

Report for: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – 23rd March 2023

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

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

Lead Officer: Robert Mack, Principal Scrutiny Officer
Tel: 020 8489 2921, E-mail: 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 reports on progress with the development and delivery of the work plan for the Panel.

2. Recommendations

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

2.2 That the Panel gives it's views on potential areas of focus for a review on housing and children, to be undertaken once the current review on physical activity and sport has been completed.

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 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. Describe the issue under consideration

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 26th July until 26th August and was open to Councillors, officers, partners, community groups and local residents. It asked respondents to identify the areas within each scrutiny body's terms of reference 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 16th September 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.

5. Review on Physical Activity and Sport

- 5.1 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.

- 5.2 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 and for the necessary work to be completed in a reasonable length of time. In addition, the recommendations from the review will assist in the development of the new physical activity and sport strategy for the borough.
- 5.3 Two evidence sessions of the review have taken place so far. The first was on 16 February, where the Panel considered:
- An overview of the Council's role in promoting and commissioning and physical activity and sport within Borough, including provision for marginalised groups; and
 - The aims and objectives of "Active Together", the Council's current 4 year physical activity and sport strategy and progress against the targets within them.
- 5.4 The second session was on 9 March, when the Panel met with a group of providers of physical activity and sport opportunities within the borough to receive their views. On 6th April, the Panel will be looking at the role of schools in the third evidence session, which will be the last of the current municipal year. The review will continue and be completed in the new year.

6. Review on Housing and Children

- 6.1 At the meeting of the Panel on 3rd January, the Panel agreed to commission a review on housing and children. This will be started once the current review on physical activity and sport has been completed. It was also agreed that some options on areas for the review to focus on would be presented to the Panel for consideration. Housing is a very large and complex policy area. It will therefore be necessary to select a specific area of it that it is possible to look at in sufficient detail within a reasonable period of time.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the review begins by examining the link between housing and poverty and how it can affect vulnerable families as this will provide a background to more detailed examination of whichever area is selected for more detailed examination.
- 6.3 The following potential areas have been 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;

- Housing allocations policy and how it impacts on children, especially those with disabilities, those considered vulnerable or part of large families; and

6.3 The above issues can be split into ones relating to private sector housing and ones relating to social housing. It is proposed that Panel select which sector they wish to focus upon and that further work be undertaken to develop a detailed scope and terms of reference. This will require engagement with officers in Housing as well as those within the Children's Services. The topic for the review has some overlap with both the terms of reference of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel and of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which has responsibility for cross cutting issues. This should not be an obstacle to the Panel undertaking the review provided that the Committee is agreeable to the proposed scope and terms of reference and that duplication is avoided.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

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

8. Statutory Officers comments

Finance and Procurement

8.1 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

8.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.

8.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the OSC.

8.4 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.

8.5 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

8.6 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.

8.7 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.

8.8 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.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – Draft Workplan 2022-24

9. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

N/A