

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 16 March 2023

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Purpose: To review and discuss the People Scrutiny Committee's future work programme

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) review and agree the latest work programme set out at Appendix 1;
 - 2) accept the recommendations of the recent Scoping Board to progress with a scrutiny review of school exclusions (as set out at paragraphs 2.4-2.5) and agree the proposed Terms of Reference as set out at Appendix 2;
 - 3) appoint Members to the School Exclusions Review Board and agree the Chair of the Review Board;
 - 4) agree that the Prevention in Children's Services Scrutiny Review is converted to a Reference Group (as set out in paragraphs 2.9-2.12);
 - 5) review upcoming items on East Sussex County Council's Forward Plan as set out at Appendix 4 to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny.
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1 Background

1.1 The work programme is an important tool in ensuring the correct focus and best use of the Committee's time in scrutinising topics that are of importance to the residents of East Sussex, and the efficient and effective working of the Council. It also provides clarity for those who may be requested to give evidence to the Committee on the issues under review, and the questions the Committee requires answers to.

1.2 Discussion of the work programme provides the Committee with the opportunity to consider topics that it may be of value to scrutinise, and to decide whether further scoping work is required. This provides a basis for deciding the best way of scrutinising a topic, the timescale, and who from the Committee will be involved in carrying out the review work. If there are a number of potential topics for review, Members can determine the priority of the work within the resources available to the Committee.

2 Supporting information

Work programme

2.1 The Committee's latest work programme is attached at Appendix 1, incorporating a number of updates including those outlined below. The Committee is asked to consider, discuss and agree the work programme, subject to any further changes required.

Scrutiny Reviews

Adult Social Care Equality and Inclusion

2.2 The review into Adult Social Care Equality and Inclusion is underway. An initial meeting to consider the areas set out in the agreed TOR and to plan for further evidence gathering took place on the 28 February.

2.3 The Board has agreed a planned timeline to report to the Committee in July 2023 which is reflected in the attached work programme.

School Exclusions

2.4 Following the pause in the review due to the Covid 19 pandemic, a second Scoping Board meeting took place in January 2023 to consider the latest position and progress with work across the local education system to prevent the use of school exclusions. The Scoping Board has recommended the Committee should proceed with re-starting this scrutiny review to consider preventative strategies, the role of early help, appropriate responses to a child at risk of exclusion, the role of governors and clarity of messaging.

2.5 It is recommended that the Committee undertakes a scrutiny review of this area with the aim of reporting to the committee in November 2023. The proposed Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 2 for the Committee's approval.

2.6 The Committee is also asked to agree the membership and Chair of this Review Board.

School Attendance

2.7 A Scoping Board meeting took place in 2022 and the Board agreed that, although the subject was appropriate for a Scrutiny Review, as so much of the current situation regarding school absence rates in East Sussex was related to the ongoing impact of, and disruption from, the coronavirus pandemic, it was too early for the Committee to undertake a scrutiny review of school attendance.

2.8 The Board agreed that the review should commence in 2023 when we expect to have a clearer sense of the long-term impact of Covid on school absences. A further short Scoping Board meeting will be held in 2023 to build on issues discussed at the 2022 Scoping Board and draft Terms of Reference for this review. Due to potential overlaps with areas to be explored by the School Exclusions review, it is planned for this review to commence in the autumn of 2023.

Prevention in Children's Services

2.9 The Committee agreed at its March 2022 meeting that it was interested in undertaking a scrutiny review of the role of prevention in Children's Services and agreed to appoint an initial Scoping Board to consider the topic.

2.10 At the Scoping Board meeting in July 2022 the Board concluded, based on the discussion with officers, that there were areas within preventative/early intervention approaches that could benefit from closer examination and challenge by scrutiny.

2.11 The first Review Board meeting took place on 5 January 2023 and received an update from officers on work being undertaken to strengthen prevention in Children's Services. The Review Board concluded that, as work on key projects and programmes was clearly under development and progressing at pace, the issue would be better considered by People Scrutiny through a Reference Group which could provide regular and timely scrutiny input. This would enable scrutiny to be more effective and impactful and provide ongoing constructive challenge.

2.12 In line with the recommendation of the Board, the Committee is asked to agree that this review is converted to a Reference Group.

2.13 The Board also recommended that a Quality Demand Reduction Diagram shared at the meeting, was shared with the committee for information. The Diagram is attached as Appendix 3 for information.

2.14 Any suggestions for potential Scrutiny Review topics should be discussed with the Chair, or the Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser, in advance of the Committee meetings.

Reference Groups

Health and Social Care Integration Programme (HASCIP) Reference Group

2.15 The group last met on 22 November 2022 to consider and comment on key elements of the draft Sussex Integrated Care Strategy ahead of it being considered by the Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development.

2.16 Following final approval of the strategy by the Sussex Health and Care Assembly in December 2022, the next step is the development of a delivery plan setting out how the strategy will be implemented. A further meeting of the Reference Group will be arranged for late May/June 2023 to review and comment on the draft delivery plan ahead of consideration by Lead Member.

Educational Attainment and Performance Scrutiny Reference Group

2.17 The Educational Attainment and Performance Scrutiny Reference Group meets on an annual basis to focus on reviewing data on educational attainment in East Sussex and related issues.

2.18 The group met on the 7 March 2023 to discuss 2021/22 attainment results. The group discussed the key priorities for East Sussex and current measures that are in place to address ongoing challenges.

Reports for Information

Market Sustainability Plan

2.19 At its September 2022 meeting the Committee asked to receive a copy of the Adult Social Care Market Sustainability Plan once it was finalised. The plan was circulated to the committee ahead of agreement by the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health on 2 March 2023.

Adult Social Care Strategy

2.20 The new Adult Social Care Strategy will be reported to Cabinet in the summer. A proposed briefing for scrutiny committee Members on the strategy in advance of this has been added to the work programme for agreement by the committee.

Forward Plan

2.21 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 March 2023 to 30 June 2023 is included at Appendix 4. The Committee is requested to review the forthcoming items on the Forward Plan to identify any issues within the remit of this Committee that may require more detailed scrutiny. The Forward Plan is revised and published on a monthly basis and Committee members should regularly review the Forward Plan.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 An important part of managing the work of the People Scrutiny Committee is regularly reviewing its future work programme. This involves the Committee assessing its priorities, ensuring its ongoing reviews are completed in a timely fashion and identifying new areas for scrutiny.

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