



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22ND OCTOBER 2020**

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME: 2020- 2021 MUNICIPAL YEAR

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &
COMMUNICATIONS**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee with a Forward Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2020/2021 (October to December 2020 in the first instance).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

2.1 Acknowledge the contents of the proposed draft Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme for the 2020/21 Municipal Year (October –December 2020), attached as Appendix 1 to the report

2.2 Consider progress, achievements, and the effectiveness of the scrutiny work programme and scrutiny practice; and,

2.3 Consider and determine other matters it may wish to consider, challenge and scrutinise over this period, taking consideration of the factors set out in section 4.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is proposed that Members of the Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to consider its work programme for the 2020/21 municipal year and that the proposed work programme allows for an element of flexibility (taking a 3 month view) and taking into account any additional consultative documents or legislative matters requiring attention.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 Members will recall that the [Local Authorities \(Coronavirus\) \(Meetings\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2020](#), published at the end of April, provided the opportunity for committee functions to operate virtually. At that time, Members supported the proposal for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as the Council's overarching Scrutiny Committee, to take a council-wide approach and consider those key matters that ordinarily would have been under review by the four themed scrutiny committees.

4.2 At its meeting on the 30th July 2020, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the Council's Performance Report, 31st March 2020 year end, as part of the temporary arrangements set in place to progress and establish virtual committee arrangements. All members of the council were invited to attend and contribute to this matter.

4.3 Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee met on two occasions, on the [22nd July](#) Members received a verbal update from the Director of Education and Inclusion Services in relation to the Councils response to COVID 19 from an education perspective and on the [9th September 2020](#) Member were presented with an overview of the work that had been carried out by Children's Service in response to the Pandemic.

4.4 Following the Councils Annual General meeting held on the 16th September 2020 Scrutiny is now able to present its forward work programmes for the 2020/21 Municipal Year, initially on a three month basis so as to provide members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to undertake a review of the work programme in December 2020.

4.5 The Committee continues to acknowledge the current pressures on the Council as it focuses on the impact of the pandemic and its associated plans for response and recovery. Committee recognises the desire to resume a 'business as usual' approach in terms of the scrutiny work programme, however, Committee will need to be mindful of these ongoing pressures. Members are asked to acknowledge the balance required for a flexible and supportive scrutiny work programme that has clear objectives, expectations and lines of questioning. Importantly, this approach allows for business critical matters to be prioritised.

4.6 With this in mind the Children & Young People Scrutiny forward work programme, attached at Appendix 1, sets out a manageable and realistic scrutiny activity for the next three months allowing for the more pressing matters to be considered whilst having the flexibility to respond to emerging issues.

4.7 Members are reminded that given the current climate the forward work programme priorities are subject to change should other specific business need to be considered by the Committee on this date.

4.8 The Committee is invited to consider areas for further scrutiny by the committee.

5. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

5.1 The Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme has been developed in discussions with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Children & Young Scrutiny Committee and the relevant senior officers.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 The report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 12.1 (Part 4) of the Council's Constitution.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

9.1 This work programme takes consideration of the Council's Corporate Plan, the work programme of the Cabinet and the service response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Members of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee are asked to identify any items they would like to review in greater detail and to agree the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme for the 2020/21 Municipal Year (up until December 2020 in the first instance).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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22ND OCTOBER 2020

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COMMUNICATION

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

'Holding the Executive to account in respect of all three priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan....Economy (Building a strong economy), People (Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone), Place (Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work).'

Each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees is responsible for setting and agreeing its own work programme by identifying a list of themes and topics which fall under the remit of each individual Scrutiny Committee. Following discussion with the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Members a practical, realistic and timetabled programme can then be developed.

The scrutiny forward work programmes should provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected; be outcome focussed; ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired; align scrutiny programmes with the council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements.

Throughout the year, there are a number of ways in which additional issues can be considered for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme and ideas for inclusion may come from a number of sources such as:-

- Individual Councillors;
- Performance or budget monitoring information;
- Inspection reports;
- Referrals from Council (such as Notices of Motion), Cabinet/Audit or other scrutiny committees;
- Service users;
- Monitoring the implementation of recommendations previously made by the Committee; and
- Local Residents

The Cabinet is also required to produce forward work programmes and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee keeps abreast of forthcoming items or topics which may enable scrutiny to be involved in the development of Council policy prior to its formal consideration by Cabinet. It is important to bear in mind that an element of flexibility is applied to each individual work programme that provides Committees with the capacity to scrutinise new / urgent issues that arise during the year.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus
22 nd October 2020, 5pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 	Director of Education & Inclusion Services Director of Children's Services Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications			Scrutiny & Challenge – For Members of the CH&YP Scrutiny Committee to consider the work programme for 2020/2021.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on the latest position within the Education Service regarding COVID 19 	Director of Education & Inclusion Services Head of Capital Projects & Support Services Management			Scrutiny & Challenge – For Members to consider the ongoing work of the Service.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Needs 	Director of Education & Inclusion Services Director of Children's Services Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications			To consider and develop a schedule of training requirements for members of the CH&YP Committee.

4th November 2020, 5pm Children's Services	Recovery Plan to contingency Planning in respect of COVID 19 Update.	Director of Children's Services			Scrutiny & Challenge – To receive an update on the recovery and service planning process.
	Update in respect of the Disabled Children's Team Review carried out by CIW	Director of Children's Services Head of Service			Scrutiny & Challenge – To consider the work undertaken by the service in response to the review of the Service
18th November 2020, 5pm Education	CSC Update in respect of work carried out during the COVID 19 Pandemic	Director of Education & Inclusion Officers from CSC			To receive an overview of work carried out by CSC in respect of the COVID 19 Pandemic and consider their forward plan.
2nd December , 5pm Joint Meeting with both services	Resilience and wellbeing of Children & Young People	Director of Children's Services Head of YEPS Service Resilient Family Service, ALN Service Attendance & Wellbeing Service Director of Education			Scrutiny & Challenge – To receive an update from both Service Areas in respect of the work carried during the COVID 19 Pandemic and future plans

Other Areas for exploration:-

Future 21st Century School proposals

WESP

CAMHS

CSC Annual reporting

Engaging Young People

Counselling Services (especially looking at the Children's mental health what work could be done to address the trauma that children have suffered during Covid 19)

Young Carers mental health and wellbeing.

Play therapy for Children to address their worries going forward from the effect of Covid 19 on their Health & Wellbeing.

(N.O.M RE: Kinship Carers)

To consider the under-mentioned Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors J James and L Hooper. It is estimated that there are 200,000 children being brought up by family members or friends in the United Kingdom in what is termed as 'Kinship Care'. These kinship carers have stepped in to care for children whose parents are unable to look after them and keep their families together, and it represents three times the number of children in the national foster care system – and is a growing figure. Kinship care is one of the main ways to provide a sense of security, continuity and belonging for children who cannot live with their parents and it provides high levels of stability and enduring support well into young adulthood. However, the support that is offered to kinship carers throughout the country lacks consistency, and carers often feel isolated, abandoned and 'hung out to dry'. This is in marked contrast to the support that foster carers and adoptive parents can receive. This Council recognises the invaluable work that kinship carers do for their loved ones, often under the most trying of situations, and is committed to providing the help, engagement and support that they need. This Council requests that a report be considered by the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee to look further into the role of kinship care in the County Borough and to work closely with Grandparents Plus to identify ways in which it can meet the needs of kinship carers and those in kinship care.