

**Supplement to the agenda for**

# **Children and young people scrutiny committee**

**Tuesday 12 October 2021**

**2.30 pm**

**Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4  
OLE**

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<b>8. EFFECTIVE SCRUTINY OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OFFER</b>	<b>3 - 6</b>
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## Effective Scrutiny of Children’s Services

### LGA Training and Development Offer

#### Aims of our offer

As part of the LGA’s continuing work to support political and corporate leadership for children’s services, we are piloting a training and development offer to support councils to improve the effectiveness of their scrutiny of children’s services. Our offer aims to:

- Support scrutiny boards to identify strengths and areas for development using our self-assessment tool.
- Use a mixture of workshop sessions, individual coaching and resources to improve the confidence and ability of scrutiny chairs and members to use their roles to have a positive impact on the lives of children and families.
- Ensure that the wider system of support around children’s services supports and enables scrutiny to operate effectively.

#### Offer overview – 6 steps to effective scrutiny of children’s services

Our offer is made up of 6 modules linked to the ‘6 steps for effective scrutiny’ described in our self-assessment tool. This means support can be tailored and scaled to the specific needs of councils.

Module	Areas of focus	Delivery
1. Knowledge of children’s services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of services provided to children and families and the impact they have on their lives</li> <li>• The legislative context and statutory role of children’s services and corporate parents</li> <li>• Children’s services policy context and key challenges</li> <li>• Understanding children’s services data trends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sharing - overview presentation (include video clip to give young person perspective?)</li> <li>• Personal exercise: put yourself in the place of a young person, parent, social worker</li> <li>• Interpreting data and information exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Action planning and next steps:</u> what can be put in place to ensure that members have the information and training they need to provide effective challenge?</p>
2. The role of children’s scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What children’s scrutiny is, isn’t and could be</li> <li>• Membership - roles and member engagement</li> <li>• Building an engaging vision and ambition for scrutiny of children’s services</li> <li>• Developing effective working relationships across the whole council and with partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sharing – overview presentation exploring different models/good practice case studies</li> <li>• Exercise: Exploring the good, the bad, and the non-existent – how well is scrutiny supported and enabled to operate effectively?</li> </ul> <p><u>Action planning and next steps:</u> What needs to happen to ensure there is a clear view on the role and purpose of children’s scrutiny across the council and partners?</p>

Module	Areas of focus	Delivery
3. Work programming and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considerations when sourcing and prioritising topics</li> <li>• Structuring the scrutiny year</li> <li>• Methods for conducting scrutiny and context for best use</li> <li>• Support and resources for evidence gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work programming exercise: brainstorm all work programme ideas, agree filter criteria, prioritise</li> <li>• Use of a case study to explore work programming and evidence gathering (Bristol: Safeguarding within the context of Covid-19 response and recovery planning)</li> </ul> <p><u>Action planning and next steps:</u> Developing an outline year on a page</p>
4. Engagement and working with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the voices, views and experiences of children and young people are embedded within scrutiny work</li> <li>• Capturing the voice, experiences and perspectives of the children’s services workforce</li> <li>• Questioning skills – how to plan, prepare, unpack issues and select the right questioning techniques for maximum impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sharing – overview presentation on evidence gathering and effective questioning</li> <li>• Use an example report and get members to come up with some key questions</li> <li>• Good practice examples of involving children and young people in scrutiny work</li> </ul> <p><u>Action planning and next steps:</u> What can you put in place to ensure the voices of children and young people are heard?</p>
5. Demonstrating value and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating SMART recommendations and tracking their impact</li> <li>• Using evidence to demonstrate the impact of scrutiny on outcomes for children and families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study examples of the impact of scrutiny done well</li> <li>• Creating SMART recommendations – exercise</li> </ul> <p><u>Action planning and next steps:</u> How will you build in follow-up to your programme of work?</p>
6. Creating a strong organisational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicators of a strong organisational culture</li> <li>• Scrutiny within the council’s wider governance structures</li> <li>• Using scrutiny to model excellent corporate parenting, and actively engage other councillors as corporate parents</li> <li>• Organisational vision for effective children’s scrutiny</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise: why is culture important for effective scrutiny?</li> </ul> <p><u>Action planning and next steps:</u> Agree a shared understanding of the role and value of children’s scrutiny within the council and how this will be supported</p>

## Facilitators

All modules will be facilitated by an LGA associate with significant experience of supporting councils with effective scrutiny, working with a Member with recent or current experience of children’s services leadership.

## Structure of support

Support will be structured based on the needs of different councils, and the modules that are most relevant to their needs. A typical programme for a council may be structured as followed with group sessions scaled up or down as necessary.



## LGA wider support for effective scrutiny

Courses	Resources	Peer Mentoring
<p>The LGA offers Leadership Essentials courses for councillors providing learning and networking opportunities on specific themes.</p> <p><b>Leadership Essentials: Effective Scrutiny 2-day programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading and managing a scrutiny review</li> <li>• Ensuring impact of scrutiny recommendations</li> <li>• Increasing participation by members and public</li> <li>• Chairing scrutiny meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership Essentials: Children’s Services 2-day programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Lead Members and children’s Scrutiny Chairs with the key challenges they face in the changing policy landscape</li> <li>• An opportunity to network and share learning.</li> </ul>	<p>The following resources can be found on the LGA website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor workbook on scrutiny</li> <li>• ‘Must Know’ guides for Lead Members of Children’s Services</li> </ul>	<p>Peer mentoring for Scrutiny Chairs from an experienced children’s services lead member or scrutiny chair.</p>

