

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: Wednesday 5th July, 2006

Report of: Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Report No:

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Report Title: **Identification of Issues for Scrutiny**

Non-Confidential

(Non-confidential) This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose:

To present to members a long list of appropriate issues for scrutiny to assist members in the selection of the issues they believe are the most pertinent for the Scrutiny Committee to investigate over the duration of the current municipal year.

The list includes:

1. A list of decisions that were implemented 12 months previously
2. A list of recommendations from CSCI that were suggested for implementation.
3. A list of performance measures compared against the national average and the previous rating of this authority – some with recommendations for improvements. These have been listed in order of their relative performance.
4. A list of areas where the council performs very well.

Background :

An external inspection from Ofsted in 2004 noted that there was scope to improve the Scrutiny of children's services in Bolton as it, "has not always tackled weakness or delays in implementation effectively" and that, "it does not have a practice of launching its own enquiries on major topics".

Furthermore Ofsted noted that "the challenge function of its work is relatively under developed". It recommended that scrutiny needs to "ensure that elected members' ability to exercise their challenge function is enhanced, by establishing a scrutiny programme based on a risk assessment."

Although the scrutiny function has developed since 2004 with an enhanced role for scrutiny panels there remain issues to address. The contents of this report should go some way to rectifying these issues. It shows what decisions were made by the Executive over the last twelve months so that Members can select issues they wish to monitor the

implementation of; it identifies recommendations from key inspectorates and it identifies issues identified by inspectorates.

Recommendations:

For the Committee to:

- select appropriate issues to receive updates on throughout the current municipal year based on the long list of potential items identified for scrutiny.
- select two issues for Scrutiny Panels based on the long list of potential items identified for scrutiny.