

**Report for:** Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel – 23 September 2021

**Title:** Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel: Work Programme 2021-22

**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 draft work plan for 2021-22 and agree any amendments or additions for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**2. Recommendations**

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

**3. Reasons for decision**

3.1 The work programme for overview and scrutiny was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 8 June 2021. 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 Following the completion of the Overview and Scrutiny work plan for 2018-20, work began on the development of work plans for 2020-22. An on-line survey on was undertaken in February 2020 and a Scrutiny Café consultative event planned but the process was disrupted by the Covid pandemic. The priorities and suggestions from the survey were incorporated into the work planning process for 2021-22. In addition, the Committee and its Panels each undertook consultative meetings during March with a range of community and voluntary sector organisations relevant to areas within their terms of reference.

4.2 The consultative meetings looked at and prioritised a range of suggestions that had come from the following:

- Responses to the on-line scrutiny survey undertaken in early 2020; and
- Outstanding matters from current work plans.

- 4.3 There was also the opportunity to add additional issues. Following these, the Committee and its Panels each met informally to finalise their proposals. Relevant Council officers were invited to these meetings to provide feedback on proposals. Each scrutiny body was asked to prioritise issues and consider if there were any additional matters that also should be included in work plans. There is finite capacity within work plans and it will not be possible to cover everything within them in depth, hence the need to prioritise.
- 4.4 Each scrutiny body was asked to decide on the following:
- A suitable topic for a scrutiny review. Whilst this is not obligatory, it will enable scrutiny bodies to look at an issue in detail. A key consideration in selecting issues is the extent to which reviews may be able to deliver tangible outcomes. Any review will need to have completed receiving evidence by the end of this calendar year to ensure that its final report is approved before the end of the current administration;
  - Items to prioritise for one-off items at scheduled meetings. Space for such items will be limited. It is recommended that sufficient space is allowed on each agenda for a meaningful discussion of issues selected by avoiding overloading agendas; and
  - Which item(s) to select for the agenda for the first meetings of 2021-22.
- 4.5 Local elections are due to take place in 2022 so it is essential that all outstanding work is completed before the end of the year. In particular, all reviews should be finalised in good time so they can be approved by the Committee. It is therefore advised that all evidence gathering activities as part of reviews be completed before the end of the calendar year. If a review is not finished before the end of the administration, it may be difficult to carry it over to the new administration due to the loss of continuity. An earlier deadline will need to be factored into work plans if Members wish their review reports considered by Cabinet before the end of the administration.
- 4.6 In terms of scheduled meetings, the current programme for the forthcoming year is set out in the workplan attached as Appendix A. There is a need to ensure sufficient time for each agenda item so that there can be a meaningful discussion in order for scrutiny to be effective and produce tangible outcomes. It is therefore recommended that agendas are not overloaded with items.
- 4.7 There are a number of proposed items that have not been allocated to a specific meeting yet. These are:
- SEND Strategy;
  - SEND Transport; and
  - Kinship Care.
- 4.8 Consideration will need to be given as to where these can be fitted in. It may not be possible to fit them all in without overloading the agendas for the remaining meetings of the year and, if so, the Panel will need to prioritise items.

- 4.9 The Panel has been undertaking an in-depth review on schools. The final evidence session of this took place on 7 September and the final report is now being drafted for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.10 The Panel has also agreed to undertake a review on Child Poverty and a scope and terms of reference now need to be drafted. This will be undertaken after consultation with the Chair and relevant Council officers. A draft will be circulated to Panel Members for comment before it is submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

#### *Forward Plan*

- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 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:

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

- 4.13 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