



Haringey Council

Report for:	Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Panel – 9 July 2015	Item Number:	
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Title:	Work Programme Development
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Report Authorised by:	Bernie Ryan, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance
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Ward(s) affected:	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions:
All	N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Developing an effective work programme is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well, it can help lay the foundations for targeted, inclusive and timely work on issues of local importance where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal.
- 1.2 Throughout May and June a number of consultative processes have been employed to support the development of the scrutiny work programme with the final programme being agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 July 2015.
- 1.3 The aim of this report is to assist the Children and Young People's in prioritising topics for inclusion in their work programme.
- 1.4 Scrutiny panels are non-decision making bodies. The work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each panel produces must therefore be approved by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations



- (a) That the Panel agree that the items outlined in section 8 of the report be prioritised for inclusion in the 2015/16 work programme.
- (b) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to endorse (a) above at its meeting on 27 July 2015.
- (c) That, in respect of the items agreed for inclusion in the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme, the Chair of the Panel meets with appropriate Cabinet members and senior officers to further clarify the work programme.

4. Alternative options considered

4.1 N/A

5. Background information

“Scrutiny is based on the principle that someone who makes a decision...should not be the only one to review or challenge it.”

“Overview is founded on the belief that an open, inclusive, member led approach to policy review...results in better policies in the long run”

(Jessica Crowe, former Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny)

Principles

- 5.1 Expending resources on investigating an issue via scrutiny requires clear justification yet there are often difficulties in prioritising work. Some of the problems in developing and maintaining an effective work programme include:
- Agenda creep and losing sight of the key issues;
 - Diving into detail;
 - Focusing on minor points;
 - Going over old ground;
 - Lack of progress on identified issues;
 - Overlapping with the role of other committees;
 - Hobbyhorses;
 - Running out of time;



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- Political loyalty versus the independence of scrutiny.

5.2 To help overcome these barriers, the careful selection and prioritisation of work is essential if scrutiny is to be successful, gain buy in from senior officers and Cabinet, retain credibility and achieve added value.

5.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny has identified a number of features in planning an effective scrutiny work programme¹, which include:

- It should be a **member led process** (e.g. involvement of all non executive members, and members leading on the short-listing and prioritisation of topics – with support from officers)
- It should **reflect local needs, priorities and policies** (e.g. issues of community concern as well as those priorities identified in the Corporate Plan and proposals within the Medium Term Financial Strategy)
- It should **prioritise topics** for scrutiny involvement that have most impact /benefit
- It should **involve local stakeholders**; e.g. local residents, community groups, Residents Associations, partners, businesses, and service users.
- It **should be flexible** to enable scrutiny to respond to new or urgent issues as they emerge.
- **Having a meaningful discussion** about the work programme probably works better than a complex set of feasibility criteria, which may be over-bureaucratic and resource intensive.

6. Components of a scrutiny work programme

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny has a number of distinct functions which provide a framework for the activities of local scrutiny bodies. An effective scrutiny work programme should aim to reflect a balance of these activities;

- **Holding the Executive to Account** – questioning the Leader and Cabinet Members on issues within their portfolio and through pre- and post-cabinet decision scrutiny. For example, the operation of ‘Call-in’ procedures and ensuring meaningful input into the development of business cases relating to decisions made by Council in February.
- **Policy Review and Development** – assisting Cabinet by undertaking strategic reviews to assess the effectiveness of existing policies or to inform the development of new strategies;

¹ A Cunning Plan: Devising a Scrutiny Work Programme, Centre for Public Scrutiny, 2011



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- **Performance Monitoring** – identifying services that are not performing, investigating and making recommendations for improvement;
- **External Scrutiny** – scrutinising and holding to account those partners and other local agencies which provide key services to the public;
- **Public and community engagement** – engaging and involving local communities in scrutiny activities and scrutinising those issues which are of concern to the local community.

6.2 In the context of these functions, and in accordance with the scrutiny protocol, a range of reports can be requested by scrutiny. Depending on the selected topic and the planned outcome, this could include:

- (i) Performance Reports;
- (ii) One off reports on matters of national or local interest or concern (e.g. Casey Report);
- (iii) Issues arising out of internal and external assessment (e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission);
- (iv) Reports on strategies and policies under development, or other issues on which the Cabinet or officers would like scrutiny views or support;
- (v) Progress reports on implementing previous scrutiny recommendations accepted by the Cabinet or appropriate Executive body.

6.3 In addition in-depth scrutiny reviews are an important aspect of Overview and Scrutiny work and provide opportunities to thoroughly investigate topics and to make improvements. Through the gathering and consideration of evidence from a wider range of sources, they enable more robust and effective challenge as well as an increased likelihood of delivering positive outcomes. In depth reviews should also help engage the public, and provide greater transparency and accountability. It is nevertheless important that there is a balance between depth and breadth of work undertaken so that resources can be used to their greatest effect.

7. Prioritising and selecting issues for scrutiny involvement

7.1 There are a number of practical criteria which are used to assist in the prioritisation and selection of scrutiny topics. Selected topics should:

- Compliment the priorities and work of the Council and its partners
;
- Not duplicate work being undertaken elsewhere by the Council and its partners;
- Reflect the concerns of the wider community;
- Be practical and demonstrate a positive and beneficial impact.



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7.1 Throughout May and June consultation and engagement with local stakeholders took place to support the development of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. This included:

- Public Survey - local residents and community groups;
- Scrutiny Cafe – non executive members, local partners and senior officers;
- Informal meetings with Cabinet Member and Senior Officers;

7.2 These activities have been used to guide and inform the selection of work programme items for each scrutiny panel.

8. Work Programme Development

8.1 Public engagement and involvement is a key function of scrutiny and local residents and community groups are encouraged to participate in all aspects of scrutiny from the development of the work programme to participation in project work (e.g. providing service assessments / service user insights).

8.2 To ensure issues considered by scrutiny are both important and relevant to the local community, an online survey was distributed to local residents, community groups and other local stakeholders to assess their views. This was administered for a three week period from mid-May and generated approximately 60 individual qualitative responses.

8.2 Further to the completion of the survey, the Chairs of all scrutiny bodies have met with relevant Cabinet members and senior officers to further discuss issues arising from the survey.

8.3 From these activities, and work rolled over from last year, a summary of suggestions – attached at **Appendix A** – was prepared for the Scrutiny Cafe that took place on 15 June.

8.4 The aim of the Scrutiny Cafe was to bring together key local stakeholders (non executive members, partners and senior council officers) for round table discussions to further inform the development of the scrutiny work programme. Discussions were themed around the council's corporate priorities.

8.5 From the discussion at the Scrutiny Cafe, a number of potential issues were identified for inclusion in the Panel's work programme for 2015/16. These are summarised below. These are linked to Corporate Priority 1, which covers the key areas that are covered within the Panel's terms of reference.

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – Work Programme Areas for 2015/16



Suggestion	Comments
<p>Major Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group identified two areas which would merit a larger OSC project; (i) ‘Early Help’ and (ii) ‘Early Years’ • In terms of timing, the group felt that the ‘Early Help’ project should begin immediately, with the ‘Early Years’ project starting at a later point in time (perhaps in the new year) • Alongside analysing performance data, these larger projects could also include calls for evidence and sessions with partners, service providers and service users, plus site visits if appropriate 	
<p>‘Early Help’ for children and young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt that the OSC should prioritise ‘early help’ as a topic – recognised that this is an area where the borough has been seen as underperforming in the past, that there has been recent upfront investment and shifts in resources to developing early help pathways and that this would be a timely major review to undertake now. • In the overarching context of meeting the outcomes for early help outlined in the Corporate Plan (p18, objective 1.5), this could capture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The effectiveness of the full range of early help and ‘diversion’ interventions/pathways which are being put in place across the borough (including Council run and partner services) (ii) Strengthening the role of the family in ‘early help’ (iii) The range of settings where early help is being delivered from – what’s the take-up and how accessible are these settings in practice for service users? (iv) How additional investment and the shifts in resources to supporting an early help approach in Haringey is being spent (v) The effectiveness of partnership working in this area, and whether common frameworks and metrics to assess risk and



Suggestion	Comments
	<p>outcomes are being set up and utilised between partner agencies</p> <p>(vi) Where is demand on ‘emergency’ services most acute in Haringey, and what should an ‘early help’ approach prioritise? – e.g. numbers of children going straight to A&E rather than their GP, preventing children from being put into social care</p> <p>(vii) Progress on the Haringey 54,000 transformational change programme for Children and Young People’s Services</p>
<p>‘Early years’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the overarching context of meeting the outcomes for early years outlined in the Corporate Plan (p18, objective 1.1), this could capture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the effectiveness of key partnerships and commissioning arrangements that are being put in place to target the improvement of 0-5 year’s outcomes (as outlined in the corporate plan) e.g. In October the Council will gain responsibility for commissioning public health for the 0-5 years, including the Healthy Child Programme. Partner agencies across the health and voluntary sector will be involved (ii) Improving the outcomes and quality of early year settings—including childcare providers, childminders, Children’s Centres, support for parents, schools with nursery places (iii) Whole early years system capacity and accessibility/take-up – particularly in light of the planned extension of free entitlement childcare places for 3-4 year olds to 30 hours • The project would be best timed for sometime in the new year – this would allow for the OSC to assess the first few months of the Council taking on public health commissioning roles for the 0-5 years, the early years services emerging from the restructured Children’s Centres, plus would allow the OSC to review the initial plans the Council is drawing up to ensure system capacity for the expansion of childcare free entitlement to 30 hours
<p>Scrutiny Update Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group identified a number of smaller ‘update reports’ which the OSC should 	



Suggestion	Comments
	<p>consider requesting officers to prepare and present over the course of the next 12 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These reports could focus on (i) performance of the Council against defined outcomes (ii) how service delivery change programmes are progressing and (iii) drawing analysis from the findings of relevant scrutiny reports being prepared by external partnership boards
School places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group recognised that the sufficiency of school places was an area where the Council generally was seen as performing well at the moment. However, it was also recognised that school places will remain one of the highest priority areas for residents, and therefore the OSC should ensure it continues to seek updates and review performance in this area • There will be some important factors for the OSC to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) capacity building for school places in areas within the borough which are earmarked for regeneration and new housing, (ii) projected changes to trends in volume of new school starters in years ahead and what this means for capacity planning • This review would be best timed to coincide with the release of latest figures on school admission projections
Educational Attainment Performance for different groups – including children with SENDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt that this performance on educational attainment should be a routine update provided to OSC at points throughout the year • Data on performance should be broken down into different groups, which would include children with SENDs, as well as ethnicity, age, household income etc
Foster carers and adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group recognised that there were some major challenges in this area which the OSC would need to keep its eye on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i)the recruitment of in-house foster carers, as picked up by Ofsted in their July inspection which found that the Council ‘requires improvement’ here



Suggestion	Comments
	<p>(ii) Gaps in the budget for foster care and adoption, arising from legacy cases of 13-17 year olds who have remained in care for 3-4 years</p> <p>(iii) The planned reforms under the Education & Adoption Bill going through Parliament, which will require a more regional approach to adoption services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group felt that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee (CPAC) would be well placed to undertake scrutiny on each of these challenges. The OSC should discuss this with CPAC and understand the remit of what they are planning to scrutinise. The OSC has a role in considering any findings and recommendations which CPAC produces, plus may want to cover any gaps.
Child Obesity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group recognised that obesity is a key component of the boroughs new Health & Wellbeing Strategy, and that this will require a joint partnership approach to tackle • The OSC should consider requesting an update on child obesity, particularly focused on the effectiveness of the Healthy Schools Programme and the role of schools in the agenda
Child Safeguarding, and preventing violence against the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB) have plans for the next 12 months to assess and scrutinise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (i) voice of the child in decision affecting them - (ii) neglect -(iii) hard to reach groups -(iv) the system’s child safeguarding capacity • The group felt that the OSC would want to consider the LSCB’s findings on each of these topics, and work closely together • The group also recommended that the OSC keeps track on the lessons learned and those emerging from the Rotherham scandal, and how this is relevant for Haringey’s work. The Government is also expected to make changes to professional duties surrounding detecting child safety issues through the Police & Criminal Justice Bill scheduled for later



Suggestion	Comments
	<p>in this Parliamentary year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Sexual Exploitation has been a major agenda which the Council has led on, and the OSC should consider requesting a short update on progress later in the year
<p>'Maybes'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The groups considered the topics below as important, but after the discussion it was not clear where and how they should fit into the OSC workload. • For these topics there was overlap with other priority areas, and the group was interested to see if other tables picked up on these 	
<p>Young people and employment/further education opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group recognised that the Council is developing a new Young People's Strategy, the STEM agenda, and that there were also significant planned budget cuts which could impact on services in this area. The number of NEETs in the borough is a continued issue of concern • The key question which the OSC would want to ask here is whether the Council has got 'the right offer' for young people in terms of employment and further education opportunities for those leaving school in the borough • Last year, the OSC did a major piece of work on transitions for young people, but there was a sense among the group that the conclusions of this project didn't lead to concrete outcomes, other than a one-off job's faire. If the OSC were to dedicate time to this topic going forward, it would need to be clearer in the type of outcomes/product it is looking for.
<p>Youth Offending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group recognised that this is a high priority topic for residents, but there were no suggestions given within the list discussed • The OSC has previously reported on diversion and youth justice last year • It is not clear where youth offending could fit into the OSC



Suggestion	Comments
	<p>agenda this year – is there a project under ‘priority 3’ where it could be captured? Prevention and diversion services targetted youth offending could also be captured within the remit of a priority 1 ‘early help’ project</p>
<i>Not discussed</i>	
<p>Sexism, stigma and culture and the effects on young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group did not have time to discuss this, but no-one raised this as a topic which the OSC should prioritise

8.6 The Panel has been undertaking an in-depth piece of work on the issue of youth transition, which has focussed on the challenges faced by young people are at risk of becoming a NEET (not in education, employment and training) and interventions that could be made to address this effectively. This work was begun last year. The Panel has agreed that further work be undertaken by it on this issue including further engagement with young people, schools and other partners, as well as comparison with support provided for young people in demographically similar London boroughs. Discussions have taken place with officers within the Children and Young People’s Service on how to take this forward and this will have to be factored into discussions regarding the work plan.

8.7 In addition to the above mentioned items, under agreed scrutiny protocols, Cabinet Members will be invited to attend relevant scrutiny panels twice each year to discuss issues within their portfolio area. The format of Cabinet Q and A is not prescribed and can be varied according to local agreement between the Chair and Cabinet member.

9. Monitoring

9.1 Once the work programme is agreed, there are both formal and informal systems in place to ensure effective monitoring of the work programme. Regular agenda planning meetings (with the Chair and senior officers) and discussion at Committee itself gives an opportunity to:

- Discuss the format, structure and priority of future items/meetings;
- Discuss the rules and procedures for formal meetings – ensuring clarity, consistency, and good time keeping;



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- Discuss what other information is required, including the identification and of witnesses which may include external experts, service-users, community groups, amongst others;
- Consider options for getting out and about including site visits to other authorities and front-line service visits;
- Develop key lines of enquiry or a questioning strategy;
- Ensure the right people attend the right meetings at the right time;
- Follow up on any actions agreed, ensuring outcomes from recommendations;
- Consider member development needs to enable activities to be planned that take into consideration items included on the future work programme.

9.2 To assist in work programme development and monitoring, a new work programme template – attached at **Appendix B** - has been created to ensure the details and desired outcomes of items on the work programme can be kept under review.

9.3 In considering its future work plan, each scrutiny panel may wish to consider Haringey's Forward Plan. This provides 28 days notice of key decisions that the Cabinet is expected to take over the next three months, together with key decisions to be taken by individual Cabinet Members. The Forward Plan is updated and republished on a monthly basis and covers a period of three months.

10. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

10.1 The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on this report and can confirm there are no direct financial implications. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications these will be highlighted at that time.

11. Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Legal Implications

11.1 The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted on this report and can confirm there are no direct legal implications.

11.2 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions.

11.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



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12. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

12.1 Overview and Scrutiny has a strong community engagement role and aims to regularly involve local stakeholders, including residents, in its work. It seeks to do this through:

- Helping to articulate the view of members of the local community and their representatives on issues of local concern.
- Bringing local concerns to the attention of decision makers and incorporating them into policies and strategies.
- Identifying and engaging with hard to reach groups.
- Helping to develop consensus by seeking to reconcile differing views and developing a shared view of the way forward.

12.2 The evidence generated by scrutiny reviews / committee work helps to identify the kind of services wanted by local people. It also promotes openness and transparency as meetings are held in public and documents are available to local people.

13. Head of Procurement Comments

N/A

14. Policy Implication

14.1 There are no direct policy implications. However, this report sets out how the work of Overview and Scrutiny will contribute and add value to the work of the Council and its partners in meeting locally agreed priorities.

15. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Suggestions for Overview and Scrutiny (Scrutiny Cafe Booklet)

Appendix B – Future Work Programme Template

16. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985