
Meeting of the Children's Services Select Committee – 19th July 2023

Report of the Lead for Law and Governance

Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24

Purpose

1. To consider the programme of meetings and potential items of business for this Select Committee during 2023/24.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended: -
 - That the programme of meetings for 2023/24 be noted.
 - That Members consider potential business items, as referred to in paragraph 4 of this report, subject to the need for flexibility during the municipal year.
 - That the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, be authorised to make all the necessary arrangements to enable this Committee to undertake its work during the 2023/24 municipal year.
 - That the draft terms of reference for the Select Committee, as set out in the Appendix, be noted.

Background

3. As agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18th May 2023, meetings of this Select Committee have been programmed during the 2023/24 municipal year to undertake its work and consider any relevant items of business during the municipal year. The draft terms of reference of this Committee are set out in the Appendix.

4. Following initial consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, the items listed below are recommended for consideration at programmed meetings of this Select Committee during 2023/24:
- **19th July 2023**
 - Programme of Meetings and Business Items for 2023/24
 - Family Safeguarding Update
 - Education Report
 - **13th September 2023**
 - Good and Innovative Practices in other parts of the Country in respect of the long-term strategy to tackle the cycle of child poverty embedded in parts of Dudley's Communities to assist with the development of the Dudley Strategy
 - Detailed Ward by Ward basis breakdown of the percentage of children living in poverty within the Dudley Borough.
 - Dudley Children's Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report
 - Children's Services Redesign Phase Two
 - Children's Services Complaints, Comments and Compliments Annual Report 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 (Briefing Note)
 - **22nd November 2023**
 - Integrated Early Years, Family Hubs, and Start of Life in Dudley
 - Ideas and Initiatives Dudley could utilise to develop healthy High Streets and provide advice on whether fast food delivery organisations require a special license to deliver food.
 - Car Free Streets Scheme outlining the advantages and disadvantages
 - **24th January, 2024**
 - Serious Violence Strategy
 - Education Report
 - The role and responsibilities of the Private Sector Housing Team: what powers of enforcement they have at their disposal and an understanding of how they put the child at the centre of the work they undertake
 - **13th March, 2024**
 - Dudley Virtual School
 - Care Leavers Accommodation and issues relating thereto
 - Annual Report 2023/24 and potential items of business for 2024/25
5. Action Tracker reports will also be included as a standing item on each agenda to ensure that any outstanding actions agreed by the Committee are progressed and monitored.

6. The Committee is requested to consider the outline programme of business as outlined above taking account of the need for considerable flexibility due to changing circumstances and any issues that might arise during the municipal year.
7. Subject to the views of the Committee at this meeting, the Lead for Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, will make the necessary practical arrangements for the Committee to conduct its work during 2023/24.
8. The Council's scrutiny arrangements are set out in Article 6 of the Constitution and the associated Procedure Rules within Part 4 of the Constitution. At the Annual Meeting of the Council on 18th May 2023, approval was given to the establishment of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, together with seven Select Committees, for the 2023/24 municipal year.

A report was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12th June 2023 proposing consequential updates to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements arising from decisions made at the Annual Meeting of the Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has resolved that the report be deferred. A further report will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course. This will include clarification of the arrangements for the scrutiny of any decisions that are 'called-in' in line with the Procedure Rules.

9. A "Scrutiny Essentials" Training Session was provided to Members by the Local Government Association on 25th May 2023, with emphasis on the importance of the Members role and essential scrutiny techniques to assist in the development of scrutiny work for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Finance

10. The Council's scrutiny arrangements for 2023/24 will cause an initial pressure of £30,180 on the budget for Members' Allowances and will also require additional unbudgeted resource for officer support. The Director of Finance and Legal will seek in year to contain this pressure from reserves. However, arrangements for future years will need to be considered as part of the budget process for 2024/25 onwards.

Law

11. Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the requirements of the Council's Constitution,

which was adopted under the Local Government Act 2000, subsequent legislation and associated Regulations and Guidance.

Risk Management

12. Reports to Select Committees will include a paragraph to ensure proper consideration of any ongoing material risks as part of the Council's Risk Management Framework.

Equality Impact

13. Provision exists within the Council's scrutiny arrangements for overview and scrutiny to be undertaken of the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

14. The issues referred to in this report are administered within the resources available to the Democratic Services Team with support from Directorates and other Officers as required.

Commercial/Procurement

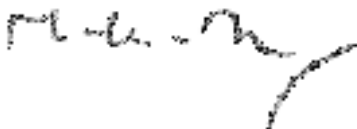
15. Individual items may have commercial or procurement implications, which will be reported to relevant Select Committees.

Environment/Climate Change

16. The Council requires that all reports should include an assessment of the impact on the environment. The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and reports on individual proposals should address the impact on the Council's work to address Climate Change and achieve the Net Zero target by 2041. In addition, individual reports should consider how the proposals support the [United Nations sustainable development goals](#)

Council Priorities and Projects

17. Work undertaken by Select Committees will contribute to the delivery of key Council priorities including the Borough Vision, Council Plan and Future Council Programme. Reports to meetings will include details of how proposals impact on key Council priorities.



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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Terms of reference

List of Background Documents

The Council's Constitution

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Membership

11 Councillors, 5 voting Church and Parent Governor Co-opted representatives.

Terms of Reference

In accordance with any agreed programme of business and any statutory requirements:

- (a) To undertake scrutiny and contribute to policy development relating to matters falling within the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education.
- (b) To undertake scrutiny investigations/inquiries as required.
- (c) To submit reports and recommendations to the relevant decision taker(s).