

Part 6.10 - Appendix Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

1. Preamble

1.1 Part 3 (Meeting Procedure Rules) sets out the rules and procedures that apply to all of the Council's Bodies and Sub-Bodies.

1.2 If there is any conflict between the wording of Part 3 and this Appendix, this Appendix will prevail.

2. Scope of Role

2.1 The requirement for local authorities in England to establish overview and scrutiny committees is set out in sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

2.2 Additional requirements for Overview and Scrutiny Committees with responsibility for reviewing education functions are set out in Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 2000.

2.3 The Children's Scrutiny Committee ("the Committee") will be, and will perform the functions of, the Council's overview and scrutiny committee in relation to all universal, targeted and specialist services for children and young people in west Berkshire as required by that legislation

3. Membership

3.1 There will be nine Members on this Committee, which shall be politically balanced and its membership will be as set out in the Bodies List and Meetings Rules Table.

3.2 Membership of the Committee shall include the following statutory co-opted Members:

- two parent governor representatives (one each for local authority maintained primary and secondary schools);
- one Church of England representative; and
- one Roman Catholic diocesan representative.

3.3 As statutory co-opted Members, the above shall be entitled to vote on any matters considered by the Committee that relate to schools or education. They shall also be entitled to speak on any other matters considered by the Committee, but they shall not be permitted to vote on such matters.

3.4 In addition, two non-statutory co-opted Members shall be appointed to the Committee, who shall be age 25 or under and living in West Berkshire or working for an organisation in West Berkshire supporting or representing children and young people. The non-statutory co-opted Members shall not be permitted to vote on any matters.

3.5 The above statutory and non-statutory co-opted members will not be taken into account when determining the political balance of the Committee.

3.6 The Committee may also appoint non-statutory, co-opted Members to the Committee or to any of its Task and Finish Groups. This may be done at any time to provide specialist input from those with specific expertise in relation to a particular aspect of the Committee's remit. This may be on an ongoing basis or to inform a particular review.

3.7 No Executive Member may be a Member or Substitute Member of this Committee.

3.8 No Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they have been directly involved. Any query about the meaning of "directly involved" will be decided by the Monitoring Officer.

4. Terms of Reference

4.1 Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils, combined authorities and combined county authorities specifies that effective overview and scrutiny should:

- provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge
- amplify the voices and concerns of the public
- be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- drive improvement in public services and strategic decision-making

4.2 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee shall review and scrutinise how the needs and interests of children and young people in West Berkshire are met by the Council and its partners; and how performance is evaluated and improved.

4.3 Its remit shall include the following universal, targeted and specialist services for children and young people:

- Children's centred/family hubs;
- Early years education;
- School support services;
- School improvement;
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- Home to school/college transport;
- 14-19 education, training and apprenticeship;
- Careers service;
- Youth services;
- Supported accommodation and lodgings;
- Supported employment for young people;
- Leaving care service;
- Youth offending service;
- Child protection;
- Children in Care;
- Targeted support - young people;

- Fostering and adoption;
- Residential homes for children;
- Family support.

4.4 The Committee shall maintain an overview of the activity and performance of maintained schools, and academy schools and colleges within the District.

4.5 It shall also scrutinise the effectiveness of the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership's arrangements for ensuring agencies work together to:

- protect children from maltreatment and prevent impairment of children's health and development
- ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promote community involvement in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare by raising awareness through publicity and training
- develop and review policies and procedures
- have the safest possible practices in relation to the recruitment and selection of all those who work with children in a statutory and voluntary capacity
- ensure systems are in place to monitor the implementation of the lessons learnt from serious case reviews
- ensure the multi-agency and independent sector workforce is trained to safeguard children and improve safety

4.6 The Committee will also review and scrutinise the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership's, including its strategy, business plan and annual reports, as well as the outcomes of any external inspection or peer review of the Partnership, and any action plans arising from those inspections or peer reviews.

4.7 Scrutiny of services that support the physical health and mental wellbeing of children and young people in West Berkshire shall be the responsibility of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, including, but not limited to, School Nursing, Health Visiting, Teenage Pregnancy Services, and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

4.8 The Committee has the power to review or scrutinise decisions taken by the Executive or any other part of the Council (excluding decisions made by Council) in relation to services for children and young people.

4.9 The Committee can make reports or recommendations to the Executive or to the Council. Its role includes developing and reviewing policy and holding the Executive to account for their decisions and actions.

4.10 Although the Committee may make recommendations for changes or improvements in the way that the Council or other bodies enact their business, it does not have any direct decision making powers, except in the way that it discharges its own responsibilities.

4.11 The Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme and in doing so shall take into account the wishes of Councillors.

4.12 The Committee has the power to:

- **4.12.1** co-ordinate and develop the scrutiny function through which relevant decisions taken by the Executive, Bodies or Officers are scrutinised, and their use of resources/the provision of services are reviewed;
- **4.12.2** undertake pre-decision scrutiny of relevant items on the Executive Forward Plan;
- **4.12.3** discharge the overview function in terms of relevant policy development activities;
- **4.12.4** monitor relevant decisions taken by or on behalf of the Executive;
- **4.12.5** monitor relevant activities of Directorates;
- **4.12.6** manage the Call-In process for decisions related to services for children and young people, and recommend reconsideration of any decisions made but not yet implemented by on or behalf of the Executive, Leader, Executive Members or Officers under delegated powers;
- **4.12.7** consider requests from Councillors, Officers, residents and organisations for particular topics to be scrutinised and determine the appropriate action;
- **4.12.8** take responsibility for the development and co-ordination of the overview and scrutiny of partnerships and external bodies (excluding those partnerships and external bodies that fall within the remit of the Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee);
- **4.12.9** undertake scrutiny reviews, as deemed appropriate.

4.13 The Committee shall coordinate its activities with those of the Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee.

5. Proceedings

5.1 The Committee shall respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests from the Council and Executive to undertake a piece of work on their behalf that is relevant to the remit of the Committee. Where the Committee does so, it shall report its findings and any recommendations back to the Executive or Council, which shall consider the report of the Committee at its first available Meeting unless the Monitoring Officer determines that it should be considered at a later Meeting.

5.2 Any Councillor shall be entitled to give notice to the Monitoring Officer that they wish an item relevant to the remit of a Scrutiny Committee or a Committee Sub Body to be included on the agenda for the next meeting, or referred to that Committee for inclusion in the approved work programme, and:

- **5.2.1** in deciding whether to pursue the matter, the Committee shall consider representations from the Councillor who referred it;
- **5.2.2** the Committee is not obliged to pursue such a matter, but it must let the Councillor in question know the reasons for its decision;
- **5.2.3** if the Committee pursues the matter, it shall report its findings and any recommendations back to the Councillor who referred it.

5.3 Members of the public are entitled to suggest topics for scrutiny review. Suggestions can be submitted online or in writing (either by post or electronic mail) to

the Monitoring Officer and must specify the name, address and contact telephone number of the member of the public (or representative) making the suggestion.

5.4 In order to be considered for the Committee's work programme topics must relate to a topic that falls within the scope of the Committee as set out in Section 4. Submissions that do not meet this criterion will be rejected by the Monitoring Officer.

5.5 An item may be rejected if the Chairman considers that it is not conducive to the Committee's Work Programme. **5.6** The member of the public will be notified as to whether their suggestion has been added to the Committee's Work Programme or has been rejected. The reasons for the rejection will be communicated to the individual

6. Evidence - Documents

6.1 Committee and Committee Sub-Body Members have the right to access relevant documents as set out in Part 10 (Access to Information Rules).

6.2 To facilitate effective scrutiny, more detailed liaison between the Executive and the Committee or a Committee Sub-Body may take place depending on the particular matter under consideration.

6.3 The Committee will be entitled to copies of any document which is in the possession or control of the Executive that relates to a matter under review, and which contains material relating to:

- **6.3.1** any business transacted at a meeting of the Executive or its Bodies; or
- **6.3.2** any decision taken by an individual Member of the Executive; or
- **6.3.3** any decision made by an Officer under the Executive arrangements

6.4 But the Committee will not be entitled to:

- **6.4.1** any document that is in draft form;
- **6.4.2** any part of a document that contains Exempt or Confidential Information, unless:
 - **6.4.3** that information is relevant to an action or decision they are reviewing or scrutinising or intend to scrutinise; and
 - **6.4.3.1** the Monitoring Officer decides that it is appropriate for such Exempt or Confidential Information to be provided (in which event Committee Members shall respect the confidentiality of the information); or
 - **6.4.3.2** the advice of a political adviser or Group Executive that would be exempt under a Freedom of Information Act request.

7. Evidence - Testimony

7.1 The Committee or a Committee Sub-Body may require the attendance of the relevant Executive Member, or Officer at the level of Service Lead/Service Director or above, to attend a meeting in order to provide advice and evidence in pursuit of a review being undertaken.

7.2 The Committee or a Committee Sub-Body may invite other persons relevant to an item of business or matter under review to address it and/or answer questions on a voluntary basis.

7.3 The Committee may consider evidence in open or confidential session as the Chairman thinks appropriate following advice from the Monitoring Officer.

7.4 Where the Committee or a Committee Sub-Body conducts a scrutiny review, the Committee will ask people to attend to give evidence at meetings which will be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- **7.4.1** that the meeting is conducted fairly and all Members of the Committee or the Committee Sub-Body are given an opportunity to ask questions of attendees and speak;
- **7.4.2** that those assisting the Committee by giving evidence are treated with respect and courtesy; and
- **7.4.3** that the meeting is conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the review.

7.5 Where a petition to Hold an Officer to Account is referred to the Committee under the Council's Meeting Rules:

- **7.5.1** it will be reported to the next convenient meeting of the Committee unless the matter is deemed urgent, in which case an extraordinary meeting may be convened;
- **7.5.2** in advance of the Committee meeting, the Petition Organiser will be invited to submit a list of questions they would like to put to the Officer at the meeting, and:
 - **7.5.2.1** the questions will be provided to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, who will decide whether they are appropriate, and
 - **7.5.2.2** (if they are deemed appropriate) they will be provided to the Officer concerned in advance of the meeting.
- **7.5.3** the Officer named in the petition and any other relevant Officers will be required to attend the Committee;
- **7.5.4** the Officer will be provided with the petition and any questions submitted by the petition organiser;

7.6 Where any Member or Officer is required or requested to attend the Committee or a Committee Sub-Body under this provision:

- **7.6.1** the Chairman of the Committee will inform the Monitoring Officer;
- **7.6.2** the Monitoring Officer shall inform the Member or Officer in writing giving at least five Clear Working Days' notice of the meeting at which they are required to attend;
- **7.6.3** the notice will state the nature of the item on which they are required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee or Committee Sub-Body; and

- **7.6.4** where the account to be given to the Committee or Committee Sub-Body will require the production of a report, then the Member or Officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for the preparation of that documentation.

7.7 Where Officers below the level of Service Director attend the Committee or a sub-Body, they will usually be accompanied by a senior manager.

7.8 At the meeting of the Committee, the Chairman will invite the Petition Organiser to address the Committee for a maximum of five minutes on the issue. The relevant Officer will then be asked to respond to the Committee on the subject matter of the petition. The Committee may question the Officer and the Chairman may invite questions from the Petition Organiser to be put to the Officer through the Chairman.

8. Reports

8.1 Following any review, the scrutinising body shall prepare a draft report, with recommendations as appropriate, for publication and submission to the Committee. The Committee will agree or amend the report and direct it to the Monitoring Officer. In cases where the Scrutiny Committee is the scrutinising body, the agreed report will be directed to the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer will then refer the report, via the Chief Executive and S151 Officer, to check for factual errors and consideration of any financial implications, to:

- **8.1.1** the Council (if the recommendations would require a departure from, or a change to, the agreed Budget or Policy Framework);
- **8.1.2** the Executive (if the proposals are consistent with the Budget and Policy Framework) or other Body as they deem appropriate for a formal response to the report's recommendations.

8.2 Reports with implications for outside bodies shall be passed to the appropriate person at those outside bodies.

8.3 The body receiving the report will be requested to consider and respond within eight weeks of it being submitted to the Monitoring Officer, or such longer timescale as the Chairman of the Body may agree.

8.4 The response to a recommendation from a decision-maker should consist of:

- a clear commitment to delivering the measure within a timescale set out;
- a commitment to be held to account on that delivery;
- where it is not proposed that a recommendation be accepted, the provision of detailed, substantive reasons why not.

8.5 It is the Committee's responsibility to monitor and evaluate recommendations once they are implemented.

9. Minority Report

9.1 If the Committee or a Committee Sub-Body cannot agree on one single report to the Executive or to Council or to a named external organisation as appropriate, then up to one minority report may be prepared and submitted for consideration with the majority report.

10. Report to Council - Key Decision

10.1 The Committee can require a report if it thinks that a Key Decision relevant to the scope of the Committee has been taken which was not:

- **10.1.1** treated as being a Key Decision; or
- **10.1.2** included in the Forward Plan; or
- **10.1.3** the subject of the general exception procedure; or
- **10.1.4** the subject of an agreement with the Scrutiny Committee Chairman, or the Chairman/ViceChairman of the Council.

10.2 The Committee may then require the Executive to submit a report to the Council within such reasonable time as the Committee specifies. The power to require a report rests with the Committee, but is also delegated to the Monitoring Officer, who shall require such a report on behalf of the Committee when so requested by the Chairman or any five Members. Alternatively, the requirement may be raised by resolution passed at a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

11. Decisions of the Executive

11.1 The Monitoring Officer shall publish all decisions taken by the Executive, Individual Executive Members or Officers under delegated powers to all Members of Council normally within three Clear Working Days of the decision, but generally by 17:00 on the day after the meeting.

11.2 Where a decision taken is one to which the Call-In procedure does not apply (see below), the reasons shall be stated in the notice of decision.

12 . Non-Implementation of Decisions Pending Possible Call-In

12.1 Except where the Call-In procedure does not apply (see above and below), Executive decisions shall not be capable of implementation until either:

- **12.1.1** the time for a Call-In request has expired without such a request being made; or
- **12.1.2** the Call-In procedure in the following rules has been followed.

13. Call-In - Application and Process

13.1 By 17:00 on the fifth Clear Working Day following the publication of the decision, any five Councillors (excluding any Councillor involved in making the original decision) may give notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer requesting that the decision be Called-In to be reviewed by the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

13.2 The Call-In notice shall give reasons for the request together with a proposal for an alternative course of action and stating whether or not those Councillors believe that the decision is contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget.

13.3 The Call-In procedure shall not apply if any of the following applies:

13.3.1 the item is due to be referred to Council for final approval;

13.3.2 the S.151 Officer or Monitoring Officer has certified that if there were a delay in implementing the decision it could have serious financial implications for the Council or could compromise the Council's position;

13.3.3 the item has been considered by a Scrutiny Committee, or has been the subject of a review undertaken by another Body, within the preceding six months;

13.3.4 the item in question was a report that did not require a decision and was for information only;

13.3.5 the item is classed as an Urgent Key Decision.

13.4 In the event of a dispute over whether a decision is capable of Call-In or not, a decision of the Monitoring Officer or S.151 Officer (as the case may be) shall be final

14. Call-In - Review

14.1 There are three options available to the Committee when considering a Call-In:

14.1.1 to let the decision stand;

14.1.2 to state its views on the matter and refer the decision back to the decision maker;

14.1.3 to refer the decision to Council if the Committee considers that the decision is contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework.

15. Call-In - Procedure

15.1 When a notice requesting that a decision be reviewed is made, the Monitoring Officer shall inform the Leader and the Committee Chairman and shall, in consultation with the Chairman, convene a special meeting of the Committees soon as reasonably practicable for the purpose of reviewing the decision, unless the matter can conveniently be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

15.2 If a notice requesting that a decision be reviewed states that the reason for it being called in is that the decision is outside the Budget or Policy Framework it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer and S.151 Officer who shall decide if this is the case.

16. Review of Decision

16.1 Any Councillor who has signed a notice requesting that a decision be reviewed may attend the meeting of the Committee when the decision is reviewed and may speak to that item of business.

16.2 The Committee may not overturn the decision which it is reviewing but may either concur with the decision (in which case it will take immediate effect) or refer it back to the next scheduled or an Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive for further consideration.

16.3 If the Committee is of the opinion, having taken advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer and S.151 Officer, that a decision is outside the Budget and Policy Framework approved by the Council, the Committee may refer the decision to the Council.

16.4 In the case of a Called-In decision being referred to the Council:

- **16.4.1** if the Council decides that the Called-In decision was contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework, then it shall decide on the issue in question;
 - **16.4.2** if the Council decides that the Called-In decision was not contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework, then no further action is necessary, and the decision will take effect on the date of the Council meeting.
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17. Referral Back to Executive

17.1 The Committee will produce a report with its findings to the next meeting of the Executive (ie the meeting following the Call-In request) unless there are exceptional circumstances why this cannot be achieved. In these circumstances, the Chairman of the Committee and the Leader of the Council will agree a revised timetable.

17.2 The report will either confirm the original decision or propose amendments to it in any way the Committee thinks fit and shall give reasons for its final decision.

17.3 If the Committee upholds the Executive decision, then the original decision of the Executive shall take immediate effect.

17.4 If the Committee does not uphold the Executive decision, then it is for the Executive to decide how it wishes to proceed (provided the decision is within the Budget and Policy Framework) having had regard to the recommendations of the Committee.

17.5 Any matter which has been the subject of a Call-In request may not be the subject of a further Call-In request.