

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Section 20 Orders Task and Finish Group – Scoping Document

Title of review	Section 20 Orders Task and Finish Group
Scope	
Reason for enquiry	A judgement by the High Court on 1 February 2018 found that there had been historic failures in Herefordshire Councils use of section 20 orders. The judgement identified specific cases where section 20 of the Children Act 1989 had been incorrectly applied.
Links to the corporate plan	The review contributes to the following objectives contained in the Herefordshire corporate plan and other key plans and strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life; and • Secure better services, quality of life and value for money.
Summary of the review and terms of reference	Summary: The review will look at the use of Section 20 orders, the processes in place to ensure their appropriate use and analyse case samples.
	Terms of Reference: The task and finish group will conduct three meetings. Meetings 1 and 2 will be held in quick succession and meeting 3 will be held three months after the commencement of the task and finish group. The three meetings will be scheduled to enable to task and finish group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of section 20 orders, including what are section 20 orders and when they are used (Meeting 1); • learn what processes are in place to ensure the appropriate use of section 20 orders (Meeting 2); and • look at case studies and audit findings to ensure processes are being observed and section 20 orders appropriately applied (Meeting 3). Membership: The task and finish group will consist of a representative of each political group at the Council. Membership of the group will initially be sought from members on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. Group leaders will be contacted to fill any remaining vacancies following this initial recruitment.
What will NOT be included	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the actions of any individual officer at the council under historic admission to care arrangements.
Potential outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To gain assurance that effective processes are in place to ensure the appropriate use of section 20 orders.

Key Questions	To consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are section 20 orders and when should they be used; • What processes manage the appropriate use of section 20 orders; and • Are the processes being observed and are section 20 orders being appropriately used?
Cabinet Member	Cabinet member young people and children's wellbeing
Key stakeholders / Consultees	Internal - Children's Wellbeing officers concerned with care arrangements for looked after children and legal officers.
Potential witnesses	None
Research Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential scenarios to assess the appropriateness of section 20 orders • Outcomes of audits and case studies to present to the task and finish group.
Potential Visits	None
Publicity Requirements	Following the conclusion of the review the task and finish group will report back to the children and young people scrutiny committee.
Outline Timetable (following decision by the children and young people scrutiny committee to commission the review)	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Confirm approach, Terms of Reference, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/meeting dates	Committee meeting – 16 April 2018
Collect detail regarding section 20 orders and develop hypothetical scenarios for circulation to the task and finish group – meeting 1.	By May 2018
Compile information regarding current processes in place at the Council to ensure the appropriate use of section 20 orders – meeting 2.	Mid May 2018
Present outcomes of audit reports concerning the use of section 20 orders – meeting 3.	July 2018
Prepare recommendations – meeting 3.	July 2018
Present final report to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	17 September 2018

Group Members	
Chair	
Support Members	
Support Officers	J Coleman M Evans