

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 3rd December, 2009

Report of: Director of Chief Executive's
Department

Report No:

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Report Title: Identification of Issues for Scrutiny / Annual Work Programme

**Confidential /
Non Confidential:**
(delete as approp)

(**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 provide members with suitable criteria to assist in the selection of the issues for the Scrutiny Committee to receive reports on or investigate further during the current municipal year. To also submit the updated work programme.

Recommendations:

1. To consider and agree the updated Committee Work Programme for 2009/10.

Decision:

**Background
Doc(s):**

The attached report includes a timetabled list of issues identified by the Committee as ones they would like to investigate over the current municipal year.

Background Information

1.0 Choosing Issues

At the Committee Work Programme Meeting, held at the beginning of the municipal year, the matters set out in 1.1 and 1.2 below were borne in mind when setting the programme. Members of the Committee are asked to refer to these issues when considering additional items for consideration during the municipal year.

1.1 Key Factors in Assessing Relevance of Issues for Scrutiny

Relevance

- The Policy highlighted for Scrutiny is under the remit of the Scrutiny Committee.
- That the planned scrutiny has an impact in improving services to better meet the needs and expectations of residents/customers.
- Ensure that the policy, action, or organisation is not being scrutinised elsewhere.

Public Interest

- There is evidence of significant Bolton wide public interest in this topic.
- It is a “high profile” topic for specific Bolton wide communities or interest groups.
- The review would, where appropriate, give an opportunity for the people of Bolton to have a say.

Impact

- The review will have a significant impact on the well-being of the public of Bolton.
- The issue has implications for diversity, equality, and social inclusion.
- This could make a big difference to the way services are delivered.
- This could make a big difference to the way resources are used.

Performance

- Is Performance particularly good/bad?

1.2 Identification of Criteria to Evaluate the Appropriateness of Issues for Scrutiny Panels

The review of whether a subject is suitable for scrutiny should consider:

- Relevance
 - Would a review be replicated by any other internal or external review process?
 - Is the service or issue a national government priority?
 - Have there been national changes to policy?
 - Is the issue of significant interest to the Bolton wide public?

- Would there be a significant impact on a particular community? (both interest and locality)
- Have there been local changes to policy?
- Is it an area of poor performance?
- Is it an area of outstanding performance?
- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspend in service area?
- Has there been a change to the remit of our arms length bodies?
- Potential Impact of a Review
 - Is it possible for the Scrutiny Panel to make a valuable contribution?
 - Are there sufficient resources both in terms of finance and officer availability to have a tangible impact?

1.3 The Council's Main Aims and Priority Themes

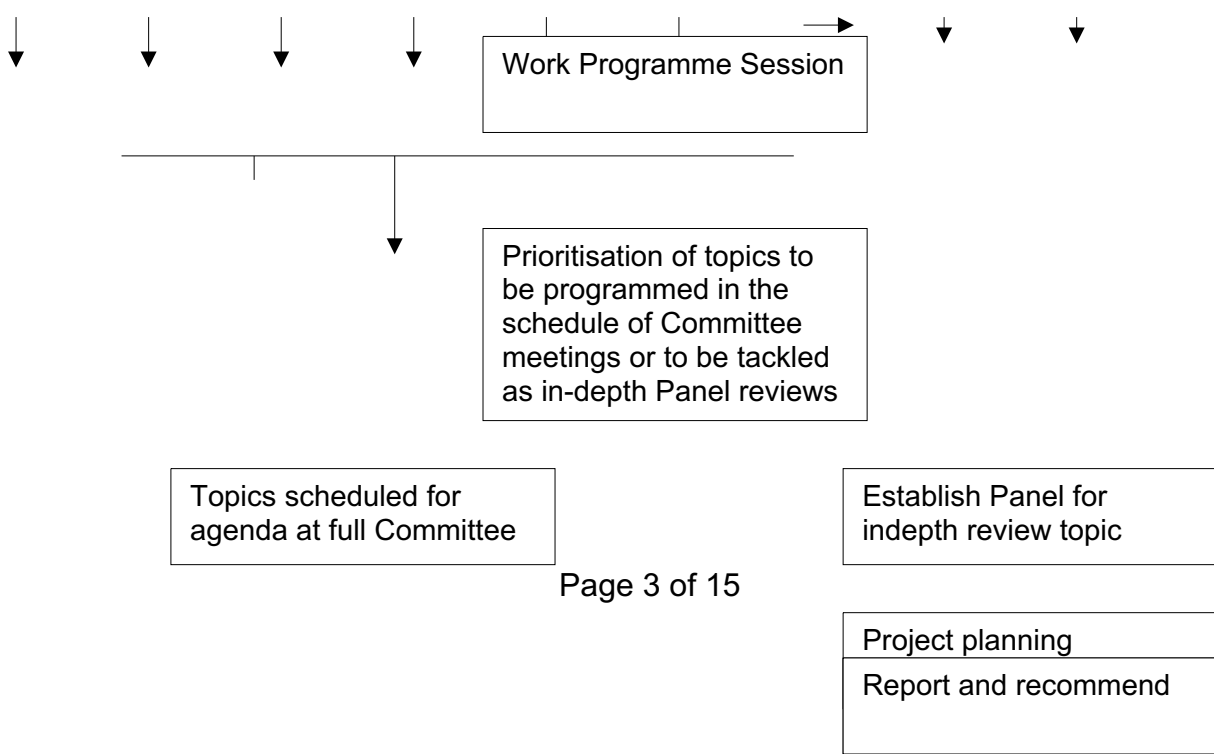
It is also worth keeping in mind the Council's Main Aims and Priority Themes when considering Committee Work Programmes:

Main Aims – Economic Prosperity, Narrowing the Gap and Transforming Services.

Priority Themes – Healthy, Achieving, Prosperous, Safe, Cleaner and Greener and Strong and Confident.

Attached at **Appendix One** is a schedule which Members can use as an aid to the identification of items for consideration by the Committee.

1.4 Planning and Managing the Committee Workload



Implementation of
decisions

Monitor implementation of
decisions

Monitor implementation of
recommendations

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

At the Committee's Work Programme Event held on Friday 17th July, 2009 a presentation was given on the big issues facing the work of the Children's Services Department in the immediate future. Following a substantial debate Members honed in on the following issues which they would like to examine during the Municipal Year. They are set out under the Performance Headings :-

Be Healthy

- (1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Be Healthy outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.**
- (2) A look at the position regarding Teenage Pregnancy and Terminations with an eye on the way forward regarding what the Council can do.**
- (3) Sex Education and Sexual Health Services in Schools. A look at what currently happens in schools, it's effectiveness and monitoring.**

Stay Safe

- (1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Stay Safe outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.**
- (2) The Child Protection Team -

A look at the work of the Duty Child Protection Teams including an appropriate off site visit to see the challenges faced. Also statistical information in terms of an increase in child protection plans and the implications thereof.**
- (3) Effectiveness and safety of ICT systems to support the management of cases in Children's Social Services.**

Enjoy and Achieve

- (1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Enjoy and Achieve outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.**
- (2) Educational Attainment of Looked After Children –**

Monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel which concluded it's work during the last Municipal Year. Also a regular look at how the Council is performing in this area.

To also include the Educational Attainment of Black and Ethnic Minority pupils.

(3) Early Years Attainment –

A background position statement and how performance is monitored in this field. Including details of how performance varies between the most deprived and least deprived areas.

(4) Academies –

Regular updates on the progress of the establishment of academies in Bolton.

Positive Contribution

(1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Positive Contribution outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.

(2) Children's Centres –

A look at the effectiveness of targeting vulnerable children in the Borough and their participation at Children's Centres.

(3) The Five Hour Sports Offer –

A look at the effectiveness of this offer and monitoring arrangements.

(4) Behaviour Support –

A look at the effectiveness of support mechanisms in place. Also details of the monitoring arrangements.

Behaviour Support restructure on-going at present.

(5) Youth Crime –

(a) An examination of statistical information in relation to the Youth Justice System including first time entrants and the effects of the economic down turn on the figures.

(b) A presentation on the outcome of the inspection of the Youth Offending Team.

Economic Wellbeing

(1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Economic Wellbeing outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.

(2) Information on the transfer of the Learning and Skills Council responsibilities to the Council and the new arrangements in place to manage these.

(3) Extra Training / Studies –

A look at the plans for meeting the needs of those not able to secure employment in terms of extra training / study opportunities, particularly in relation to the current economic climate.

General Service Management

(1) Population Growth-

A look at the plans and policies regarding the growth in population and the accuracy of the pupil forecasting models.

(2) Value for Money –

The impact to date of the Council's Value for Money initiative and the plans the Department have in place to manage this process.

The schedule below sets out the proposed meeting dates for consideration of the work programme suggestions.

29th July, 2009	(1) NEETS Scrutiny Panel Update (2) Children's Services Department Value for Money (3) Adoption and Fostering Inspection (4) 2008/09 Performance Outturn Report (5) 2008/09 Financial Outturn Report
27th August, 2009	<u>Positive Contribution</u> (1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Positive Contribution outcome area, and the Council's current performance information. (2) Children's Centres – A look at the effectiveness of targeting vulnerable children in the Borough and their participation at Children's Centres.

	<p>(3) The Five Hour Sports Offer –</p> <p>A look at the effectiveness of this offer and monitoring arrangements.</p> <p>(4) Behaviour Support –</p> <p>A look at the effectiveness of support mechanisms in place. Also details of the monitoring arrangements. Behaviour Support restructure on-going at present.</p> <p>(5) Youth Crime –</p> <p>(a) An examination of statistical information in relation to the Youth Justice System including first time entrants and the effects of the economic down turn on the figures.</p>
8th October, 2009	<p><u>Be Healthy</u></p> <p>(1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Be Healthy outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.</p> <p>(2) A look at the position regarding Teenage Pregnancy and Terminations with an eye on the way forward regarding what the Council can do.</p> <p>(3) Sex Education and Sexual Health Services in Schools. A look at what currently happens in schools, it's effectiveness and monitoring.</p> <p><u>Other</u></p> <p>(1) <u>St. Catherine's Academy Update</u></p> <p>An update on the position regarding the opening of the new Academy at St. Catherine's</p> <p>(2) <u>School Results</u></p> <p>Key Stage 2 and 3, GCSE and A Level Results monitoring. Also KS4 results in terms of English and Maths.</p> <p>(4) <u>Needs Scrutiny Panel</u></p>

	<p>Initial response on the findings of the Panel from the Executive Member and the Director of Children's Services.</p> <p>(5) <u>Educational Attainment of Looked After Children</u></p> <p>An update in terms of actions implemented following the previously agreed recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>(6) <u>Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Data</u></p> <p>Provides Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Data relating to children aged 5 in the reception classes in Bolton. This data collection is a legal requirement.</p> <p>(7) <u>Children's Services Financial Monitoring Report, Quarter one, 2009/10</u></p> <p>(8) <u>Children's Services Performance Management Dashboard, 2009/10</u></p>
3rd December, 2009	<p><u>Enjoy and Achieve</u></p> <p>(1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Enjoy and Achieve outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.</p> <p>(2) <u>Educational Improvement Update</u></p> <p>To provide and overview of the purposes of the Educational Improvement Team in Children's Services, their range of work and to outline four key areas of work –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriching the curriculum • 14-19 developments • The School Improvement Framework <p>(3) YOT Inspection –</p> <p>A presentation on the outcome of the inspection of the Youth Offending Team.</p>

<p>11th February, 2010</p>	<p><u>Economic Wellbeing</u></p> <p>(1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Economic Wellbeing outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.</p> <p>(2) Information on the transfer of the Learning and Skills Council responsibilities to the Council and the new arrangements in place to manage these.</p> <p>(3) Extra Training / Studies –</p> <p>A look at the plans for meeting the needs of those not able to secure employment in terms of extra training / study opportunities, particularly in relation to the current economic climate.</p> <p><u>Other</u></p> <p>(1) Population Growth-</p> <p>A look at the plans and policies regarding the growth in population and the accuracy of the pupil forecasting models.</p> <p>(2) Annual Performance Assessment Letter for the Children's Services Department</p> <p>(3) Children's Services Portfolio Revenue and Capital Month 6, Monitoring Report.</p> <p>(4) Children's Services Budget Portfolio Allocation, 2009/10</p> <p>(5) Behaviour Support –</p> <p>An update in terms of the effectiveness of behaviour support mechanisms and the on-going restructuring of the service.</p>
<p>8th April, 2010</p>	<p><u>Stay Safe</u></p> <p>(1) Background information in terms of the Performance Indicators included under the, Stay Safe outcome area, and the Council's current performance information.</p> <p>(2) The Child Protection Team -</p>

	<p>A look at the work of the Duty Child Protection Teams including an appropriate off site visit to see the challenges faced. Also statistical information in terms of an increase in child protection plans and the implications thereof.</p> <p>(3) Effectiveness and safety of ICT systems to support the management of cases in Children's Social Services.</p> <p><u>4) Understanding and Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools.</u></p> <p><u>Other</u></p> <p>(1) Children's Services Performance Management Dashboard, Quarter 3, 2009/10</p> <p>(2) Children's Services Financial Monitoring Report, Quarter 3, 2009/10</p> <p>(3) <u>NEETS Scrutiny Panel</u></p> <p>An update on the actions being implemented following the previously agreed recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel.</p>
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Evaluating the Work of Scrutiny Panels

Evaluating the work of Scrutiny Panels will become increasingly important to aid the Council in determining what works well and in terms of Government expectations.

Evaluating the panel and monitoring implementation:-

1. At their last meeting, all panels include an item in which they look back on the panel's work and evaluate its effectiveness. Panel members' views of what has and has not been effective is noted so that it can be taken on board for future panels.
2. Once the report has been received by the Executive it is sent out to all those who contributed to the panel's work along with a short evaluation form asking contributors about their experience of the scrutiny panel, from the adequacy of administrative arrangements to the standard of interaction with the panel and their views on the final report. The published report is put on the web site and also sent

to all libraries and is provided on request to anyone who wants a copy.

3. Ultimately the real effectiveness of the panel must be measured by the difference it makes to outcomes. This remains extremely hard to evaluate given that there may be many changes occurring within a particular service area at any one time due to any number of reasons and these can all have an impact on residents' lives. Singling out the effect of the implementation of scrutiny panel recommendations is therefore very difficult.
4. However, care should be taken to ensure that those recommendations that are agreed by the Executive are implemented.

This should be done via a standard Decision Monitoring Schedule which will be implemented this municipal year.

In certain circumstances it may though be necessary to write off some outstanding recommendations. This may be because implementation was initially agreed in principle, subject to funding being approved but despite attempts to locate sources there is no reason to think that funding will be available in the near future. It could also be because legislation or internal changes had altered the shape of a service to such an extent that some recommendations had become obsolete.

Criteria to Aid Topic Selection – Appendix One

Title of suggested review:					
Criteria					Score
Will it duplicate recent or planned work?	NO If NO, go to Q.1		YES If YES, go to DECISION		
CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT					
Q1. Is there evidence that customers/residents have raised this as an issue that needs to be addressed?	0	1	3	5	
Q2. Does this suggestion lend itself to a review in which the customer/resident can contribute significantly?	0	1	3	5	
Q3. Will this proposal result in services which better meet the needs and expectations of customers/residents?	0	1	3	5	
IMPROVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE					
Q4. Will this proposal improve the council's performance in line with our cleaner, greener, safer and stronger ambitions?	0	1	3	5	
Q5. Will the proposal help us to achieve the Council Plan priorities?	0	1	3	5	
VALUE FOR MONEY					
Q6. Will the proposal help the council to reduce cost and improve efficiency. i.e. better VFM?	0	1	3	5	
Q7. Is there evidence that we are either a) performing at a high cost or b) performing poorly in this area?					
TOTAL SCORE					
How does suggested review score against this criteria?					
DECISION					
Should the suggested review be added to the work programme, and if so, how should it be carried out?	Short-listed for Scrutiny review? Page 13 of 15	Request a report/Add to the work programme as an agenda item?/		No further action?	

		appoint a rapporteur	
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- Council's Key Aims – Strong and Confident Bolton, Safe Bolton, Achieving Bolton, Prosperous Bolton, Clean and Green Bolton, Healthy Bolton, Transforming our Services.
- Change Programme Themes – Customer Access, Local Delivery, Seamless Service, Shared Services and Resources.

