

**Report for:** Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023

**Title:** Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel: Work Programme 2022-24

**Report authorised by:** Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

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**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** N/A

## **1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 To note the work plan for 2022-24 and agree any amendments or additions to it for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the Panel considers its work plan for 2022-24, attached at Appendix A, and whether any amendments are required.

## **3. Reasons for decision**

3.1 The work programme for 2022-24 for overview and scrutiny was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2022. Arrangements for implementing it have progressed and the latest plans for the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel are outlined in **Appendix A**.

## **4. Background**

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has developed a work programme for itself and the scrutiny panels with the aim of ensuring that the scrutiny function is used to its best effect. This was informed by engagement with representatives of the local community. There were two main elements to its development:

- An on-line scrutiny survey; and
- A “Scrutiny Café.”

4.2 The scrutiny survey ran from 26<sup>th</sup> July until 26<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and was open to Councillors, officers, partners, community groups and local residents. It asked respondents to identify the areas that should be given highest priority. People were also asked for any other specific issues or problems that they felt warranted special attention.

4.3 The Scrutiny Café took place on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at the Selby Centre in Tottenham and brought together Council officers, partners and community and voluntary sector representatives to discuss matters that might merit consideration

by Overview and Scrutiny. The results of the scrutiny survey were used to inform the discussion. The event was very well attended, including a number of young people who were able to provide useful feedback on the areas that were most important to them.

- 4.4 The outcomes of the survey and discussions at the Café were put together for consideration by the Committee and its Panels so that they could finalise proposals for their workplans. Relevant Council officers were also invited to advise on suggestions. In addition, the Panel met informally to discuss proposals.
- 4.5 There is finite capacity within work plans and it is not possible to cover everything within them in great depth, hence the need to prioritise. There are a number of different options for how issues can be addressed:
- In depth scrutiny reviews;
  - “One-off” reports to Panel meetings; or
  - Questions to Cabinet Members.
- 4.6 It is not obligatory for scrutiny bodies to undertake scrutiny reviews but they enable issues to be looked at in greater detail. This approach is particularly suited to complex issues involving a wide range of stakeholders. A key consideration in selecting issues is the extent to which reviews may be able to deliver tangible outcomes. It is also important that the scope of reviews is sufficiently focussed to allow the detailed gathering of evidence and consideration of issues that is most likely to bring about outcomes.
- 4.7 “One-off” items are normally dealt with through a report from relevant officers or partners. Scrutiny is a flexible process though and other approaches can be incorporated, including inviting external witnesses to give evidence and site visits. It is recommended that sufficient space is allowed on each agenda for a meaningful discussion of items selected by avoiding overloading agendas.
- 4.8 There is an expectation that each Cabinet Member will attend a relevant scrutiny body at least twice per year for Cabinet Member Questions. This provides an opportunity for scrutiny bodies to hear about key developments within each Cabinet portfolio and answer questions.

#### *Review on Physical Activity and Sport*

- 4.9 At the informal meeting of the Panel to consider the work plan, it was agreed to undertake a review on leisure and recreational activities for children and young people. The issue had been raised by young people who attended the Scrutiny Café and there had also been some feedback on this from the Scrutiny Survey.
- 4.10 Following further discussion with officers and the Chair on the scope and terms of reference, the Panel agreed that the review would focus specifically on one particular aspect of leisure and recreation; physical activity and sport. The narrower scope of the review made it better placed to go into sufficient depth to make meaningful recommendations. The recommendations from the review will assist in the development of the new physical activity and sport strategy for the borough.

4.11 The review has now been completed. There were six evidence sessions of the Panel in total and a wide range of individuals and organisations contributed to them. All of the evidence has been collated into a final report, together with conclusions and recommendations from the Panel. The report will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 October for approval. Once the report has been approved, it will be submitted to the Council's Cabinet where it will be considered alongside a response to each of the recommendations.

#### *Review on Housing and Children*

4.12 At the meeting of the Panel on 3rd January, the Panel agreed to commission a review on housing and children. The intention was that this would commence once the review on physical activity and sport had been completed.

4.13 Housing is a complex and multi-faceted area of policy and, in order for the review to be productive, it was recognised that it would need to focus on a specific aspect so that it is possible to look at it in sufficient depth to draw meaningful conclusions. A number of potential areas of focus were identified;

- The Private Rental Sector;
- Roll out and expected outcomes of the Council's private licensing scheme;
- Linking of vulnerable families placed in Haringey by other local authorities to safeguarding and support services;
- Safeguarding responsibilities of social housing providers, including housing associations; and
- Housing allocations policy and how it impacts on children, especially those with disabilities, those considered vulnerable or part of large families.

4.14 The above issues can be split into ones relating to private sector housing and ones relating to social housing. The Panel agreed that the review would look at social housing in the first instance and, in particular, housing allocations. Consideration could be given to commissioning further work on private sector housing in due course.

4.15 A scope and terms of reference for the first part of the review will now be fully developed in consultation with the Panel and relevant officers. Once these have been finalised, the review can begin its work in earnest.

4.16 A copy of the draft work plan for the Panel is attached as Appendix "A". Further development of the plan will take place as the year progresses and progress will be reviewed on a regular basis.

#### *Forward Plan*

4.17 Since the implementation of the Local Government Act and the introduction of the Council's Forward Plan, scrutiny members have found the Plan to be a useful tool in planning the overview and scrutiny work programme. The Forward Plan is updated each month but sets out key decisions for a 3-month period.

4.18 To ensure the information provided to the Committee is up to date, a copy of the most recent Forward Plan can be viewed via the link below:

- 4.19 The Committee may want to consider the Forward Plan and discuss whether any of these items require further investigation or monitoring via scrutiny.

## **5. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- 5.1 The contribution of scrutiny to the corporate priorities will be considered routinely as part of the OSC's work.

## **6. Statutory Officers comments**

### **Finance and Procurement**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications these will be highlighted at that time.

### **Legal**

- 6.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.
- 6.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the OSC.
- 6.4 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an OSC has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions. In accordance with the Constitution, the appointment of Scrutiny Panels (to assist the scrutiny function) falls within the remit of the OSC.
- 6.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

### **Equality**

- 6.6 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
  - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

- 6.7 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;
- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
  - Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
  - Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
  - Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.
- 6.8 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

## **7. Use of Appendices**

Appendix A: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel: Work Plan for 2021/22

## **8. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

N/A