

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Dave Gordon – Scrutiny Officer  
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**WARDS:** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

#### **EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL** **2018 – 19 WORK PROGRAMME**

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 For the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel (ECS Scrutiny Panel) to form its work programme for 2018 – 19.

2. **Recommendations/Proposed Action**

2.1 That the Panel approve the proposed work programme for the 2018 – 19 Municipal Year and the items for inclusion in future meetings.

2.2 That the Panel provide clear guidance as to the key questions which should be addressed in these future agenda items.

2.3 That the Panel consider areas suited to the commissioning of Task & Finish Groups to provide in-depth reviews of specific areas.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The ECS Scrutiny Panel, along with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and other Scrutiny Panels combine to meet the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of the ECS Scrutiny Panel also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan, in particular the following:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful

#### 4. **Supporting Information**

4.1 The work programme is currently relatively undecided. As a result, the ECS Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the approach it wishes to take to the 2018 – 19 Municipal Year. The approach outlined in the following sections is the proposal being put to the Panel by officers, and would offer members a significant opportunity to add value to Slough Borough Council's (SBC) work across a diverse range of areas.

4.2 The proposal is that meetings have specific themes; these would then take a range of related agenda items, each with specific questions of interest to the Panel and the local community. The themes which have been identified as most important to SBC's work for children and its responsibilities as a corporate parent are as follows:

- Young People's Services (to be taken on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018)
- Children's Social Care (to be taken on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018)
- Early Years (to be taken on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019)
- School Standards (to be taken on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019)
- School Places and SEND (to be taken on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019)

4.3 Specific agenda items related to the key questions for each of these areas should then be allocated as appropriate. The areas identified by SBC as of most importance here are:

##### **Young People's Services**

- What has the impact of the Curve been on the uptake of library services by young people?
- What is the impact of the Slough Youth Parliament?

##### **Children's Social Care**

- What has been the impact of Slough Children's Services Trust?
- How effective is corporate parenting in Slough?

##### **Early Years**

- What is the work and impact of Slough Children's Centres? This could also be the best suited item to Task & Finish Group work.
- How is Slough progressing with the implementation of 30 hours free childcare ?
- What is the strategy to develop the Early Years Workforce in Slough?

##### **School Standards**

- How have Slough children, including vulnerable groups achieved in 2017-18?
- What can Slough do to improve teacher recruitment and retention? This may include key worker housing.

## **School Places and SEND**

- What is the present situation and future demand for school places?
- How is Slough progressing with implementation of the SEND Reforms? (e.g. transfer from statements to EHC plans) What are the key issues with SEND funding and provision in Slough?

4.4 This proposal is the one included at Appendix A. The Panel are asked to approve this proposal, and in addition recommend areas for inclusion in the Work Programme as suitable. Officers at the meeting will advise the Panel on the suitability of these, either in terms of scrutiny's ability to have a positive impact on the process of forming policy or in terms of the logistics of including them on an agenda without overburdening the Panel.

4.5 The Panel is also asked to consider the formation of one or more Task & Finish Groups. As can be seen above, the proposal is for this to focus on Children's Centres. Should this be commissioned, the Panel may wish to seek guidance as to when this should commence, which areas should be included in its scope and when it should report to ensure that its work and recommendations can be considered in a timely and appropriate manner.

4.6 The Work Programme is a flexible document which will be continually open to review throughout the Municipal Year.

## 5. **Conclusion**

5.1 This report is intended to provide the ECS Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to formulate its work programme for the year.

## 6. **Appendices Attached**

A - Proposed Work Programme for 2018 – 19 Municipal Year

## 7. **Background Papers**

None.