

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 MARCH 2023

WORK PROGRAMME – ADDENDUM REPORT

Report from: Dr Lee-Anne Farach, Director of People (Statutory DCAS)
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Summary

As part of the development of the Committee's Work Programme, this seeks to bring together proposals for development of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to improve ways of working and maximise meeting times to promote effective scrutiny following the support the Committee has received from the Local Government Association as part of the Children's Improvement Journey.

1. Background

- 1.1. As part of the Children's Improvement Journey, the Local Government Association delivered two training and development programmes which took place on 25 April 2022 and 12 September 2022 for the Committee.
- 1.2. The Local Government Association discussed with the Chairman best practice for scrutiny for Children and Young People, as well as maximising use of the Committee's overview functions.
- 1.3. Both political groups were tasked with completing a 'Six steps to effective children's scrutiny' self-assessment form based around six steps which together articulate good practice in scrutiny of children's services to be used as a tool to identify areas of strength as well as areas for further development in scrutiny practice.
- 1.4. Work was delegated on behalf of the Committee to the Director of People to scope a possible new model of working within the Committee's meetings and forward plan.

2. Advice and analysis

- 2.1. As a result of work undertaken in partnership with the Local Government Association it is proposed that the Committee adopt a hybrid model moving forward.
- 2.2. This works on the assumption that meetings will last no more than three hours, with the first two being focused on the theme and the remaining time on general matters that need to be reviewed by the Committee as existing ongoing business.

2.3. This would allow the Committee the time to:

- Reflect and discuss on existing practice and performance in a specific area of delivery by the Council and/or its partners – namely by receiving a mixture of context sources from witnesses, data etc.
- Propose recommendations for improvement in their areas.
- Outward looking at the broader context in the local area
- Add value to ongoing work and delivery as well as acting as a ‘check and balance’.
- Develop a common understanding of both the overview and the scrutiny functions of the Committee.
- Explore and identify ways to ensure the voice of the child is centre to the activities of the Committee.

2.4. It is noted that this is the last meeting of the Committee during the current electoral cycle, therefore, it is important that the work which has been undertaken by the Committee and the LGA is captured at this stage and that the Committee is given an opportunity to make recommendations to the first meeting of this Committee post-elections.

3. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Failure to adopt the new approach	Moving to a new approach was proposed by the LGA as best practice for the Committee to support the Council’s Improvement journey. Failure to adopt may impact the Committee’s ability to appropriately scrutinise services.	Robust training programme for Members as part of induction	B2
Failure to create the work programme as next steps for the model	The Committee would need to come up with themes to discuss. Failure to do this would - affect the efficiency of the Committee.	The Director of People to advise the Committee on the best themes that would have maximum impact for the service as a whole	C3

Likelihood	Impact:
A Very high B High C Significant	1 Catastrophic (Showstopper) 2 Critical

D Low E Very low F Almost impossible	3 Marginal 4 Negligible
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4. Consultation

- 4.1. The proposed new model for the Committee has been discussed and consulted on with the Committee Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the Opposition Spokesperson.

5. Financial and legal implications

- 5.1. There are no direct financial and legal implications as a result of this report.
- 5.2. The proposals do not require any formal changes to the Overview and Scrutiny rules in the Council's Constitution.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. The Committee is asked to recommend approval of the proposed ways of working outlined in section 2 of the addendum report to the first meeting of the Committee post-elections.
- 6.2. The Committee is asked to delegate authority for the construction of an initial themed Work Programme to the Director of People, in consultation with the Committee Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Opposition Spokesperson, which will be presented to the first meeting of the Committee post-elections for consideration.

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