

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 2009/10 programme

1. Standing Items
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
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: 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. Red - where the performance measure is assessed as inappropriate or unachievable by the end of the year.
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 - March meeting
Forward Plan
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: <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 review.
All meetings

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> <p>September meeting</p>
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> <p>September meeting</p>
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> <p>September meeting</p>
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> <p>September meeting</p>

2. Scrutiny Reviews
Scrutiny Review of Youth Offending Team
Further report – part time timetables – September 2009
Scrutiny Review of the effect of alcohol misuse on the health of children and young people.
<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>Report to Scrutiny – key recommendations</p> <p>First update – March 2009 Final update – September 2009</p>
Tabletop Review of the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers ⁴
<p>A table top review on this issue was carried out by Councillor Dowling in 2008. When his final report was presented in November 2008 it was agreed that future update reports on these issues should now be brought to the full committee. A key issue for scrutiny to monitor in the future is the work being done by the department around succession planning and head teacher appointments.</p> <p>Report to Scrutiny – key recommendations</p> <p>Update report to scrutiny – November 2009</p>
Support for School Governors
<p>Review carried out between May and October 2008. The aim of the review was to Assess, and make recommendations on, how best the local authority can ensure that all governing bodies have the necessary skills and abilities to fulfil their overall responsibility of helping their school provide the best possible education for the pupils.</p> <p>Membership: Sarah Maynard, Councillor Pat Ost, Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre and Jeremy Taylor</p>

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<p>Report to Scrutiny – key recommendations</p> <p>First update – September 2009 Final update – March 2010</p>
<p>Review of governing bodies clerks</p>
<p>One of the recommendations of the review on support for school governors was that a further piece of work be carried out by the review board to look at the roles and responsibilities of governing body clerks and provide a judgement on whether a centralised clerking service in East Sussex would be better and more cost effective</p> <p>Report to Scrutiny - July 2009</p>

<p>3. Ongoing issues</p>
<p>Autistic Spectrum Disorder</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>Reducing teenage pregnancies</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>Common Assessment Framework</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>Equality Strategy</p>
<p>A report on the Equality Strategy was presented to the Committee in November 2008. Members asked for an update report in mid 2009</p>

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on key areas of work, outcomes against the 5 outcomes for children, as outlined in the Children's Act, and plans for revision of the Strategy
Children's Centres
The Committee has been receiving regular reports on the progress of the Children's Centres in East Sussex. At the November 2008 meeting members requested a further report in November 2009 which focuses on the that the centres are having on improving outcomes for children.

4. Future items to include in the programme at a later 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

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5. 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
Briefing on Baby P case and impact on Children's Services	Members received an update on how the Baby P case will impact on work of the Children's Services department in November 2008. It was suggested that a recent briefing note provided to Children's Services Lead Members be shared with the committee	

6. 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	

Distribution list:

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