will set out the provisional proposals for the funding formula for mainstream schools and academies for 2022/23.
Anticipated Cabinet Decision Date: 19 October 2021

## 5. Performance Data Workshops

5.1. At the Committee's meeting on 5 March 2020, it agreed a number of measures to maximise its involvement and impact in relation to the scrutiny of children's social care.

5.2. Part of those measures included the provision of detailed performance data to all members of the Committee on a monthly basis and for performance data workshops to be provided, in between Committees. The purpose of this is to strengthen the capacity for effective scrutiny of performance by providing an informal setting in which detailed analysis of the data can be undertaken. Members can then apply their increased knowledge and understanding to carry out an effective scrutinising role in main committee meetings and in task group activity.

5.3. The latest workshop was held virtually on 22 June 2021. This session was attended by the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Social Care, the Head of Service for Children's Social Work and the Independent Scrutineer of the Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership who was also the Independent Chair of the Improvement Board. At the session, Members were able to interrogate the data and explore beneath the performance to understand the contributory factors and identify key areas for further focus.

5.4. At this session, officers also discussed with Members how the data was used alongside other tools to triangulate the information and build the fullest picture of performance relating to all aspects of children social care. Members raised questions relating.

5.5. At the session, Members raised questions relating to caseloads, support for staff, Personal Education Plans, supporting care leavers into education, employment or training and staff recruitment.

## 6. Implications for looked after children

6.1. Members should ensure they focus on outcomes for looked after children. This includes considering their physical health; their emotional health; their safeguarding; their educational attainment and progress; their hopes and aspirations for their adult lives and how looked after young people have their voices heard. We know that looked after children can be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation so particular attention should be given to this. As a corporate parent, Members should be a champion for looked after children

and have the same high expectations of them as they would for their own child, grandchild or niece/ nephew.

## 7. Financial and legal implications

7.1. There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report.

## 8. Recommendations

8.1. The Committee is asked to agree the work programme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to accepting the proposed changes, outlined in italic text on Appendix 1.

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### Appendices

Appendix 1 – Children and Young People O&S Committee Work Programme

### Background papers

None