

Scrutiny Board Task and Finish Group Scoping Document

The process for establishing a task and finish group is:

1. The Scrutiny Board identifies a potential topic for a task and finish group
2. The Scrutiny Board Chairman and the Scrutiny Officer complete the scoping template.
3. The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews the scoping document
4. The Scrutiny Board agrees membership of the task and finish group.

<p>Review Topic: The role of the voluntary, community and faith sector in early help for children, young people and their families</p>
<p>Scrutiny Board(s) Social Care Services Board</p>
<p>Relevant background</p> <p><u>Early Help</u></p> <p>Early help plays a vital role in reducing demand on statutory services and improving outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>As Impower’s April 2015 report <i>Breaking the Lock</i> notes: “[The national] shift to a preventative model as being driven by two critical factors; the need to improve outcomes and life chances for vulnerable children and need to make services more sustainable.”</p> <p>It goes onto comment: “Early help must be seen as a component part of a wider whole system that is focused on responding to the needs of children earlier, ensuring that we provide the right help at the right time and that early identification and early help are firmly within the scope of child protection services. To have the greatest impact we need to ensure that all of our universal, voluntary and targeted support services work together to improve the lives of our children and reduce to a minimum the need for direct intervention by social care professionals.”¹</p> <p><u>Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS)</u></p> <p>A report to the Resident Experience Board on 21 July 2015 outlines that: “There are over 5,700 voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) groups in Surrey. Most of these are front line organisations, delivering services directly to our communities. They range in their size and purpose and can be large organisations like the Red Cross that cover the whole county, to much smaller organisations like neighbourhood watches or locally based befriending schemes. The voluntary, community (VCFS) and faith sector is hugely important to Surrey County Council supporting us to deliver key services meeting the needs of the residents of Surrey and often reaching those parts of the community that are the most vulnerable.”²</p>

¹ <http://www.impower.co.uk/insights/new-report-breaking-the-lock-released-today>

² <http://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s23529/FINAL%20REB%2021%20July%202015.pdf>

In Surrey the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector (VCFS) supports the early help offer in a variety of ways:

- by being commissioned to deliver services on behalf of the council
- by providing early help services that improve outcomes for children and young people, therefore reducing the need for statutory intervention
- by coordinating community efforts to improve resilience in children, young people and their families

Why this is a scrutiny item

Services across the directorate are being faced with significant budgetary and demand pressures.

In order to continue to meet its statutory responsibilities and realise improvements, the Council will be required undertake work to transform how services are delivered.

The Early Help agenda is central to achieving this transformation, and the role of key partners, such as VCFS, is a key component in this regard.

Adult Social Care has undertaken a number of initiatives under its Family, Friends and Community Support programme to bolster the role of the VCFS and improve how these services are signposted.

This has worked in conjunction with other strands of the programme in order to support the Directorate's strategic aims. The overall programme is expected to achieve £14.5million savings over the life of the council's current Medium Term Financial Plan (2016-21).

The Board would like to develop an understanding of how Children, Schools and Families could utilise the lessons from this initiative, and also support the Directorate in identifying opportunities that exist for the VCFS and council to collectively support the Early Help agenda.

What question is the task group aiming to answer?

How does the Council currently work with the VCFS to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families, and reduce the need for statutory services?

What are the current examples of success, and what barriers exist in relation to the above?

What could the Council do differently to bolster the role of the VCFS in supporting the early help agenda?

What savings can be delivered and evidenced by developing work with the VCFS?

What lessons can be learnt from the Council's work on Family, Friends and Community Support in order to ensure the benefits of working with the VCFS are realised?

What gaps exist in the VCFS offer across Surrey?

What are the risks and opportunities associated with developing an early help offer in conjunction with the VCFS?

Aim

To identify potential policy developments and opportunities to work with the VCFS, and support the improvement work being undertaken by the council in regard to children, young people and their families.

Objectives

- Establish a current picture of how the VCFS and council work together to improve outcomes for children
- Seek the views of key stakeholders and partner agencies as to what opportunities exist to improve collaborative working
- Consider what can be learnt from the work undertaken with the VCFS in regard to Family, Friends and Community Support
- Make recommendations to inform future commissioning decisions, and support the VCFS and council working jointly to deliver an early help agenda

Scope (within / out of)

Given the short period of time to conduct preliminary witness sessions, the task group will need to take a focussed, strategic approach to its work.

It will, however, note possible future avenues for scrutiny to assist future work.

In scope

- Partnership arrangements with the VCFS and the council in regard to children and young people
- The Early Help strategy

Out of scope

- Support arrangements for individual children and young people
- Delivery of VCFS arrangements in Adult Social Care
- Grant giving and commissioning processes
- Targeted and statutory services
- Children who are Looked After
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Programme

Outcomes for Surrey / Benefits

Through the work it proposes to undertake, the Task Group will support the following of the Council's strategic priorities for 2016-21:

Wellbeing:

"Everyone in Surrey has a great start to life and can live and age well"

- Improve outcomes for children in need of support and protection
- Support 750 families through the Surrey Family Support Programme

Resident experience

"Residents in Surrey experience public services that are easy to use, responsive and value for money"

- Enhance opportunities for residents to influence and shape council services
- Deliver the savings set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan

It will do so by producing recommendations that support future policy development aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people, while also ensuring best value for public resources.

Proposed work plan

It is important to clearly allocate who is responsible for the work, to ensure that Members and officers can plan the resources needed to support the task group.

Timescale	Task	Responsible
August 2016	Terms of reference drafted	Scrutiny officer/Chairman
21 September 2016	Terms of reference approved by Council Overview Board	COB/Chairman
September – October 2016	First set of witness sessions	Scrutiny officer/Task Group
November 2016	Verbal update to Board	Task Group
November 2016	Second set of witness sessions	Scrutiny officer/Task Group
December 2016	Report back and consideration of final recommendations by the Board, prior to referral to Cabinet in January 2017.	Task Group

Witnesses

Officers

Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention
Senior Strategy & Policy Development Manager, Children, Schools and Families
Head of Youth Support Services
Head of Early Years & Childcare Service
Strategic Partnership Manager. Children, Schools and Families
Lead officers for Family, Friends and Community Support

External witnesses

Church Diocese representatives
Phase Council representatives
Homestart
Oasis
Wellcare
Surrey Care Trust
YMCA
Busy Bees

Useful Documents

<http://www.impower.co.uk/insights/new-report-breaking-the-lock-released-today>
¹<http://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s23529/FINAL%20REB%2021%20July%202015.pdf>

Potential barriers to success (Risks / Dependencies)

Equalities implications

The voluntary, community and faith sector represents a broad range of different communities and ethnic groups. The Task Group will work to ensure that it takes this into account when identifying witnesses.

The Task Group will monitor the equalities implications emerging from its recommendations with officers, and will work to identify mitigation measures for those with a potentially negative impact.

Task Group Members	
Co-opted Members	
Spokesman for the Group	
Scrutiny Officer/s	Andrew Spragg