

CHILDREN'S WORKING GROUP – 2018/19

TERMS OF REFERENCE

RATIONALE

The Children's Working Group is instructed as a fixed sub-group of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year.

Seeking the lived experience and wishes of children and young people about the services they receive must be an active driver for decision-making and service development. The group will look to ensure that there are sufficient and adequate mechanisms in place to encourage participation, with the aim to inform service delivery.

The group will have a specific remit to consider matters relevant to Children's Services and Education. In addition to this, the group will monitor past actions and recommendations put forward by the Voice of the Child Overview Panel in 2017/18.

To do this the working group will meet with stakeholders, review existing documentation and assess a range of information and evidence. The group does not make decisions about service provision but will provide comment and recommendations to support services in capturing the views and experiences of children and young people.

SCOPE & OBJECTIVES

The scope and objectives of the Children's Working Group are to:

- Create a fixed membership to include elected members from the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel, co-opted young people and co-opted adults.
- Seek to identify and establish a working list of topics for consideration.
- Deliver statutory functions when educational matters are considered.
- Promote 'critical friend' challenge to the improvement process.
- Ensure young people and adults feel safe and able to voice any concerns.
- Encourage broader participation opportunities for young people.
- Review the variety of methods available for residents and young people to communicate their views.
- Ensure that Children's Services continue to use the findings from participation and engagement in strategic and operation improvement, as well as in individual case decisions.
- To encourage participation to a range of local and regional consultations.

OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING

The Chair of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny holds responsibility for the oversight and approval of activity undertaken by the Children's Working Group. The working group is to be chaired by the Deputy Chair of the Scrutiny Panel.

The Children's Working Group will establish a work pattern whereby every meeting will have set objectives and measured outcomes, in the form of a response paper or letter. Findings and actions from the meeting will be tabled and presented at the next available meeting of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel, for information and sign off. To prevent any delay in reporting, all findings and papers will be shared directly with the Chair of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel prior to submission.

STATUTORY ROLES

As part of the Children Act 1989 it is the duty of the authority in its care of children and young people, to listen to and base improvements on the wishes and feelings of children and young people on matters that affect them.

A further statutory requirement for the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel is to include co-opted representatives when dealing with educational matters. Local authorities must appoint:

- Parent Governors at maintained schools
- Representative of the Roman Catholic Church
- Representative of the Church of England

ACTIVITY

The Children's Working Group will:

- Ensure that designated groups and networks for children and young people are being listened to and adequately supported to have their voice heard on a strategic level. This includes testing whether individuals and groups are being listened to by the bodies responsible for implementing change.
- Ensure that the voice and lived experiences of young people are acted upon on an individual level. To include examination of how this is evidenced across Children's Services and Educational services.
- Include evidence from external challenge mechanisms and regulators, for example complaints; whistleblowing; Serious Case Reviews; examples of respectful challenge and judicial reviews.
- Benchmark new and innovative ideas for gathering the experience of residents and young people at strategic and operational levels.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the working group is:

- Cllr Teresa Smith (Chair)
- 4 x Councillors from the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.
- 3 x co-opted young people
- 3 x co-opted adults (to include Roman Catholic and Church of England representatives as set out under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000).

MEETINGS

The group will have four fixed meeting dates for the remainder of 2018/19 municipal year:

- Wednesday 14 November 2018 - 6.00pm
- Wednesday 16 January 2018 - 6.00pm
- Wednesday 27 February 2018 - 6.00pm
- Wednesday 3 April 2018 - 6.00pm

In addition to the dates above, the panel may hold additional meetings when deemed appropriate by the subject being considered.

The group will meet in private at Dukinfield Town Hall, as is standard for a scrutiny working group. Meetings will last no longer than 2 hours.