

**Report for** Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – 29 September 2020

**Title:** Work Programme 2020-21

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

**Lead Officer:** Robert Mack, Principal Scrutiny Support Officer  
Tel: 020 8489 2921, e-mail: [rob.mack@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:rob.mack@haringey.gov.uk)

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

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

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

1.1 This report presents an outline workplan for 2020-21 and requests the views of the Panel on priorities and issues to be added.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Panel approves the draft current work programme for 2020-21, attached at **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 That consideration be given to which one-off items to prioritise and any additional issues to be added to the work plan.
- 2.3 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to endorse the workplan for the Panel at its meeting on 6 October 2020.

### **3. Reasons for decision**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Panels completed their workplans for 2018-20 and were in the process of developing new ones for 2020-22 when the Covid-19 crisis occurred. A scrutiny survey had been undertaken and analysed as part of this. Another Scrutiny Café event had also been arranged but this needed to be postponed.
- 3.2 After lockdown, the normal work of the Committee and its Panels was suspended. Regular virtual meetings of the Committee were arranged though, with short, focused agendas. In order not to divert or distract key officers and partners from responding to the crisis, these centred around Cabinet Member questions with officer involvement and the need for written reports reduced. The first round of Panel meetings for the year were cancelled.
- 3.3 With the crisis now past its initial peak and some degree of normality returning, the Committee and its Panels are now in a position to resume their normal work, albeit with the need for virtual meetings for the foreseeable future. The Panel

will therefore need to give further consideration to how it develops its workplan. A key part of this will be plans for how the borough recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### **4. Alternative options considered**

- 4.1 The Panel could choose not to review its work programme but this could diminish knowledge of the work of Overview and Scrutiny and would fail to keep the full membership updated on any changes to the work programme.

#### **5. Background information**

- 5.1 A draft outline workplan for the remainder of 2020-21 has been developed for the Panel and this is attached as **Appendix A**. The items within it comprise the following:
- Cabinet Member Questions for the two Cabinet Members whose portfolios fall within the terms of reference for the Panel; and
  - Matters that are routinely reported to the Panel, such as exam and test result and updates on the implementation of the recommendations of previous reviews; and
  - Scrutiny of the budget
- 5.2 There are also several reports that the Panel has previously requested to come to future meetings. These are listed under “to be arranged”. There are more of these than there currently is capacity to accommodate within the number of scheduled meetings for the Panel. It will therefore be necessary for the Panel to prioritise those that it feels are the most significant. There may also be other matters that the Panel wishes to add to the workplan. To assist the Panel in prioritising items, feedback from the Scrutiny Survey that took place in February is attached as **Appendix B**.
- 5.3 The Panel began a review on schools earlier in the year and had its first evidence session on 10 February, when it received evidence from relevant Council officers. A further evidence session had been scheduled for 10 March but had to be postponed. It should now be possible for evidence gathering to be resumed, although this will need to be undertaken virtually.
- 3.4 The need to continue to hold meetings virtually means there will be some limitations on what is possible. It can be challenging to maintain focus for an extended period of time when meeting virtually and meetings will should therefore be kept short and focussed. In addition, the Panel may wish to receive evidence from people who do not have access to the necessary IT or be able to operate it. Certain evidence gathering activities may also not be possible at the moment, such as visits.

#### *Forward Plan*

- 5.4 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.

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

<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RP=110&RD=0&J=1>

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

## **6. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

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

## **7. Statutory Officers comments**

### **Finance and Procurement**

- 7.1 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**

- 7.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.
- 7.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the OSC.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 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**

- 7.6 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.

7.7 The Panel should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan, 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.

7.8 The Panel should ensure 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.

## **8. Use of Appendices**

Appendix A – Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel; Work Plan for 2018/20  
Appendix B – Summary of responses from Scrutiny Survey relating to areas covered by the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel.

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

N/A