

Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee – 2008/09 programme

1. Standing Items		
Item	Notes	When
Announcements	Update, for information, on any matter of significant public or member concern listed not on the agenda elsewhere.	All meetings
Quarterly Performance Monitoring reports against the Council Plan	<p>These reports provide a summary of the Council's performance for the parts of the Council within the remit of this Committee. The performance measures are reported in the following ways:</p> <p>Amber - where there is concern about the likelihood of the performance measure achieving its target by the end of the year, together with recommendations for action.</p> <p>Red - where the performance measure is assessed as inappropriate or unachievable by the end of the year.</p>	All meetings (except September)
Reconciling policy and resources	Scrutiny plays a key part in the Reconciling Policy and Resources (RPR) process and considers and provides feedback to Cabinet on the process in terms of policy steers, identified strategic risks, performance issues and financial planning	September meeting and December board. Update on outcomes and improving future process to March meeting
Forward Plan	<p>The Council’s Forward Plan is appended to each committee agenda. The purpose of this is to enable members to identify and highlight relevant issues for scrutiny. Options for dealing with items identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request a briefing paper to be sent to some or all committee members. • Request an item on a future scrutiny committee agenda to address specific questions raised by committee members. • Suggest that the item or elements of it be considered for a more in-depth scrutiny 	All meetings

	review.	
Item	Notes	When
Local Safeguarding Children Board	<p>The committee received a report at the 26 September 2006 meeting on the arrangements for the establishment of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the business plan for 2006/07.</p> <p>The committee requested that it receive the Safeguarding Board business plan and annual report on an annual basis.</p>	September
Safeguarding Children – Member and Senior Management monitoring	<p>The Lead Member for Children and Families and senior managers with Children's Services carry out a series of visits to the social care duty teams and conduct quarterly file audits to ensure that services to safeguard children are properly co-ordinated and managed effectively.</p> <p>Annual report to the committee outlining the findings of these visits and audit checks. Opportunity for the committee to monitor concerns and ensure improvements are put in place where necessary</p>	September
Complaints report	<p>An annual report is presented to the committee on the number of complaints received by the department, the stage at which they were rectified, common themes identified from the complaints and the action being taken as a result of them.</p> <p>The report is used by the committee to identify key issues for future monitoring or to consider as a future scrutiny review.</p>	September
School surpluses and deficits	<p>Annual report outlining school balances at 31 March each year. Report to highlight the number of schools with a surplus or deficit and what percentage these are of their overall budget. Report to also highlight the number of schools who are managing their budgets well.</p>	September

2. Completed reviews		
<p>Scrutiny Review of the effect of alcohol misuse on the health of children and young people.</p>	<p>Review carried out between September 2007 and February 2008. The aim of the review was to examine the range of policies and initiatives in place at a national and local level aimed at informing and educating children and young people about the dangers of alcohol misuse</p> <p>Membership - Councillor Pat Ost (chair), Councillor Joy Waite, Carole Shaves, Sam Gregory</p>	<p>First update – March 2009</p> <p>Final update – September 2009</p>
<p>Tabletop Review of the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers</p>	<p>Membership: Councillor Chris Dowling</p> <p>This was a short desktop review would be carried out to assess the current national and local situation with regard to the recruitment and retention of teachers.</p>	<p>Update report – November 2008</p>

3. Ongoing reviews		
Topic	Background and aims of review	Report to Committee
<p>Support for School Governors</p>	<p>Membership: Sarah Maynard, Councillor Pat Ost, Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre and Jeremy Taylor</p> <p>Examine the current support received by school governors from East Sussex County Council</p>	<p>November 2008</p>

4. Future meetings	
Item	Purpose of report
21st November	
Children's Centres	Following a report to the June 2007 meeting on Children's Centres the Committee asked for a further update report. The report to include an update on Phase 3 funding and outcomes, particularly in relation to the impact of Children's Centres on improving the start for children at primary school level.
Equalities and Diversity	Requested at November 2007 meeting. Report on the implementation of the actions around equalities and diversity.
18th December - Reconciling policy and resources board (2pm)	
9th March	
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Report on the strategy and policy presented to the committee at September 2007 meeting. Members requested that action plan being developed to support the strategy be presented to the committee
Reducing teenage pregnancies	The committee received a report in March 2008 regarding recent pregnancy date and key work aimed at reducing teenage pregnancy rates. Committee requested a further report to bring them up to date on outcomes from previous work in this area and details on additional work that has been done. Particular issues to be covered: work in rural areas, work in schools and with parents and work by the PCTs. Key question to be addressed will be how this work has impacted on teenage pregnancy figures
June/July meeting <i>(date to be confirmed following decision on date of County Council/European elections)</i>	
Common Assessment Framework	This was fully implemented in April 2008 and will potentially be a big lever for change. There is concern though that it could create a big demand for services. Committee to look at the Framework and the impact that it has had on officers, clients and services, after it has been in place for a year
Report on part time timetables	The committee received a report in September 2008 on the effectiveness of the new guidance in limiting the use of part-time timetables by schools, particularly with regard to young people known to the Youth Offending Team. Update report requested on this item. Report to include data on children who are on part time tables but are not known to the Youth Offending Team. Youth Justice Worker to be invited to attend the meeting.

5. Future items to include in the programme at a later date		
Item	Purpose of report	Proposed date
14-19 Agenda	Presentation on this at the Away day in October 2007. Members asked to be kept up to date on this as it develops. Members raised concerns at the away day about the capacity and skills of teachers and how transport issues across the county could have a detrimental effect on young people being able to access courses	
Special Education Needs funding	Item identified by Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee in November 2007 and request made to Children's Services Committee to receive a full report on this issue regarding the full impact that changes to the Special Educational Needs funding will have on children, schools and provision of services	
Outcomes for East Sussex Children	Presentation on global data sets on children in East Sussex against the 5 outcomes for children	
The combined Reintegration and Secondary Behaviour Support Service	The committee received an update report in March 2008 regarding recent developments in the Reintegration Service and the Secondary Behaviour Support Service following the reorganisation of them in April 2007. Further work was now being undertaken to combine these two services into one and members asked that feedback be provided to them on how this change of provision impacted on service users.	
Take up of school places	At the March 2008 committee meeting members asked that the current work being done on forecasting further pupil numbers across the county be brought to the committee in due course	

6. Request for information/briefings		
Item	Information	When provided
Remit of Education Standards Panel	Issue raised at Away day in October. Members asked for a paper outlining the remit of the Panel. Asked that an annual report to committee from the Panel on following the GCSE results	Sent to members with November 2007 agenda
Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy	Outline of key sections which relate to Children's Services to assist members in taking part in the consultation process	Sent to members December 2007
Special Educational Needs	Briefing and question and answer session on Special Educational Needs requested by the committee in March 2008	Held September 2008

7. Visits		
Visit to:	Aim of visit	Date
Plumpton Agricultural College	Opportunity for members to see the vocational courses provided for the 14-16 year olds	7 th May 2008
Wealden Skills Centre	Opportunity for members to see the initiative approach being taken to providing young people with vocational skills training in relation to Health & Safety, IT, Management and Marketing and Communication Skills	4 th June 2008
Bexhill College	Visit to look at provisions made for young people with disabilities	

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