



Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 9th June 2006

Subject: Work Programme

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

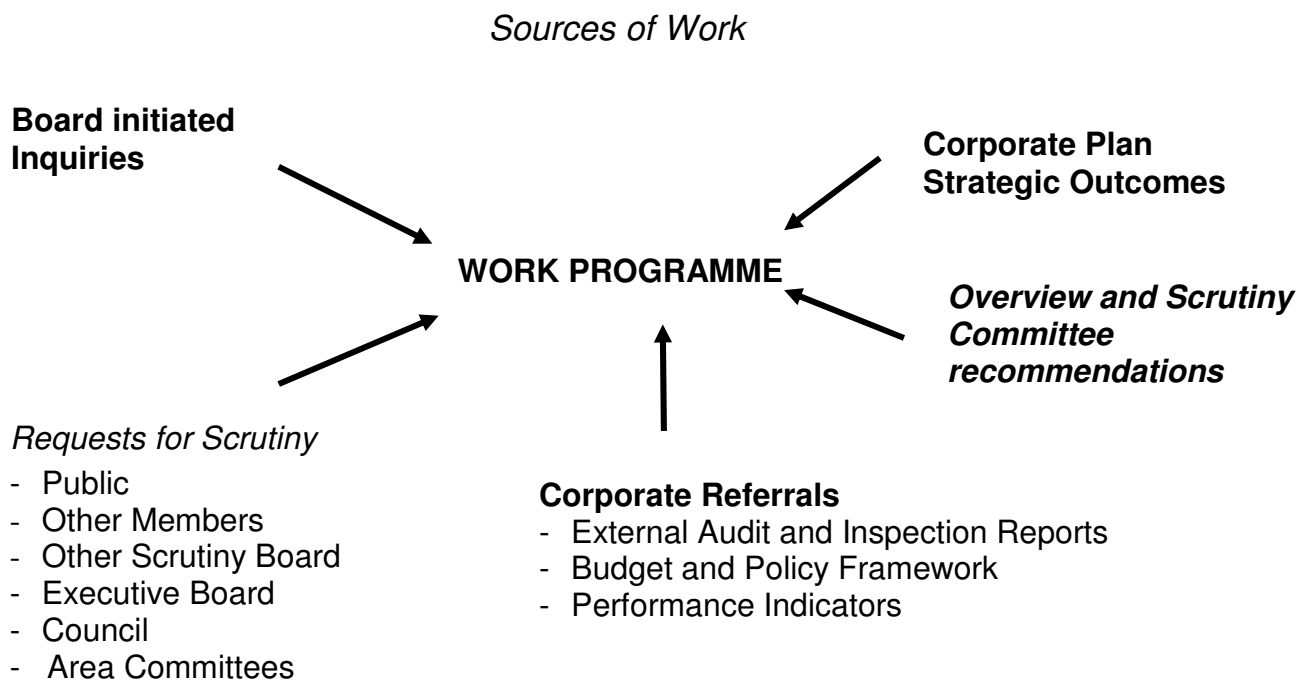
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report proposes guidelines for the development of a work programme for this Scrutiny Board.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that Scrutiny Boards are now aligned to Executive Board portfolios. For this Board, the remit includes the responsibilities within the portfolio of the Executive Board Lead Member and Support Member for Children's Services . These areas of responsibility are identified in **appendix 1**.
- 1.3 Whilst the remit of the Board is aligned to Executive Board Member responsibilities, Members will be aware that the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for the Council has highlighted the need to focus on the corporate priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan.

2.0 Work Programme

- 2.1 Scrutiny Boards perform a number of roles. These include:
 - holding the Executive to account including the review of executive decisions;
 - review and development of policy;
 - performance monitoring and review in relation to the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2005/08 and Council Plan;
 - undertaking tasks as determined within the Council's Constitution;
 - evaluating and monitoring initiatives and pilot work.

- 2.2 The development of a manageable work programme enables Members to undertake:
- Effective planning of the Board's time and workload;
 - The identification of priorities for inquiry, based on the Corporate Plan 2005/08 priorities;
 - The allocation of financial and human resources to support the Board;
 - Planning of evidence from Councillors, Officers and potential external witnesses allowing the provision of written submissions in advance where required;
 - Informing the public in advance of the Board's proposed activities, thereby enhancing their ability to participate.
- 2.3 Scrutiny Board work comes from a number of different sources:



- 2.4 These different elements will require forward planning and the Board will need to consider giving priority to the Corporate Plan 2005/08 strategic outcomes. The Board will also need to create a manageable workload. Over the last few years of Scrutiny Board work, experience has shown that the process is more effective if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time. Overview and Scrutiny Committee advice is that the Board considers the benefits of single item agendas (excluding miscellaneous information and minutes) in order to focus on all the relevant evidence and complete the inquiry in a shorter period of time. There are various mechanisms available to assist the Board in concluding inquiries quickly whilst the issues are pertinent, such as working groups and site visits.
- 2.5 Previous experience has shown that the majority of work is initiated by the Board itself and given that there will be a number of competing demands, this work needs to be carefully selected in order to reflect the priorities associated with the relevant strategic outcome within the Corporate Plan 2005/08 and Council Plan to ensure the Council is achieving those stated aims.

- 2.6 At the end of the last municipal year, a number of Boards suggested 'carry over' items for consideration by the relevant Board this year. These are included on the draft work programme at appendix 2 under 'unscheduled items'. The Board may either agree to plan these into the year's work, or prioritise other areas for scrutiny.
- 2.7 Also attached to this report are the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (appendix 3) and the most recent minutes of the Council's Executive Board (appendix 4) and the Executive of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (appendix 5), which will give Members an overview of current executive activity within the Board's portfolio area.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 2.8 The Board should also be aware that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to undertake inquiries into matters which fall within the remit of more than one Scrutiny Board.
- 2.9 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may from time to time also recommend Inquiry subjects to relevant Boards, which should be taken into account when the Board discusses its work programming.

Work programming

- 2.10 The Director of Children's Services, Chief Executive of Education Leeds and the Executive Members for Children's Services have been invited to attend this meeting of the Board to contribute to discussions about the Board's work programme.
- 2.11 Following those discussions, it is suggested that the Board agrees an outline work programme that prioritises the issues to be investigated. The work programme would need, in accordance with the protocols, to fairly reflect minority party concerns.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 Members are requested to agree the details of the Board's work programme.

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**OVERVIEW OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

POST	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY
Lead Executive Member for Children's Services	<p>To have overall political oversight for the following principal areas of Council activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • functions of the authority in its role as children's services authority (including arrangements to promote co-operation to improve the well-being of children); • social services functions so far as they relate to children (and young people leaving care); • health services – functions exercisable on behalf of an NHS body so far as they relate to children; • functions of the authority as LEA <p>To represent the Council on key inter-sector and inter-authority partnerships.</p>
Support Executive Member for Children's Services	<p>To have political oversight for the following principal areas of Council activity on behalf of the Children's Services Lead Executive Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based learning • Early years development and child care planning • Youth services <p>To represent the Children's Services Lead Executive Member on appropriate inter-sector and inter-authority partnerships.</p>

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) – Draft Work Programme 2006/07

Appendix 2

Item	Description	Notes
Possible items for 2006/07 work programme		
Adoption	To consider conducting a formal Inquiry into the adoption of looked after children.	This follows discussions at the previous Board's February 2006 meeting in response to the report of the Director of Social Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds on 'Monitoring Support to Children in Care'. The Board were concerned that performance with regard to the adoption performance indicator had deteriorated since 2001.
Anti-Social Behaviour Interventions	To consider carrying out further work in relation to preventative work with children and young people	Following an Inquiry last year by the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Community Safety), the Scrutiny Board (Children and Young People) identified this as a potential area of further work, but agreed to await the department's formal response to the scrutiny recommendations before making a final decision.
Scrutiny by Children and Young People	To consider proposals for children and young people to carry out scrutiny activity	Last year members of the Youth Council carried out a scrutiny inquiry into fair-trade in schools. It was agreed that there should be further opportunities for children and young people to be directly involved in scrutiny.
Transition from Primary to Secondary School	To receive further information in relation to the work of the Transfer Consultants	The Board indicated an ongoing interest in the progress of this work.

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) – Draft Work Programme 2006/07

Item	Description	Notes
Meeting date: 13th July 2006 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 27th June		
Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) Inquiry	To receive the formal response to the final inquiry report	The Scrutiny Board (Children and Young People) published an Inquiry report on 6 th April 2006
Implementing the Children Act 2004 in Leeds	To receive the formal response to the final inquiry report, and additional information arising from the interim inquiry report	The Scrutiny Board (Children and Young People) published an Inquiry report on 26 th April 2006
Secondary Achievement	To receive the formal response to the final inquiry report	The Scrutiny Board (Children and Young People) published an Inquiry report on 26 th April 2006
Recruitment, Retention and Workload of Children's Social Workers	To receive the formal response to the final inquiry report	The Scrutiny Board (Children and Young People) published an Inquiry report on 26 th April 2006
Looked After Children	To consider performance information in relation to the Council's services to looked after children	A framework was agreed by the previous Scrutiny Board on 17 th November 2005. It was envisaged this would take place as early as possible in the new municipal year.
Meeting date: 7th September 2006 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 22nd August		
Meeting date: 12th October 2006 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 26th September		

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) – Draft Work Programme 2006/07

Item	Description	Notes
Meeting date: 16th November 2006 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 31st October		
Meeting date: 14th December 2006 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 28th November		
Meeting date: 11th January 2007 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 19th December		
Meeting date: 8th February 2007 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 23rd January		
Meeting date: 8th March 2007 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 20th February		
Meeting date: 19th April 2007 - The deadline for reports for this meeting is 10.00am on Tuesday 3rd April		
Annual Report	To agree the Board's contribution to the annual scrutiny report	

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS****EXTRACT RELATING TO THE SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)**For the period 1st June 2006 to 30th September 2006

Key Decisions	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker	Lead Officer (To whom representations should be made)
Schools Devolved Formula Capital Budgets – to seek approval to carry out capital works and incur expenditure at Leeds schools, to be funded by Devolved Formula Capital grant.	Director of Corporate Services	1/06/06	With schools before grant is spent	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
Major Refurbishment and General Building Works 2006/07- Authority to incur £2,000,000 of expenditure in respect of the Major Refurbishment and General Building Works programme	Director of Corporate Services	1/06/06	The relevant schools will be consulted on their refurbishment	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
Schools Capital Investment Partnership 2006/07 – to seek approval to carry out capital works and incur expenditure in respect of the 2006/07 Schools Capital Investment Partnership Programme	Director of Corporate Services	1/06/06	With schools to put in bids for funding	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
Review of Primary Provision in Meanwood Primary Planning Area – To seek agreement on the way forward for primary provision in the Meanwood area and any relevant statutory processes	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	14/06/06	Public consultation Summer 2005	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds

Key Decisions	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker	Lead Officer (To whom representations should be made)
Review of Primary Provision in Horsforth Primary Planning Area- to seek agreement on the way forward for primary provision in the Horsforth area and any relevant statutory processes.	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	14/06/06	Informal consultation	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
Strategy for Planning Primary School Places – To seek approval of the Strategy for Planning Primary School Places	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	14/06/06		The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
The former Royal Park Primary School- to note the outcome of the work undertaken to investigate the viability of implementing proposals considered at November 2003 Executive Board meeting, and to seek approval for proposals in respect of marketing the property against a brief requiring the inclusion of community elements and on the premise the Council will retain long term control of the property by granting a long leasehold interest	Executive Board (Portfolio: Development)	14/06/06	Ward Members and Area Management Committee	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Director of Development
Review of Primary Provision in Boston Spa Primary Planning Area- seeking agreement on the way forward for primary provision in the Boston Spa area and any relevant statutory processes.	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	5/7/06	Informal consultation	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds

Key Decisions	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker	Lead Officer (To whom representations should be made)
Review of Primary Provision in Alwoodley Primary Planning Area- To seek agreement on the way forward for structure of primary provision in Alwoodley and any relevant statutory processes.	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	5/7/06	Formal consultation Autumn 2005	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School – To seek approval to inject a capital receipt generated from the proposed sale of the former Newall Primary School into the Capital Programme and to incur expenditure in respect of capital investment at Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School.	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	5/7/06	Consultation ongoing with DfES	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds
East Garforth Primary School – To seek approval to the ring fencing of a capital receipt generated from the sale of an area of surplus school land. Approval will also be sought to inject the capital receipt into the capital programme and to incur expenditure in respect of the construction of a new nursery, changing rooms, and an office link between the existing school buildings, and to carry out improvements to the school playing fields at East Garforth Primary School.	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	5/7/06	Consultation ongoing with DfES	The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds

Key Decisions	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	Documents to be Considered by Decision Maker	Lead Officer (To whom representations should be made)
Review of Primary Provision in Richmond Hill Primary Planning Area – Agreement on the way forward for primary provision in the Richmond Hill area and any relevant statutory processes	Executive Board (Portfolio: Learning)	5/7/06		The report to be issued to the decision maker with the agenda for the meeting	Chief Executive of Education Leeds

NOTES

Key decisions are those executive decisions:

- which result in the authority incurring expenditure or making savings over £500,000 per annum, or
- are likely to have a significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards

In cases where Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive are not included in this Plan, 5 days notice of the intention to take such decisions will be given by way of the Agenda for the Executive Board meeting.

Executive Board Portfolios

Central and Corporate
Development
City Services
Neighbourhoods and Housing
Leisure
Learning
Children's Services
Social Care and Health
Narrowing the Gap
Leader of the Labour Group
Advisory Member

Executive Member

Councillor Mark Harris
Councillor Andrew Carter
Councillor Steve Smith
Councillor John Leslie Carter
Councillor John Procter
Councillor Richard Harker
Councillor Brian Jennings
Councillor Peter Harrand
Councillor David Blackburn
Councillor Keith Wakefield
Councillor Judith Blake