

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

4 March 2020

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee Business Planning Group

Report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group

Summary

Each Scrutiny Committee has a Business Planning Group (BPG) to oversee the Committee's work programme and prioritise issues for consideration by the Committee. This report provides an update of the last meeting of the BPG held on 21 February 2020, setting out the key issues discussed.

The focus for scrutiny

The Committee to consider the report and identify any future areas for scrutiny. Also, that members agree to hold an Education and Skills Task and Finish Group and appoint membership to this group.

Proposal

1. Background and Context

1.1 The BPG met on 21 February 2020. All members were present.

2 Education and Skills Update

2.1 It was reported that the SEND and Inclusion Strategy was now live, and work had begun on the Special Support Centres. Members heard that the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) had been working on the development of the new Agreed Syllabus.

2.2 Members received a short update on Elective Home Education, and agreed that this item should return to the March BPG agenda, at which point it was hoped that the consultation report from Government would be published.

2.3 Members had previously received an update on Alternative Provision (AP) which detailed WSCC's responsibility for arranging suitable education for permanently excluded pupils and for other pupils who, for varying reasons, would not receive suitable education in a typical school setting. Members felt this may warrant scrutiny at a future committee meeting, therefore requested an update at the March BPG.

2.4 The BPG agreed that home to school transport should return as a substantive item at the March BPG.

2.5 Members considered a request from the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee to consider education performance. The group agreed that this would be part of the annual Education and Skills Annual Report TFG, to be

held in April and reported back to the full Committee at the next appropriate meeting. The purpose of the TFG would be as follows:

- Scrutiny of the Education and Skills Annual Report provides an insight into the performance of West Sussex children and young people in the academic year 2019-20 and progress towards achievement against targets in the West Sussex Plan. This may inform recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and priorities for further scrutiny by the Committee.

3. Children and Family Services Update

3.1 The BPG considered a report on the commissioning of high cost residential placements for children. Members agreed this item should be considered by the whole committee, with a focus on post 16. It was requested that this item be added to the work programme for September 2020.

4. Total Performance Monitor

4.1 The BPG considered the latest TPM data.

- Members raised concern on the £1 Million cost on legal cases in the children's portfolio area and asked for an update on this at the March BPG, specifically concerning capacity for the officers concerned.

5. Work Programme Planning

5.1 Forward Plan

5.1.1 No proposed decisions were identified for scrutiny other than those already identified.

5.2 Agree the work programme for the coming year and plan the upcoming meetings

5.2.1. The BPG agreed the Committee's work programme as at Appendix A, but recommended that the domestic violence item be removed and requested that the Member Development Group consider this as a potential member day/briefing.

5.2.2 Members agreed that an extra meeting on 7 April needed to be scheduled in order to consider the small school's consultation, and a further update on the Children First Improvement Plan.

5.2.3 Members received an update on the Youth Cabinet Scrutiny Committee takeover session on 23 April 2020, and agreed to add this to the March BPG agenda in order to plan this work.

5.2.4 It was agreed that the June 2020 meeting could be used for training, and potential visits to residential homes and other visits if required.

5.2.5 Members agreed that an item on fostering and adoption be considered at the September meeting, including an update on the Regional Adoption Agency.

5.2.6 Members requested an update on Children and Family Centres, as part of the information detailed in the budget, to be brought to the March BPG.

5.2.7 It was agreed that 1001 critical days be considered alongside items relating to early help.

6 Resources

6.1 No impact.

Factors taken into account

7 Issues for consideration by the Select Committee

7.1 To consider the report and identify and future areas for scrutiny.

8 Consultation

8.1 Members and the service are present at the BPG, details of which are then presented to the main Committee.

9 Implications

9.1 There are no resource, risk management, Crime and Disorder Act or Human Rights Act implications arising directly from this report.

David Barling

Chairman

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee Business Planning Group

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Background Papers: None

Appendix A – Work Programme for Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee