



Strong Families, Children, and Young People Scrutiny Panel Meeting

Thursday, 23 June 2022

Dear Councillor

STRONG FAMILIES, CHILDREN, AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL - THURSDAY, 23RD JUNE, 2022

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Thursday, 23rd June, 2022 meeting of the Strong Families, Children, and Young People Scrutiny Panel, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

**6 Cross Party Scrutiny Review Group – SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA)
(Pages 3 - 12)**

[Brenda Wile, Deputy Director of Education, and Julia Cleary, Scrutiny and Systems Manager, to present report. The panel will be asked to consider the remit of the group, the frequency of meetings and the governance arrangements]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the scrutiny team:

Contact Earl Piggott-Smith
Tel 01902 551251
Email earl.piggott-smith@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Address Scrutiny Team, Civic Centre, 1st floor, St Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

Encs

This page is intentionally left blank



Strong Families, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item No: 6

23 June 2022

Report title	Cross Party Scrutiny Review Group – SEND Written Statement of Action	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Chris Burden Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Executive Director of Families	
Originating service	Governance	
Accountable employee(s)	Brenda Wile Email	Deputy Director of Education 01902 Brenda.wile@wolverhampton.gov.uk
	Julia Cleary Email	Scrutiny and Systems Manager Julia.cleary@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	14 June 2022
	Joint Children's/adults Social Care and Education Leadership Team	16 June 2022

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Consider and agree the remit, terms of reference and frequency of meetings for the Cross-Party Scrutiny Review Group.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the terms of reference, remit, and frequency of meetings, for the Scrutiny Review Group relating to the SEND Written Statement of Action.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At the meeting of Full Council on Wednesday 1 December 2021, the following motion was agreed:

“This Council notes the findings of the inspection of SEND services within Wolverhampton.

Council agrees to explore the formation of a Review Group, outside of the existing scrutiny process, to monitor progress, in consultation with the SEND Partnership Board and other partnership bodies and organisations, of SEND services, and provide regular, dedicated scrutiny and support to assist in both the embedding of the strengths that exist within the service and to improve where weaknesses have been identified.

Council agrees that if the parties consulted agree that such an approach has merit, then proposals be brought forward to full Council for approval having consulted with the partners above.

Council delegates responsibility to the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel for the selection of both Review Group numbers and membership.”

- 2.2 The required consultation was carried out and a draft remit agreed for the Review Group at the meeting of Full Council on 6 April 2022.

- 2.3 Full Council recommended:

- a) *That the Deputy Director for Education in consultation with the Scrutiny and Systems Manager submit a report to the Strong Families, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel providing details on the remit, terms of reference, frequency of meetings, membership and governance arrangements for the proposed scrutiny review group.*
- b) *That this report be considered at the first meeting of the Strong Families, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in the 2022-2023 municipal year.*

- 2.4 The draft remit, membership and frequency for the Review Group is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

3.0 Progress

- 3.1 The Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is monitored every eight weeks by the SEND Partnership Board, of which the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is a member.
- 3.2 Following discussion with relevant parties and as agreed at the meeting of Full Council on 8 April 2022, the WSoA will also be monitored by a Cross-Party Scrutiny Review Group which will provide updates to the SFCYP Scrutiny Panel every six months.
- 3.3 Strong Families, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel is requested to consider the draft remit, membership, and frequency of meetings for the Review Group as attached at Appendix 1.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Review Group will not be a decision-making body but may upon conclusion of its work, make recommendations to Full Council or any other appropriate body to consider. As such, at this stage there are no financial implications. [TS/17062022/N]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 The scrutiny review group, will be a working group outside of the formal arrangements of the Local Government Act 1972, and will be set up to consider the Written Statement of Action, its progress, and any challenges that may occur.
- 5.2 The WSOA is necessary and in accordance with relevant legislation, under the Children's Act 2014 and Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015, following the recent SEND inspection. [AS10062022/A]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 There is not a requirement for the Written Statement of Action or the scrutiny review group to have an Equality Impact Assessment. However, as the work of the review group progresses advice will be sought from the Equality & Diversity service within the local authority as and when required. This is particularly important since the purpose of the Written Statement of Action is to address weaknesses in provision in the local area for a vulnerable and protected group. These SEND CYP are often disproportionately affected through exclusions and can also be considered as 'hard to place' in respect of school admissions and in other areas of school and wider life opportunities. For this reason, the Council places additional focus on the monitoring of performance data against all areas for development within the service areas ensuring that where there are gaps there are mitigations to address these.

7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft remit, terms of reference, membership, and frequency of meetings.
Appendix 2 WSoA Reporting Timetable

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1 – Cross Party Scrutiny Review Group

Resolved by Council on 6 April 2022:

That the remit, terms of reference and membership of the review group be agreed at the first meeting of the Strong Families, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in the 2022-2023 municipal year.

Remit

- That a time limited scrutiny review group, which will be a working group outside of the formal arrangements of the Local Government Act 1972, be set up to consider the Written Statement of Action, its progress, and any challenges that may occur.
- That as far as possible, meetings of the group be open to the public unless there is information to be considered that falls under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information. However, a degree of flexibility and discretion will be employed should the group consider that a public meeting is prohibitive to the matter under consideration and that on balance, the benefits from holding such a meeting in private outweigh any benefits to the public good in making the meeting open.

Frequency of Meetings and Reporting

- That the first meeting of the review group be held in September 2022.
- That the review last for 12 months initially with an option to extend this should the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel consider this appropriate.
- That updates from the review group be provided to the Strong Families, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel every six months for the duration of the group.

Membership:

- That the Review Group be constituted of five members from the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel.
- That this membership remains consistent throughout the life of the group and that should members of the group cease to be members of the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel, their membership of the group, can by agreement of the group persist. If however a member is no longer a Councillor then a replacement will be appointed by the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel, on recommendation from the relevant political group.

- That the review group consist of three members from the majority group in the council and two members from the opposition group and, if considered appropriate by the group, that up to two co-opted members from the Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel also be included in its membership.
- That substitutes be allowed to attend in exceptional circumstances (reasons for the substitution must be provided) following agreement from the Chair.

Appendix 2 - WSOA Reporting Timetable

Meeting	Date	Status	Notes
Submission to Ofsted	16 February 2022		Complete
WSOA approved and published	8 March 2022		Complete
Leader and Leader of the Opposition informed of approval	21 March 2022		Complete
SEND Partnership Board	6 April 2022		Highlight Reports - Overarching and Key Issues 1, 4 & 5 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
SEND Partnership Board	13 June 2022		Highlight Reports – Overarching and Key Issues 2, 3 & 6 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
DfE Monitoring Meeting (1)	16 June 2022		Notes to be taken and distributed to inform Briefing Note (1)
SEB	21 June 2022		
Cabinet Member Briefing	22 June 2022		
Exec Team	11 July 2022		
Strong Families, Children and Young People (SFCYP) Scrutiny Panel	23 June 2022		Report to request setting up of cross-party review group, terms of reference, remit, membership, governance.
SEND Partnership Board	14 September 2022		Highlight Reports – Overarching and Key Issues 1, 4 & 5 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
Cross Party Review Group (1)	TBC September 2022		Meeting to discuss progress against Key Issues

SEND Partnership Board	2 November 2022		Highlight Reports – Overarching and Key Issues 2, 3 & 6 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
DfE Monitoring Meeting (2)	TBC November 2022		Notes to be taken and distributed to inform Briefing Note (2)
SEB	(15, 22 or 29) November 2022		
Cabinet Member Briefing	(22 or 29) November		
Exec Team	28 November or 12 December 2022		
Cross Party Review Group (2)	TBC November 2022		Meeting to discuss progress against Key Issues
Children's Leadership (exception reporting)	10 November 2022		Briefing note (2) to be presented following DfE monitoring visit
Cross Party Review Group (3)	TBC December		Prepare update to CYPF Scrutiny Panel in January 2023
SFCYP Scrutiny Panel	11 January 2023		Update report (2) to be produced following DfE monitoring visit and update from cross party review group
SEND Partnership Board	11 January 2023		Highlight Reports – Overarching and Key Issues 1, 4 & 5 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
SEND Partnership Board	8 March 2023		Highlight Reports – Overarching and Key Issues 2, 3 & 6 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
DfE Monitoring Meeting (3)	TBC March 2023		Notes to be taken and distributed to inform Briefing Note (3)
SEB	(7, 14, 21) March		

Cabinet Member Briefing	21 or 28 March		
Exec Team	27 March 2023		
Cross Party Review Group (4)	TBC March 2023		Meeting to discuss progress against Key Issues
Children's Leadership (exception reporting)	TBC March 2023		Briefing note (3) to be presented following DfE monitoring visit
SEND Partnership Board	19 April 2023		Highlight Reports – Overarching and 1, 4 & 5 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
SEND Partnership Board	7 June 2023		Highlight Reports – Overarching and 2, 3 & 6 Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
DfE Monitoring Meeting (4)	TBC June 2023		Notes to be taken and distributed to inform Briefing Note (4)
SEB	TBC June 2023		
Cabinet member Briefing	TBC June 2023		
Exec Team	TBC June 2023		
Children's Leadership (exception reporting)	TBC July 2023		Briefing note (4) to be presented following DfE monitoring visit
SFCYP Scrutiny Panel	TBC July 2023		Update report (4) to be presented following DfE monitoring visit
SEND Partnership Board	19 July 2023		Highlight Reports – Overarching and Key Issues 1 – 6 (All) Update to Cabinet Member at SPB
Cross Party Review Group (5)	TBC July		Meeting to discuss progress against Key Issues – draft final report and update to CYPF Panel
SEND Partnership Board	TBC September 2023		Closure Report

Cross Party Review Group (6)	TBC September 2023		Preparation of final report and update for CYPF Scrutiny in October
Leader and Leader of the Opposition	TBC September 2023		Closure Report
Cabinet	TBC October 2023		Closure Report
SFCYP Scrutiny Panel	TBC October 2023		Closure Report