

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Proposed topic for Scrutiny – Children and Family Services
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2015

**Purpose of Report:** To propose the establishment of a task group to identify the most effective way in which the Commission might scrutinise the activities of the Children and Families Service.

**Recommended Action:** It is recommended that the Commission agrees to the establishment of a task group to agree a programme or schedule of activity for the scrutiny of the Children and Family Service.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Emma Webster (0118) 941 1676
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	ewebster@westberks.gov.uk

<b>Contact Officer Details</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	David Lowe
<b>Job Title:</b>	Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager
<b>Tel. No.:</b>	01635 519817
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	dlowe@westberks.gov.uk

## Executive Report

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The recent Ofsted inspection of the Children and Family Service set out that there would be a benefit for increased supervision through Overview and Scrutiny.
- 1.2 This paper sets out a proposal to examine the extent to which Overview and Scrutiny should be involved in improving services to children and families, providing context and a methodology for doing so.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 The 2015 Ofsted inspection of 'services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers' in West Berkshire, found that the Council's leadership, management and governance required improvement.
- 2.2 Within the wider section on leadership, management and governance, it reported, at para 115, that

*Although the role of overview and scrutiny has demonstrated some appropriate challenge when considering matters relating to children, a specific focus on children's services would further strengthen the scrutiny provided.*

### 3. Proposed action

- 3.1 In order that action might be taken to address the area for improvement set out at para 115 of the report, the Head of Children and Family Services has requested that the Commission explores how it might be most effectively achieved.
- 3.2 It is proposed therefore that a small task group is established to agree a programme or schedule of activity for the scrutiny of the Children and Family Service. The will work with senior officers from the Communities Directorate.
- 3.3 The task group should comprise 4 members (3 x Conservative, 1 x Liberal Democrat) and should be able to report back to the February meeting of the Commission

### 4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Commission agrees to the establishment of a task group to agree a programme or schedule of activity for the scrutiny of the Children and Family Service.

## Appendices

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There are no Appendices to this report.