

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and young people scrutiny committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Tuesday 12 January 2021</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Work programme 2020 - 2021</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Democratic Services Officer</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose and summary**

To: review the attached work programme for 2020/21; consider the draft scoping document for the paediatric therapies task and finish group; and note the recommendations tracker.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That the committee:**

- (a) reviews the 2020/21 work programme at appendix a, discusses any additional items of business or topics for inclusion in the work programme and agrees the changes since the previous meeting of the committee, as listed in paragraph 3 below;**
- (b) approves the scoping document (appendix b) for the paediatric therapies task and finish group, its membership (including any co-optees) and the appointment of a chairperson; and**
- (c) notes the recommendation tracker in appendix c.**

## **Alternative options**

1. It is for the committee to determine its work programme to reflect the priorities facing Herefordshire. The committee needs to be selective and ensure that the work programme is focused, realistic and deliverable within existing resources. The committee needs to develop a manageable work programme to ensure that scrutiny is focused, effective and produces clear outcomes. Topics selected on the work programme should reflect issues of current importance facing children's services at Herefordshire council.

## **Key considerations**

### **Work Programme**

2. The work programme needs to focus on the key issues of concern and be manageable allowing for urgent items or matters that have been called-in. Should committee members become aware of any issue they think should be considered by the committee they are invited to discuss the matter with the chairperson, vice chairperson and the statutory scrutiny officer. The current version of the work programme is attached at appendix a.
3. Since the previous meeting of the committee on 1 December an additional meeting has been added to the work programme on 19 January to undertake pre-decision scrutiny on Provision of children centre service in Bromyard area.

### **Constitutional Matters**

#### **Task and Finish Groups**

4. A scrutiny committee may appoint a task and finish group for any scrutiny activity within the committee's agreed work programme. A committee may determine to undertake a task and finish activity itself as a spotlight review where such an activity may be undertaken in a single session; the procedure rules relating to task and finish groups will apply in these circumstances but the review is likely to be attended by all members of the committee and chaired by the chairperson.
5. The scrutiny committee will approve the scope of the activity to be undertaken by a task and finish group, the membership, chairperson, timeframe, desired outcomes and what will not be included in the work. A task and finish group will be composed of a least 2 members of the committee, other councillors and may include, as appropriate, co-opted people with specialist knowledge or expertise to support the task. The committee will appoint the chairperson of a task and finish group.
6. The committee is asked to determine matters relating to the convening of a task and finish group including the scope of the review to be undertaken, the chairperson, membership, timeframe, desired outcomes, what will not be included in the review and whether to co-opt any non-voting members to the group. Such co-optees could consist of individuals with valuable skills and experience that would assist a task and finish group to undertake a review (see below).
7. During its work programming session on 20 November the committee agreed the convening of a paediatric therapies task and finish group. The draft scoping document for the task and finish group is attached, as appendix b, for the committee to consider and approve. The committee is also asked to agree the membership of the task and finish group and the appoint a chairperson.

## Co-option

8. A scrutiny committee may co-opt a maximum of two non-voting people as and when required, for example for a particular meeting or to join a task and finish group. Any such co-optees will be agreed by the committee having reference to the agreed workplan and/or task and finish group membership.
9. The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to exercise this power in respect of any matters in the work programme.

## Tracking of recommendations made by the committee

10. The recommendations of the committee concerning the review of peer on peer abuse cases at the previous meeting on 15 September and the draft executive response to those recommendations are attached as appendix c. Cabinet will consider the draft executive response at its meeting on 26 November; any updates or changes resulting from the Cabinet's deliberations will be reported to the committee at the meeting on 1 December.
11. A schedule of recommendations in the current administrative council term is appended to this report as appendix d.

## Forward plan

12. The constitution states that scrutiny committees should consider the forward plan as the chief source of information regarding forthcoming key decisions. Forthcoming decisions of the children and families directorate are listed below:

Decision and purpose	Date of decision and decision maker
<b>Schools Capital Investment Programme</b> To approve the proposed expenditure of the preliminary works budget included in the capital programme. The distribution of this funding is determined in accordance with the principles set out in the schools capital investment strategy and is based on regular condition surveys, suitability assessments and assessments of current and forecast demand for places.	14 January 2021 by Cabinet
<b>Strengthening the recruitment of Council Foster Carers</b> To approve the business case for investment in marketing and engagement services to strengthen the council's in-house fostering service, increase the number of general and specialist foster carers and reduce the reliance on the more costly IFA (independent fostering agency) sector.	15 January 2021 by Cabinet member children and families
<b>Provision of children centre service in Bromyard area</b> To approve proposals for the integration of early help children's centre services for the Bromyard area with the existing in-house provision.  The Bromyard Reach area is the only part of Herefordshire where Children's Centre provision is externally commissioned. All other	22 January 2021 by Cabinet member children and families

<p>areas are supported via an in-house service which is centrally governed and managed.</p> <p>It is intended that all children centre services are integrated across Herefordshire</p>	
<p><b>Schools Budget 2021/22</b></p> <p>To approve school forum's recommended budget proposals for school budgets, central school services and early years within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2021/22</p>	<p>28 January 2021 by Cabinet member children and families</p>
<p><b>High Needs Budget 2021/22</b></p> <p>To approve the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) high needs budget for 2021/22 as recommended by Schools Forum</p>	<p>31 March 2021 by Cabinet member children and families</p>

### Suggestions for scrutiny from members of the public

13. Suggestions for scrutiny are invited from members of the public through the council's website, accessible through the link below. There have been no suggestions for scrutiny received from members of the public since the previous meeting of the committee.

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200148/your\\_council/61/get\\_involved/4](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200148/your_council/61/get_involved/4),

### Community impact

14. In accordance with the adopted code of corporate governance, Herefordshire Council is committed to promoting a positive working culture that accepts, and encourages constructive challenge, and recognises that a culture and structure for scrutiny are key elements for accountable decision making, policy development and review. Topics selected for scrutiny should have regard to what matters to residents.

### Equality duty

15. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:
- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
16. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this report concerns the administrative function of the children and

young people scrutiny committee, it is not felt that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

## Resource implications

17. The costs of the work of the committee will have to be met within existing resources. It should be noted the costs of running scrutiny can be subject to an assessment to support appropriate processes.
18. The councillors' allowance scheme contains provision for co-opted and other non-elected members to claim travel, subsistence and dependant carer's allowances on the same basis as members of the council. If the committee agrees that co-optees should be included in an inquiry they will be entitled to claim allowances.

## Legal implications

19. The council is required to deliver a scrutiny function. The development of a work programme which is focused and reflects those priorities facing Herefordshire will assist the committee and the council to deliver a scrutiny function.
20. The Scrutiny Rules in Part 4 Section 5 of the Council's constitution provide for the setting of a work programme, the reporting of recommendations to the executive and the establishment of task and finish groups, as below.
21. Paragraph 4.5.28 of the constitution explains that the scrutiny committee is responsible for setting its own work programme. In setting its work programme a scrutiny committee shall have regard to the resources (including officer time) available.
22. Under section 4.5.10 of the constitution a scrutiny committee may appoint a task and finish group for any scrutiny activity within the committee's agreed work programme. A committee may determine to undertake a task and finish activity itself as a spotlight review where such an activity may be undertaken in a single session; the procedure rules relating to task and finish groups will apply in these circumstances. The relevant scrutiny committee will approve the scope of the activity to be undertaken, the membership, chairperson, timeframe, desired outcomes and what will not be included in the work. It will be a matter for the task and finish group to determine lines of questioning, witnesses (from the council or wider community) and evidence requirements.
23. Under section 4.5.19 of the constitution task and finish groups will report their findings/outcomes/recommendations to the relevant scrutiny committee who will decide if the findings/outcomes/recommendations should be reported to the cabinet or elsewhere.

## Risk management

24.

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
There is a reputational risk to the council if the scrutiny function does not operate effectively.	The arrangements for the development of the work programme should help mitigate this risk.

## Consultees

25. The work programme is reviewed at every committee meeting.

## **Appendices**

Appendix a – Work Programme 2020/21.  
Appendix b – Scoping document paediatric therapies task and finish group.  
Appendix c – Recommendation tracker.

## **Background papers**

None identified.