

Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 28th June 2013

Subject: Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report presents the terms of reference for the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for Members' information (Appendix A).
2. Scrutiny Boards will continue to be aligned to the Strategic Partnership Boards and are therefore authorised to review or scrutinise the performance of their relevant Partnership Board. In accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, Scrutiny Boards will also continue to act as 'critical friend' to their relevant Partnership Board and assess how well the Partnership is working in practice. A report summarising the Scrutiny Board's observations and recommendations following its assessment of the Childrens Trust Board in March 2013 is attached for information (Appendix B).

Recommendation

3. Members are requested to:
 - (a) note the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference;
 - (b) note the report of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board on the Childrens Trust Board.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report presents the terms of reference for the Children and Families Scrutiny Board following recent amendments made to the Council's Constitution.
- 1.2 Following the Scrutiny Board's assessment of the Childrens Trust Board in March 2013, a report summarising the Scrutiny Board's observations and recommendations is also attached for information.

2.0 Background information

- 2.1 The Annual Review of the Constitution more often than not identifies areas for amendment in relation to the Scrutiny Boards' terms of reference to ensure consistency in wording and provide procedural clarity.

3.0 Main issues

Constitutional changes affecting the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference

- 3.1 On this occasion there have been no changes to the remit of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for 2013/14. The terms of reference are attached for Members' information (Appendix A).
- 3.2 The Board's terms of reference are related to the functions delegated to the Director of Childrens Services. In terms of Executive Members, the Scrutiny Board's role encompasses the areas of responsibility assigned to the Executive Member for Children's Services.

Alignment of Scrutiny Boards to the Strategic Partnership Boards

- 3.4 Scrutiny Boards will continue to be aligned to the Strategic Partnership Boards and are therefore authorised to review or scrutinise the performance of their relevant Partnership Board. In accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, Scrutiny Boards will also continue to act as 'critical friend' to their relevant Partnership Board and consider and report on the following areas:
 1. What contribution the Partnership Board is making to tackle poverty and inequality, and the progress being made against this?
 2. How successfully the Board's partnership arrangements are working?
 3. To what extent are significant benefits being seen from partnership working? How has partnership working ensured increased pace of change to address the issue in hand?
- 3.5 During March 2013, the Scrutiny Boards received a report from their relevant Strategic Partnership Board setting out their strengths and potential areas for development in respect of the three key questions above. The Scrutiny Boards were also given the opportunity to question the chair, members of the Partnership Board and support officers.

3.6 It was agreed that, following the scrutiny sessions, each Scrutiny Board would produce a summary report of its findings. The Scrutiny Support Unit would then prepare a cover report drawing out any common threads and best practice emerging from the individual inquiry sessions. Each Strategic Partnership Board will also receive their respective individual report and will be requested to respond to any scrutiny recommendations in the normal manner.

3.7 As the Children and Families Scrutiny Board is aligned to the Childrens Trust Board, representatives from this Partnership Board attended the Scrutiny Board's meeting on 14th March 2013. A report summarising the Scrutiny Board's observations and recommendations in relation to the Childrens Trust Board was forwarded to the Partnership Board and is also attached (Appendix B).

4.0 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The amendments made to the Council's Constitution were considered by the General Purposes Committee on 9th May 2013, prior to being formally considered and approved by Council on 20th May 2013.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration.

4.2.1 In line with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, the Scrutiny Boards will continue to ensure through service review that equality and diversity/cohesion and integration issues are considered in decision making and policy formulation.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards continue to promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the City Priorities. The Scrutiny Boards will continue to review or scrutinise the performance of their relevant Strategic Partnership Board. In doing so, they will review outcomes, targets and priorities within the Business Plan and specific "Best City for.... " priorities set out within the City Priority Plan.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 This report has no specific resource and value for money implications.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The amendments made to the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference aim to provide procedural clarity.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 This report has no risk management implications

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 This report clarifies the duties and functions of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) note the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference;
- (b) note the report of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board on the Children's Trust Board.

7.0 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.