

**Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**Subject: Sources of work and areas of priority for the Scrutiny Board**

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**

This report is provided too assist the Scrutiny Board in effectively managing its workload and set an outline for the work programme for the forthcoming municipal year. The report also provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and clarifies the Board's terms of reference.

**Recommendation**

Members are requested to use the attached information and the discussion with those present at the meeting to

- (a) confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year
- (b) authorise the Chair, in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To assist the Scrutiny Board in effectively managing its workload for the forthcoming municipal year, this report provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 Scrutiny Boards are responsible for ensuring that items of scrutiny work come from a strategic approach as well as a need to challenge service performance and respond to issues of high public interest.
- 2.2 Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to be strategic and outward looking in their operation and continue to focus on the City Priorities.
- 2.3 City Priority Plans were established to replace the Leeds Strategic Plan. These city-wide partnership plans identify the key outcomes and priorities to be delivered by the Council, and its partners, from 2011 until 2015. The City Priority Plans are aligned to the Strategic Partnerships who will own the plans and be responsible for ensuring the delivery of the agreed priorities.

## **3 Main issues**

### Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

- 3.1 Five of the Scrutiny Boards are themed to mirror the Strategic Partnership Boards, which is reflected in the terms of reference for each Board. Whilst it is recommended that areas of review are focused around the City Priorities and maintain a strategic approach all Scrutiny Boards remain autonomous in determining their reviews.

### Sources of Scrutiny work

- 3.4 In addition to the functions outlined with the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference, other sources of work will continue to be 'requests for scrutiny' and corporate referrals.
- 3.5 The City Priority Plans are structured around a small set of short term (4 years) priorities each of which is measured through a headline indicator. As such they are the "must-do" priorities or "obsessions" for each partnership and may be supported by more detailed plans as the partnership sees fit. The most relevant plan is the Children and Young People Plan 2011-15 ([refresh xxxxx 2013](#)). This is attached as appendix 1. A copy of the original Children and Young Peoples Plan approved April 18<sup>th</sup> 2011, will be made available at the meeting should members wish to view it.
- 3.6 A draft of 'The Best Council Plan 2013-17' is to be presented to Executive Board on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2013. This replaces the Council Business Plan for 2011- 15 and aims to set out the strategic priorities for the council. The plan sets out best council objectives, including building a child friendly city on page 19. The draft 'Best Council Plan 2013 – 17 is attached as appendix 2.

- 3.7 In February 2013 the analysis report of the Every Child Matters Survey 2011/12 was published. The report identifies and insight into what it is like for children and young people growing up in Leeds and highlights a number of key area's that the Board may wish to consider for scrutiny. This report is attached as appendix 3.
- 3.8 The Quarter 4 Performance Report is also scheduled for consideration at the meeting which may highlight potential areas of work for 2013/14.
- 3.9 Attached as appendix 4 is the latest Executive Board minutes. The Scrutiny Board may also undertake further pieces of scrutiny work as considered appropriate.
- 3.10 Over the last few years of Scrutiny Board work, experience has shown that the process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time. This view was echoed within the findings of the KPMG external audit report 2009 on the Scrutiny function in Leeds.
- 3.11 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules require Scrutiny Boards, before deciding to undertake an inquiry, to consider the current workload of the Scrutiny Board and the available resources to carry out the work.
- 3.12 In addition the Board should consider if a similar or related issue is already being examined by Scrutiny or has been considered by Scrutiny recently and if the matter raised is of sufficient significance and has the potential for Scrutiny to produce realistic recommendations that could be implemented and lead to tangible improvements. A list of previous scrutiny inquires relating to Children and Families work area is attached as appendix 5.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 It is recognised that in order to enable Scrutiny to focus on areas of priority, each Scrutiny Board needs to establish an early dialogue with the Director and Executive Board Member holding the relevant portfolio and also the Partnership Chair.
- 4.1.2 The Director of Children's Services and the Executive Board Member with responsibility for Children's Services have been invited to attend the meeting to discuss priorities.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration.**

- 4.2.1 In determining the areas of work and setting the work programme there will be will be no equality, diversity, cohesion and integration implications for groups or individuals. Further consideration will be made and recorded accordingly as the Board undertake their obligations during 2013/14.

### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The following plans are relevant to the work of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- The Leeds Children and Young Peoples Plan 2011 -15
- Best Council Plan 2013-17

#### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 This section is not relevant to this report

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 There is no restricted or confidential information contained in this report.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 This section is not relevant to this report

### **5 Recommendations**

5.1 Members are requested to use the attached information and the discussion with those present at the meeting to

- (a) confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year
- (b) authorise the Chair, in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

### **6 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

6.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> 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.