

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

## **REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 July 2009
<b>Report of:</b>	Borough Solicitor
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Work Programme update

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 To consider further the items proposed for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme and determine which items should be included in the Work Programme for the current municipal year.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee agree its Work Programme, determine a priority order, agree timescales and methodology.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 It is good practice to agree a Work Programme to enable effective management of the Committee's business.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

### **6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health**

- 6.1 Not known at this stage.

### **7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

- 7.1 None identified at the moment.

## **8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

8.1 Not known at this stage.

## **9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1 None.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 There are no identifiable risks.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 At the last meeting of the Committee on 8 June, Members considered a list of potential items for the Work Programme that had been given a priority order at the Scrutiny briefing session on 27 April, together with a number of additional items identified by Members:

- Children's Centres – usage, role and services;
- Costs of transport for young people;
- Provision of support to families.

11.2 The Committee also considered a number of items raised at the meeting and resolved as follows:

That:

(a) the current draft Work Programme as submitted be approved;

(b) the following items be added onto the Work Programme as potential items:

- Children's Centres – role, usage and services;
- Costs of transport for young people;
- Provision of support to families;
- School admissions process;
- Educational attainment across the Borough;
- Residential placements and Review of residential provision; and

(c) the Work Programme be considered further at the next meeting.

11.3 The Committee was also advised that a meeting had been arranged between the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Portfolio Holder and relevant Senior Officers to discuss the remit of the Committee and that further items for the Work Programme may be identified at that meeting.

- 11.4 The meeting referred to above has now taken place and a list of items has been proposed by Lorraine Butcher, Head of Services for Children and Families, which the Scrutiny Committee may want to consider, a number of which relate to items already suggested:
- Safeguarding;
  - Corporate Parenting – in the first instance it has been proposed that a training session be arranged for all Members of this Committee;
  - Review of residential provision;
  - Family Support Services – targeted and preventative work;
  - Educational attainment – “narrowing the gap”;
  - Early Years Funding Reform;
  - Review of the Children Plan;
  - Role of the Children’s Trust.
- 11.5 The Committee is now invited to consider and determine a Work Programme, decide a priority order, agree timescales and methodology – for example, whether items should be dealt with by a Task/Finish Panel, at the main Committee etc.
- 11.6 To assist the Committee, each of the above additional matters should be assessed against the following criteria :
- Does the issue fall within a corporate priority
  - Is the issue of key interest to the public
  - Does the matter relate to a poor or declining performing service for which there is no obvious explanation
  - Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends
  - Is it a matter raised by external audit management letters and or audit reports.
  - Is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service

If during the assessment process any of the following emerge, then the topic should be rejected:

- The topic is already being addressed elsewhere
- The matter is subjudice
- Scrutiny cannot add value or is unlikely to be able to conclude an investigation within the specified timescale

## **12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

- 12.1 It is good practice to have a Work Programme for the Committee to consider and prioritise on a regular basis.

## **13.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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