

Children and Young People Select Committee			
Title	Select Committee work programme		
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager	Item	7
Class	Part 1 (Open)	19 March 2014	

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Select Committee with an overview of the work programme.

2. Summary

- 2.1 At the beginning of the municipal year each select committee is required to draw up a work programme for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel. The Panel considers the proposed work programmes of the six overview and scrutiny select committees and coordinates activities between them in order to maximise the use of scrutiny resources and avoid duplication.
- 2.2 The meeting on 19 March is the last scheduled meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee in the 2013-14 municipal year, as well as the last meeting of the 2010-14 Council administration. This report provides a brief overview of the Committee's work in the 2010-14 administration in preparation for the development of the 2014-15 Committee work programme.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Select Committee is asked to:
- note the completed work programme attached at **Appendix B**;
 - consider the core issues covered in the 2010-14 administration;
 - consider any matters arising that it may wish to propose for future scrutiny.

4. Children and Young People Select Committee 2010-2014

- 4.1 The Children and Young People Select Committee has had an important role to play in the oversight and development of a number of areas of strategic importance over the last 4 years. The Committee has carried out three in depth reviews and made a number of recommendations for improvement, via referrals to Mayor and Cabinet/Council or partner organisations. The work of the Committee, and the evidence-based recommendations it has made, have had a direct impact on the development of both policy and service delivery in a number of areas. Below are some examples of the Committee's work:

Nursery Education and Childcare Review

- 4.2 The Nursery and Childcare Review examined the funding and affordability, quality, availability and accessibility of nursery education and childcare provision in Lewisham. The review highlighted that the implementation of the government's free 15 hour childcare provision for targeted 2 year olds has been a challenge, partly because of poor incentives for childcare providers to sign up to deliver it. The review recommended increased flexibility in the provision of childcare across the borough, better linkages between schools and nursery and childcare providers and improved processes and information around the 2 year old provision.

Falling Through the Gaps Review

- 4.3 This review looked at how children might be unknown to the Council and therefore at risk; and took evidence on the processes for information sharing in relation to specific groups identified as at risk. The final report made recommendations in relation to the early identification of at risk children and the role schools and the Attendance and Welfare service played in ensuring that issues were identified and addressed early on. The review contributed to the strengthening of information sharing, awareness and processes between local public sector bodies.

Special educational needs services

- 4.4 Throughout the 2010-2014 administration the Committee considered issues surrounding special educational needs services. This included regular updates on the Strengthening Specialist Provision Programme, which aimed to strengthen Lewisham's service provision for children and young people with special educational needs. In addition there was specific scrutiny addressing options for Meadowgate School and the development of SEN focussed resource bases for schools. The Committee also considered provision for special educational needs as part of their general questioning of other services.

Safeguarding and looked after children

- 4.5 The Committee has regularly monitored the performance of the Council with its corporate parenting and safeguarding roles, including the attendance of the Chair of the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board. The Committee's role was recognised in the 2012 safeguarding and looked after children inspection carried out by Ofsted. The inspection report stated that the Committee provides 'robust and appropriate scrutiny and challenge, contribution to Lewisham's outstanding grade for ambition and prioritisation.

Joint working with the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee

- 4.6 The Committee has been actively involved in scrutinising the Council's plans for commissioning youth service provision to ensure an effective and engaging programme of youth provision remains available across the borough in spite of reduced funding being available to the Council to deliver youth services directly. The committees have held three joint meetings to scrutinise the commissioning process: at their first meeting the committees considered how the proposals for the service were intended to work; at the second meeting they reviewed the transition process from Council provision to the commissioning structure - and at their third

meeting they assessed how the proposals for the allocation of funding had been made.

- 4.8 At each stage the committees referred their views to Mayor and Cabinet for consideration. As a result of the Committee's engagement detailed mapping of existing provision across the borough was undertaken and a strong focus on ensuring accessibility of the commissioning process to the local community and voluntary sector was maintained.

5. Planning for the next administration

- 5.1 A work programme report will be put forward at the first Children and Young People Select Committee meeting of the 2014-15 administration. The report will take account of the committee's previous work, and will draw on a range of sources for suggestions, as set out in the following sections.

- 5.2 The Committee has already indicated that there are matters it feels should be considered for further scrutiny, these are:

- IT services for schools
- annual updates on safeguarding
- services for children with special educational needs

- 5.4 As with the development of all new work programmes, suggestions will also be incorporated by drawing on:

- matters arising as a result of previous scrutiny;
- issues that the committee is required to consider by virtue of its terms of reference;
- items requiring follow up from committee reviews and recommendations;
- issues suggested by members of the public;
- petitions;
- standard reviews of policy implementation or performance, which is based on a regular schedule;
- items that senior council officers feel are important for the committee to scrutinise;
- suggestions from officers;
- decisions due to be made by Mayor and Cabinet.

The Lewisham Future Programme

- 5.5 Through the Lewisham Future Programme the Council must save a further £95m from its £285m budget in the four years from 2014-15 to 2017-18. In order to achieve the savings, the Council has embarked on a series of thematic and cross-cutting reviews to fundamentally review the way it delivers services. This will mean that savings will be delivered over longer time periods and will need to be agreed and taken as and when they are identified. Officers have committed to regular interactions with Members in order to facilitate scrutiny of the specific savings proposals arising from the major change programmes. The Select Committees will need to retain capacity in its work programme to consider these as is necessary.

5.6 At the beginning of the new administration the Committee will be asked to agree a provisional work programme for the coming year for submission to Business Panel. Members are asked to review the completed work programme for 2013-14 as well as the core issues covered and put forward any matters arising that should be considered as part of the 2014-15 work programme.

6. Financial implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

7. Legal implications

7.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Business Panel at the start of each municipal year.

8. Equalities implications

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.2 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

8.3 There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

Background documents

Lewisham Council's Constitution

Centre for Public Scrutiny: the Good Scrutiny Guide

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process

