



Children and Young People Select Committee

Select Committee work programme report

Date: 21 September 2020

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: Not applicable

Contributors: Assistant Chief Executive (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

To ask Members to discuss the committee's priorities for the 2020/21 municipal year and to agree an annual work programme.

The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the draft work programme at **Appendix E**.
- Discuss the committee's priorities and agree a work programme for 2020/21.
- Consider opportunities for public engagement throughout the work programme.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The meeting dates below were agreed at the Council AGM on 15 July 2020:

- Monday 21 September 2020
- Thursday 26 November 2020
- Thursday 21 January 2021
- Thursday 4 March 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report asks Members to discuss and agree priorities for the committee's work programme for the year ahead and describes the process setting the work programme for approval by the Overview & Scrutiny Business Panel, and ongoing monitoring by the Select Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to:
 - Consider the draft work programme at **Appendix E**.
 - Discuss the committee's priorities and agree a work programme for 2020-21.
 - Consider opportunities for public engagement throughout the work programme.

3. The role of the select committee

- 3.1. The remit of the Children and Young People Select Committee is set out in its terms of reference (Appendix A). The Committee's areas of responsibility, include, but are not limited to:
 - Schools and related services
 - Children's Social Care
 - Transition for care leavers
 - Youth services
 - SEND provision for children and young people up to age 25

The Committee is from time to time invited to participate in or contribute to the work of the Safer Stronger Select Committee where the work of that Committee affects Children and Young People, for example youth offending, County Lines, etc.

4. Agreeing the committee's work programme

- 4.1. A draft work programme is attached at **Appendix E**. It includes suggestions made by last year's committee; suggestions from council officers; and issues arising as a result of previous scrutiny.
- 4.2. The Committee is not bound to accept these suggestions. It can set its own work programme and agree any priority issues as it sees fit.
- 4.3. It is important that, when deciding on issues to include in the work programme, the committee considers the key services and programmes within its remit as well as the criteria for selecting and prioritising topics. The Committee should refer the flowchart below.
- 4.4. The committee should also take into account upcoming Mayor & Cabinet decisions (**Appendix D**) and avoid duplicating the work of any agreed task and finish groups (TFGs). Currently, no TFGs have been agreed.
- 4.5. Items within the work programme should also be linked to the priorities in the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2018-2022 (**Appendix B**):
- 4.6. The committee is recommended to schedule a maximum of **two substantive items per meeting**, to allow sufficient time for meaningful scrutiny of the items. It is also a good idea to allow capacity later in the year to deal with urgent business as the need arises throughout the year.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

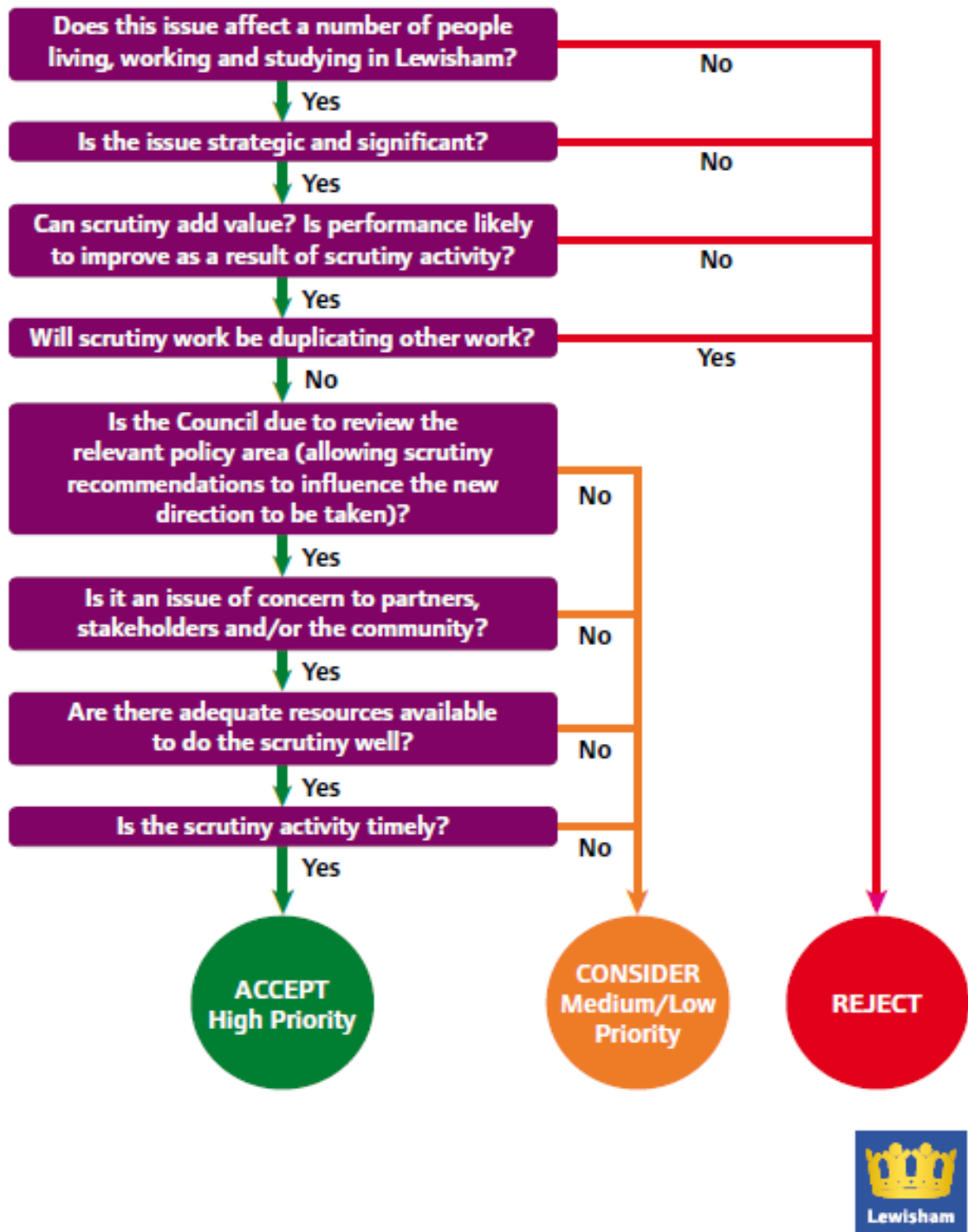
- 4.7. If further items are added to the work programme, existing items may need to be removed or become briefings, circulated by email.
- 4.8. Meetings are scheduled to last for up to 2.5 hours. The Committee should aim to **manage its business within 2 hours**. In exceptional cases the committee may suspend standing orders to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes to conclude urgent business.
- 4.9. The committee should specify the information it requires for each item to ensure that officer reports and other evidence meets its needs. This should be done under the work programme item at every meeting.
- 4.10. Some issues may only require an initial briefing, circulated by email, for information.
- 4.11. Some of the reports that fall under the Committee's remit are usually presented as reports to note and therefore likely to be circulated by email in the first instance, these include:
- Annual report on attendance and exclusions
 - Corporate Parenting and Looked After Children Annual Report
 - Annual School Standards report
 - Safeguarding Services 6 monthly report
 - Education Strategy
 - CAMHS waiting times
 - Safeguarding annual report (formerly LSCB)
- 4.12. The committee normally considers the following reports:
- education outcomes
 - annual school standards report
 - annual report on attendance and exclusions.
- 4.13. Owing to the unprecedented situation brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, and in line with government guidance, this year's school results will not be published, used as a comparison with previous or future years' results or to inform Ofsted inspections. Furthermore as schools were closed to the majority of students from March, data for the academic year is incomplete. These items, therefore, do not appear on the draft work programme.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

4.14. Suggestions from officers in view of forthcoming developments

- Social care improvement
- Early Help
- Black Caribbean Achievement
- Safeguarding with a focus on Child Exploitation

4.15. Issues arising as a result of previous scrutiny

- Unregulated education settings
- Follow up on in-depth review of how living in temporary accommodation affects children and young people
- Education Strategy

4.16. These items have been scheduled into the draft work programme, either for discussion at a Committee meeting, or as information to be received by email. Nothing has been scheduled for consideration at the January meeting, so there is capacity for two items to be added to the meeting agenda. Alternatively, the Committee may decide to retain capacity to allow for any matters that may arise.

4.17. The Chair is required to keep abreast of developments within the committee's remit and recommend adding any issues to the work programme, where necessary and appropriate.

5. Different types of scrutiny

5.1. It is important to think early on about the most effective method for scrutinising an item. This may be by initial briefing, sit visit, public engagement or detailed questioning at a formal committee meeting.

5.2. The *Effective Scrutiny Guidelines* at **Appendix C** sets out 5 key principles to take into account when carrying out scrutiny: *Prioritise; Be independent; Work Collectively; Engage; make SMART recommendations*. This will help the Committee decide on the most appropriate scrutiny approach.

5.3. Members should also note the comments in the [Local Democracy Review](#) about how scrutiny can be more effective, participative and open. Suggestions include:

- Focusing on fewer issues more closely linked to council priorities
- More engagement with the public outside of formal meetings
- Individual scrutiny Members leading on defined topic areas
- Contributing to new policy proposals at an early stage

5.4. Some of the most common scrutiny methods are described below, but the Committee is encouraged to try new ways of gathering evidence and engaging the public.

5.5. "Standard items"

5.6. The majority of work programme items tend to be "standard items", where scrutiny is carried out at a Committee meeting. To be effective, Members will:

- agree in advance the information and analysis needed
- receive an officer report presenting the relevant information
- gather additional evidence from activity outside of meetings

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

- ask questions of the presenting officers or expert guests
 - agree recommendations to Mayor and Cabinet and partners.
- 5.7. Policy development
- 5.8. The Committee may be invited to contribute to policy design prior to a decision by Mayor and Cabinet. Select Committees should be engaged at an early enough stage to have influence.
- 5.9. Performance monitoring
- 5.10. Scrutiny Committees can request performance data and information to scrutinise the effectiveness of council services.
- 5.11. Task and Finish Groups
- 5.12. For cross-cutting issues or issues that require extensive evidence gathering, Members may put forward a proposal for a Task and Finish Group (TFG). The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will agree which TFGs should be established, their membership, terms of reference and duration. TFGs are independent of Select Committees and make recommendations directly to Mayor & Cabinet.
- 5.13. Information items
- 5.14. Low priority items (refer to flowchart above) may only require a email briefing report, with questions put to the report author for written response. There is no provision for discussion of information items at committee meetings.

6. Approval and ongoing monitoring of the work programme

- 6.1. Select Committees are required to submit their work programme to the Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel for approval to ensure a coordinated approach and no duplication. The Business Panel will meet on 29 September 2020.
- 6.2. The Committee's work programme should be reviewed at each meeting to reflect changing priorities, bearing in mind capacity. The Committee's work programme must be achievable in the time available.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme will have financial implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. 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.

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1. 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.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

- 9.2. 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.
- 9.3. 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.

10. Climate change and environmental implications

- 10.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have climate change implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

11. Crime and disorder implications

- 11.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have crime and disorder implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

12. Health and wellbeing implications

- 12.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have health and wellbeing implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

13. Report author and contact

- 13.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact: Emma Aye-Kumi, 020 8314 9534 emma.ayekumi@lewisham.gov.uk.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Appendix A – Committee terms of reference

Appendix B – Council corporate priorities

Appendix C – Effective scrutiny principles

Appendix D – Notice of forthcoming executive decisions

Appendix E – Draft work programme

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Appendix A – Children and Young People Select Committee Terms of Reference

(a) To fulfil all overview and scrutiny functions as they relate to the social care of children and young people up to the age of 19 years including but not limited to the following activities:-

- (i) the social services functions of the Council under the Children Act 2004, and all functions of the Council under the National Assistance Act 1948, the Mental Health Act 1983, Children Act 1989, the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, Children Act 2004, Children and Families Act 2014 and all other relevant legislation in force from time to time
- (ii) to invite representatives of other service providers to children and young people in the area to give account of their performance and to answer questions.

(b) In so far as they relate to the provision of services for those under the age of 19 years, the exercise of all of the Council's powers under all relevant legislation pertaining to education from time to time in force. Without limiting the generality of this, this shall include, in particular, schools and school related services.

(c) The exercise of the overview and scrutiny powers of the Council in so far as they relate to people under 19 years of age in the provision of opportunities for education, training and learning outside the school environment, including pre-school services.

(d) In so far as they relate to children and young people under 19 years of age, to make comments and recommendations to the Executive on the contents and proposed contents of the plans making up the Council's policy framework.

(e) In so far as they relate to people under the age of 25 years, to make comments and recommendations on the provision of education, training and learning by those with special educational needs.

(f) Without limiting the remit of the Select Committee, its terms of reference include the following matters:

- Child protection - covering provision for vulnerable children including children in need and children looked after, placements, foster care and adoption
- Early years provision
- Special needs provision
- Schools and related services
- Youth Services
- Youth offending and challenging behaviour
- Transitional services for those leaving care
- Other matters relating to children and young people

(g) To receive and consider referrals from Healthwatch in so far as they relate solely to people under 19 years of age. Otherwise such referrals will be made to the Healthier Communities Select Committee.

(h) Without limiting the remit of the Select Committee, to hold the Executive to account for its performance in relation to the delivery of Council objectives in the provision of services to children and young people.

NB In the event of there being overlap between the terms of reference of this select

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

committee and those of the Healthier Communities Select Committee, the Business Panel shall determine the Select Committee which shall deal with the matter in question.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Appendix B - Lewisham Council Corporate Priorities

Open Lewisham

Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all, where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.

Tackling the Housing Crisis

Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable

Giving children and young people the best start in life

Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education, and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.

Building an inclusive local economy

Everyone can access high-quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.

Delivering and defending: health, social care and support

Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.

Making Lewisham Greener

Everyone enjoys our green spaces, and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.

Building Safer Communities

Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Appendix C - Effective Scrutiny Guidelines

1. Prioritise

It is more effective to look at one or two key issues per meeting in an in-depth way, than skim the surface of everything falling within the committee's remit. Try to focus on issues of concern to the community and/or matters that are linked to corporate priorities. Only add items to the work programme if you are certain your consideration of the matter will make a real and tangible difference.

2. Be independent

Scrutiny is led by Scrutiny Members. You are in charge of the work programme and, for every item, you should specify what evidence you require and what information you would like to see in any officer reports that are prepared. You should not be whipped by your political party or unduly influenced by the Cabinet or senior officers.

3. Work collectively

If you collectively agree in advance what you want to achieve in relation to each item under consideration, including what the key lines of enquiry should be, you can work as a team to question witnesses and ensure that all the required evidence is gathered. Scrutiny is impartial and the scrutiny process should be free from political point scoring and not used to further party political objectives.

4. Engage

Involving residents helps scrutiny access a wider range of ideas and knowledge, listen to a broader range of voices and better understand the opinions of residents and service users. Engagement helps ensure that recommendations result in residents' wants and needs being more effectively met.

5. Make SMART evidence-based recommendations

Scrutiny has the most impact when its recommendations are based on solid, triangulated evidence – where a variety of sources of evidence point to a change in practice that will positively alter outcomes. Recommendations are more powerful if they are:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant).
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating).
- Achievable (agreed, attainable).
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>