

## Report to Scrutiny

Item Number:

**Contains Confidential or Exempt Information**

No

<b>Subject of Report:</b>	Panel Operations
<b>Meeting:</b>	Scrutiny Review Panel 2 – 2020/2021: Children’s Services Ofsted Improvements 11 November 2020
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<b>Scrutiny Officer:</b>	Harjeet Bains Scrutiny Review Officer Email: <a href="mailto:bainsh@ealing.gov.uk">bainsh@ealing.gov.uk</a> Tel: 020-8825 7120
<b>Cabinet Responsibility:</b>	Councillor Yvonne Johnson (Schools & Children’s Services and Deputy Leader)
<b>Director Responsibility:</b>	Helen Harris Director of Legal and Democratic Services Email: <a href="mailto:harrish@ealing.gov.uk">harrish@ealing.gov.uk</a> Tel: 020-8825 8615
<b>Brief:</b>	To consider and agree the Panel’s terms of reference including co-option arrangements and work programme.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That the Panel accepts its terms of reference, co-option arrangements and work programme.

## 1.0 Panel Operations

### ***Terms of Reference***

- 1.1 As part of Scrutiny's light touch review of Ealing Council's approach to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Panel scrutinised the ***community response in the borough*** element at its first meeting on 8 July 2020.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee cancelled the second meeting scheduled for 23 September 2020, along with the scheduled meetings for the other Scrutiny Review Panels in September/October to bring the meetings programme in line with the reduced number of meetings per panel as agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2020.
- 1.3 Going forward, the Panel has been tasked to review how the Ealing Children's Services is meeting its statutory responsibilities in respect of the 2019 Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care Services findings and progress against the inspection priority actions. This review will take place over the remaining 3 meetings scheduled to take place.
- 1.4 Consequently, at the recent pre-agenda meeting with the service officers, the Chair (Cllr Karanvir Dhadwal) and Vice Chair (Cllr Seema Kumar) identified the following main areas for review over the next three Panel meetings:

#### Meeting 1

- An overview of the function and delivery of children's social care services.
- Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting and Priority Actions.
- Workforce Strategy including staff recruitment/retention, examples of the Weekly Directors Messages and support provided to staff.
- COVID-19 Pandemic – adaptations/flexibilities used, statutory services/ impact on families.

#### Meeting 2

- Care Leavers and Housing Quota.
- Children's Performance Data – exploratory review and scrutiny around performance (Quarter 2) particularly the Section 47 child protection investigation, initial child protection conference and child in need processes (including the Mosaic project).
- Ofsted comments on the now improved data.
- Regional Adoption Arrangements – with the possibility of incorporating a video feedback of an adopter's experience via video recording.
- Black Lives Matters – corporate approach/children's equalities groups.

#### Meeting 3

- Short Breaks Service  
An update on the provision at Haydock Avenue (which opened on 23 September 2020) that provides accommodation-based short breaks for children and young people (aged 9-18 years) with disabilities.

#### Key Witnesses

- 1.5 The key Cabinet Member responsible for this service area is Councillor Yvonne Johnson (Portfolio Holder for Schools & Children's Services and Deputy Leader).

- 1.6 The main Service Officers called to give evidence are:
- Carolyn Fair (Director, Children and Families)
  - Gary Jones (Assistant Director, Children's Social Care)
  - Charles Barnard (Assistant Director, Early Help and SEND)
- 1.7 Witnesses have been called from Ealing Council only for this meeting in acknowledging that partner organisations are still responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 crisis. Any lines of enquiry for partner agencies should be identified for the future meetings.

Evidence to be provided

- 1.8 The key lines of enquiry have been relayed to the service officers in advance to assist with the preparation for the meeting.

Co-optees

- 1.9 The Panel has the power to appoint non-voting advisory members onto the Panel in accordance with the framework for the nomination, appointment and retention of non-voting advisory members (including substitutes) which is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.10 The Chair and Vice Chair proposed the co-option of a headteacher or a governor from the local schools.
- 1.11 Consequently, Mr Paul Adair (Headteacher at Castlebar Primary School, Hathaway Gardens, London W13 0DH) has agreed to be co-opted onto the Panel. Castlebar is a day special school with good specialist facilities for children aged 4-11 years. It caters for pupils who have moderate to severe learning difficulties and are able to benefit from a modified, adapted curriculum. There are up to eight children in each class with a teacher and a teaching assistant or nursery nurse. Speech and language therapists are based at the school three days a week and an occupational therapist is based at the school two days a week. Individual programmes are incorporated, wherever possible, into the class work.
- 1.12 The Panel is asked to co-opt Mr Paul Adair onto the Panel.
- 1.13 The statutory education co-optees would be invited to any meetings that consider an education matter.
- Work Programme**
- 1.14 The main themes for review have been scheduled in the outline Work Programme (**Appendix 2**) in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and relevant service officers.
- 1.15 The Panel is asked to consider the outline Work Programme and agree any supplementary topics that should be included to achieve the agreed scope and expected outcomes. The Panel also needs to decide who (groups, individuals, etc.) should be engaged in the selected topics and in what manner.
- 1.16 Similar items should be grouped together for a themed meeting. To improve productivity and for the meetings to be more effective it is advisable to select no more than two substantive items for in-depth scrutiny at each meeting.

### ***Guidance on Selecting Topics***

- 1.17 General guidance on selecting a scrutiny topic is that it should be:
- Specific (there is a clear remit/question to answer);
  - Achievable (in the time given and the resources available);
  - Likely to generate productive outcomes;
  - Timely and relevant (a community or Council priority); and
  - Of public interest.
- 1.18 It is proposed that an updated Work Programme for the Children's Services Ofsted Improvements Scrutiny Review Panel be presented at each meeting. This will allow the Panel members, officers and others to know well in advance the topics of enquiry that will be addressed throughout the year; schedule items into the work programme accordingly and track the progress of issues.
- 1.19 The Work Programme is a rolling plan of work that will be amended throughout the period. Items can be addressed as and when they arise or come to the attention of the Panel.

### **External Engagement**

- 1.20 The Panel is also asked to agree how it would like to engage the local people and relevant organisations in the Panel's work for the remaining meetings.
- 1.21 The Panel will need to engage and seek the views of the major stakeholders for all the main topics that have been selected. The appropriate groups/individuals will be invited to make presentations at the relevant meetings.
- 1.22 Due to the COVID-19 constraints, the method of engaging and seeking views would depend upon the topic involved and the nature of the stakeholder.
- 1.23 An article inviting expressions of interest in the Panel's work will be published on the Council website.

## **2.0 Legal Implications**

- 2.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 2.2 The general scrutiny functions and powers are set out in the Council Constitution (as amended).

## **3.0 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Support to the Panel is contained within the allocated budget. Value for money will be achieved from the Panel completing its brief to time and quality, with considered recommendations.

## **4.0 Other Implications**

- 4.1 There are no other implications arising.

## 5.0 Background Papers

Ealing Council's Constitution, available at

[https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201046/decision\\_making/597/council\\_constitution](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201046/decision_making/597/council_constitution).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Agendas, Minutes and Reports, available at

[http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS\\_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/34/Default.aspx](http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/34/Default.aspx).

Scrutiny Review Panel 2 – 2020/2021: Children's Services Ofsted Improvements – Agendas, Minutes and Reports, available at

[https://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS\\_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/325/Default.aspx](https://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/325/Default.aspx).

Current agendas and reports are available at

<http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committees.aspx>.

## Report Consultation

<b>Name of Consultee</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Date Sent to Consultee</b>	<b>Date Response Received from Consultee</b>	<b>Comments Appear in Report Para</b>
<b>Internal</b>				
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	N/A		
Ross Brown	Chief Finance Officer	N/A		
Sam Bailey	Head of Democratic Services	23.10.20/ 28.10.20/ 30/10/20		
Cllr Karanvir Dhadwal	Panel Chair	16.10.20		
Cllr Seema Kumar	Panel Vice Chair	16.10.20		
Carolyn Fair	Director, Children and Families	16.10.20/ 23.10.20/ 28.10.20		
Gary Jones	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care	20.10.20/ 23.10.20/ 28.10.20		
Charles Barnard	Assistant Director, Early Help and SEND	28.10.20		
<b>External</b>				
None.				

## Report History

<b>Decision Type:</b>		<b>Urgency item?</b>	
Non-key Decision		No	
<b>Authorised by Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Date Report Drafted:</b>	<b>Report Deadline:</b>	<b>Date Report Sent:</b>
N/A	15.10.20	03.10.20	02.10.20
<b>Report No.:</b>	<b>Report Author and Contact for Queries:</b>		
	Harjeet Bains Scrutiny Review Officer Email: <a href="mailto:bainsh@ealing.gov.uk">bainsh@ealing.gov.uk</a> Tel: 020-8825 7120		