

Minutes of a meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday, 12 July 2023 at 4.30 pm in Council Chamber - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 4.34 pm
Concluded 5.35 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	BRADFORD INDEPENDENT GROUP
Fricker Mohammed Regan Thirkill Zaman	Davies Pollard	Sunderland	Sajawal

Councillor Davies in the Chair

7. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

8. MINUTES

That the minutes of the meetings held on 1 March 2023 and 15 March 2023 be signed as a correct record.

9. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

10. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

11. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS

12. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

The report of the Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document "A"**) was submitted to Members for comment and review of the 2023/24 draft Work Programme. There was a discussion in relation to potential areas of work in Children's Services that could be explored. Members raised numerous questions and sought further clarification in relation to the Work Programme.

The Overview & Scrutiny Lead talked through the draft work programme for the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as well as the programme of detailed Scrutiny Review for the Committee.

It was reported that the Local Government Association (LGA) sessions which were originally to be held face to face at the City Hall, would take place remotely due to rail issues. The aim of the sessions would be to provide members with knowledge and guidance on how they could scrutinise the Children's Trust and to manage the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee by learning how to raise challenging questions.

The Overview & Scrutiny Lead also informed Members of sessions carried out by the Children's Trust, which would also help members better understand the role of the Trust and equip them with knowledge and understanding which would then enable them to raise any questions with officers in future meetings.

Members were provided with upcoming dates for these sessions.

The Overview & Scrutiny Lead provided details of scrutiny reviews undertaken by the Committee, such as, child poverty, elective home education, persistent school absence reviews. Members were advised that they would receive the terms of reference for child poverty and elective home education following the committee meeting.

There was a brief discussion in relation to the work programme and members felt that having access to data would help in having constructive discussions relating to schools/absences. Members felt that they should be able to, in their position as members of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee have access to the Bradford dashboard. Which would then enable members to look more closely at things as a committee in order to improve the lives of children and young people in Bradford.

Members of the Committee said that it would also be helpful to learn the progress of previous reports submitted to the committee, this would guide the committee to make recommendations for future meetings.

A member of the Committee wanted to know where she could access previous reports submitted to the Committee.

In response, the Overview & Scrutiny lead advised that all previous reports could be accessed on the Council's website, minutes and agendas.

Members discussed issues relating to child poverty and were concerned that the level of child poverty had increased since the last time it was addressed at this committee.

Members of the committee had some concerns relating to the notion of Council directing the Scrutiny Committee to do anything was unsuitable and that a scrutiny committee should be wholly independent of that form of process. Members of the committee requested guidance from the Director of Legal and Governance.

Resolved –

That the Committee amended and approved the 2023-24 work programme.

ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead

(Mustansir Butt – 07582 101597)

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THIS AGENDA AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER