



## **Borough of Telford and Wrekin**

### **Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee**

**Thursday 10 July 2025**

**6.00 pm**

**Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

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<b>Democratic Services:</b>	<b>Paige Starkey</b>	<b>01952 380110</b>
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<b>Committee Members:</b>	<b>Councillors L Parker (Chair), C Chikandamina (Vice-Chair), E Aston, S P Burrell, A S Jhawar, J Kaur, I Preece, K Tonks and J Urey Co-optees S Fikeis and C Morgan</b>	

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	<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>	<b>3 - 8</b>
	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 May 2025.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Terms of Reference 2025/26</b>	<b>9 - 16</b>
	To review and reconfirm the Terms of Reference for the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee for the 2025/26 municipal year.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 2025/26</b>	<b>17 - 26</b>
	To approve the work programme for the 2025/26 municipal year.	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Chair's Update</b>	

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## **CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 1 May 2025 at 6.00 pm in Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4JG**

**Present:** Councillors A R H England (Vice-Chair),  
C Chikandamina, P Davis, A S Jhawar, L Parker, K Tonks  
and J Urey

**Also Present:** Councillor S A W Reynolds (Cabinet Member: Children,  
Young People, Education, Employment & Skills)

**In Attendance:** L Goodfellow (Interim Service Delivery Manager SEND  
and Personalisation), P Starkey (Senior Democracy  
Officer (Scrutiny)), D Thomas-White (Lead Lawyer:  
Children and Adults) and S Wellman (Director: Education  
& Skills)

**Apologies:** Councillors J Jones and S P Burrell  
Co-Optees: S Fikeis and C Morgan

#### **CYP47    Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **CYP48    Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

#### **CYP49    SEND**

The Interim Service Delivery Manager: SEND and Personalisation presented an update to the Committee on the current landscape for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) within Telford and Wrekin highlighting key statistics, recent developments and strategic initiatives aimed at supporting children and young people with SEND.

The presentation outlined Telford and Wrekin's local offer for children and young people identified as having SEND or complex needs as one which was both comprehensive and inclusive, reflecting a strong commitment to co-production and early intervention. The local offer had been underpinned by strong relationships with parents and carers, with all schools signed up to a co-produced Working Together Charter developed with PODS Parent Carer Forum.

At the time of the meeting, the size of the school population in Telford and Wrekin was estimated at 31,527 pupils with 5,360 children identified with

SEND, representing 17.9% of the child population, higher than the national average of 16.3%. Of these, 2,458 children and young people aged 0-25 had Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which accounted for 4.1% of the population when compared to the national average of 4.8%. The number of EHCPs had increased over the past few years and was demonstrated by a 11.6% increase between 2023 and 2024.

The presentation highlighted a number of key strengths including the Council's EHCP process. During 2024/25 the Council's SEND Team had delivered over 90% of Education, Health and Care Plans within the 20-week statutory timeframe when compared to the national average of 50.7% within the same period.

The Inclusive Schools Forum (ISF), was now in its seventh year and had supported 1,080 children by providing targeted resources without the need for an EHCP and had been recognised nationally as a model of good practice. As a school-led initiative, the ISF had provided support and challenges to mainstream schools regarding their practices and provisions for children with SEND. Members heard that the Forum had continued to foster an inclusive educational framework within Telford and Wrekin, enabling children with increasingly complex needs to thrive and succeed in mainstream educational settings.

Nationally there had been an increase in the number of children being identified with complex special educational needs and approximately 1.4m children had been identified in 2020, with numbers continuing to rise and expected to reach around 1.7m. The Council's SEND services included a wide range of professional support teams, such as educational psychologists, early years advisors and the Portage service, a home-visiting educational service designed for pre-school children with SEND.

The development of specialist outreach services from schools such as Southall and Haughton ensured mainstream settings were equipped to meet the increasing complexity in special educational needs. Specialist teachers had been provided with bespoke advice and training opportunities for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), teachers and teaching assistants within mainstream schools.

The Council had also established specialist hubs which had enabled children to be taught within a reduced class size with a specialist teacher but still have access to the mainstream school environment. At the time of the meeting, four hubs were currently operational supporting a total of 29 children with an additional hub due to open in September 2025. Investments had also been made into the delivery of resource bases within mainstream schools, which offered smaller classrooms run by schools with support from outreach services.

Members heard that Telford and Wrekin was the lead local authority in the West Midlands for the Department for Education's SEND & Alternative Provision Change Programme. The programme involved working alongside

Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire to test areas of support, share best practices and learning from other regional areas nationally. This collaborative approach would help ensure that the provision for children with SEND is continuously improved and that schools are equipped with the necessary resources and knowledge to support pupils effectively.

There had been many successful initiatives to support children and young people in the Borough including the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) programme, a pioneering initiative aimed at supporting children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) within Early Years and Primary School settings. Since its launch in September 2024, ELSEC has engaged with 8 primary schools and 6 private nursery settings in Telford and Wrekin, focusing on improving the speech and language support for children in Year 1, Reception and pre-school years.

Building on the success of the National Autism in Schools project, the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project was a new initiative which had recently been rolled out across schools in Telford and Wrekin. The project was a nationally funded initiative aimed at enhancing the support for neurodiverse children within mainstream primary schools. At the time of the meeting, 20 mainstream primary schools were participating in the PINS project with a further 10 schools signed up to begin this project in the next school term.

In response to questions raised during the meeting around the EHCP process and Hub provision, the Interim Service Delivery Manager: SEND and Personalisation advised that the Council had a very strong and well-established process in Telford for dealing with EHCP requests which had been supported by a consistent and experienced team. Staff retention had been key to maintaining continuity and every child who had come through the service with a request was allocated to both a coordinator and a SEND officer, who had stayed with the case throughout and maintained close links with the school.

The Interim Service Delivery Manager: SEND and Personalisation confirmed that the PINS project had been working well and was due to be rolled out again during the next academic year with a further group of schools invited to take part.

The Director: Education & Skills advised that a secondary hub was in place at Langley School in partnership with Southall School and had provided a flexible model where children could spend as much time as possible in a mainstream setting but also have access to the specialist unit when needed. This type of provision had supported staff to better understand the curriculum and tailor support for pupils accordingly.

The Director: Education & Skills also stated that the Council had continued to recognise national challenges around autism diagnosis and long waiting times and was continuing to work closely with health partners. Members were informed that a "Waiting Well" initiative had been developed, alongside the

commissioning of an Autism Hub for children and young people which would provide a range of support services for families whilst they wait for a formal diagnosis. A recommissioning process was also underway, informed by a comprehensive review of current services and challenges across the Council. In response to questions raised around early years inclusion and support for children diagnosed with SEND, the Interim Service Delivery Manager: SEND and Personalisation commented that all early years settings, including childminders were expected to support children regardless of need. The Early Years Team was available to provide guidance and support and advisors were highly skilled and if additional help was needed, the Early Years Inclusion Fund would be able to provide resources or equipment to meet individual needs.

The Interim Service Delivery Manager: SEND and Personalisation confirmed that the ELSEC programme was one of several interventions and schools were encouraged to assess each child's needs and consult with Learning Support Advisory Teachers as needed. If the ELSEC programme was not able to provide support, alternatives such as Talk Boost could be used. SENCOs were also trained to guide families and staff to the right service and internal screening could also be used to help determine the best intervention.

The Director: Education & Skills advised that parents should first speak with the school's SEND Coordinator regarding any concerns around support at school which could be further escalated with the Council as required.

In response to questions raised around the number of hubs and resource bases in the Borough, the Interim Service Delivery Manager: SEND and Personalisation confirmed that at the time of the meeting, there were specialist hubs located at Haughton Primary School for both KS1 and KS2 pupils and also at Old Park Primary School for KS1 pupils. Resource bases were available at Newport Infant and Junior Schools as well as John Fletcher of Madeley Primary School and a new base was expected to open at Millbrook Primary School. Satellite hubs were also in operation at Wrockwardine Wood in partnership the Bridge School and at The Telford Langley School in partnership with Southall School.

The Director: Education & Skills commented that SEND assessments take into consideration home life in addition to school environment and health implications in order to help identify the root cause of a child's needs and ensure the most appropriate support is put in place.

Members thanked Officers for the detailed report and presentation and requested that site visit to a specialist hub be arranged for the Committee.

## **CYP50     Work Programme**

The Senior Democracy Officer (Scrutiny) presented the updated work programme to the Committee. Members were advised that there were no further meetings scheduled to take place for the 2024/25 municipal year and

any remaining items on the work programme would be carried forward into the next year.

**CYP51    Chair's Update**

None.

The meeting ended at 6.50 pm

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:**            Thursday 10 July 2025

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## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 10 July 2025

### Terms of Reference 2025/2026

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Zona Hannington - Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Anthea Lowe - Director: Policy & Governance
<b>Service Area:</b>	Policy & Governance
<b>Report Author:</b>	Ashley Hickman – Democracy & Scrutiny Assistant
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 382589 <b>Email:</b> ashley.hickman1@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee – 10 July 2025

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.1 Agree and reconfirm the Terms of Reference set out at Appendix A.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To set out for review and agreement the Terms of Reference for the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee outlined at Appendix A of the report.

#### 3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Constitution requires that Full Council should agree at its Annual Meeting the Terms of Reference for each of its Committees to enable the Council to efficiently conduct its business.

3.2 At the Annual Meeting of the Council on 15 May 2025, Full Council delegated authority to each Committee to review its own Terms of Reference.

3.3 The Terms of Reference forms part of the Consitution and were approved by Full Council in that context on 15 May 2025.

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

4.1 For the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee to review its Terms of Reference as set out in appendix A.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options**

5.1 There are no alternative options arising from this report.

#### **6.0 Key Risks**

6.1 There are no key risks arising from this report.

#### **7.0 Council Priorities**

7.1 A community-focused, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

#### **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

#### **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

9.1 The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has the delegated authority to review and approve it's own terms of reference. This should be completed at the first meeting of the Committee in the municipal year. The Terms of Reference remain unaltered from the last municipal year.

#### **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 There are no ward implications arising from this report.

#### **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 There are no Health, Social and Economic Implications arising from this report.

#### **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

#### **13.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications**

13.1 There are no Climate Change, Biodiversity or Environmental implications arising from this report.

**14.0 Background Papers**

1 Council Constitution

**15.0 Appendices**

A Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference 2025/26

**16.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal Services	27/06/2025	01/07/2025	DTW
Finance	17/06/2025	18/06/2025	MLB

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## **CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Membership**

1. The Committee will be made up of elected members from the Scrutiny Assembly, as appointed at Annual Council in line with the political balance of the Council, and co-opted scrutiny members.
2. The Committee may appoint co-opted scrutiny members but they must not exceed the number of elected members.
3. The Parent Governors and the Catholic and Anglican diocesan representatives will have statutory voting rights on education matters as set out in the Local Government Act 2000. Other co-optees will not have voting rights.
4. In addition to the standing co-optees, the Committee may appoint additional co-optees for one-off reviews to supplement the skills, knowledge and experience of the Committee on that particular issue. (Subject to the number of co-opted scrutiny members not exceeding the number of elected members.)
5. The Chair is appointed at the Annual General Meeting of full Council. A Vice-Chair may be appointed by majority decision of the Committee
6. The quorum required for a meeting is 3 elected members.
7. All Committee members should undergo the Corporate Parenting and Child Sexual Exploitation training offered by the Council (including any refresher training).
8. Members of Committee should act as champions for children and young people in the care of the authority and raise awareness of the issues facing children and young people in care with other elected members and members of the public.

### **Functions**

9. The Committee will be the main mechanism by which Scrutiny members will scrutinise and monitor the planning and performance of the Council's services to children and young people and the Council's Corporate Parenting role, including but not limited to the following key areas
  - Early years and child care
  - All aspects of education including schools and academies, school improvement, school/college transport, training and apprenticeships, behaviour and attendance, further education
  - Children's Centres
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
  - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
  - Positive activities for young people
  - Safeguarding and child protection (including exploitation)
  - Corporate Parenting

## Appendix A

- Looked After Children and Care Leavers
- Fostering and adoption
- Teenage pregnancy
- Supported accommodation and lodgings
- Supported employment for young people
- Youth Services
- Youth Offending Service
- Youth unemployment, NEETs
- Family Support

10. The Committee will set its own work programme. The following points may be taken into consideration when considering the work programme each year:

- areas where significant change is proposed and the potential impacts
- performance in areas where significant change has been implemented;
- areas of financial overspend;
- areas receiving a high level of budgetary commitment;
- areas where there is a high level of user dissatisfaction;
- reports and action plans produced/agreed with external inspectors;
- areas that are key issues for the public or have become a public interest issue covered in the media.

11. The Committee will consider matters referred by the Scrutiny Management Board, and will exercise discretion as to whether a suggestion falls within the remit of the Committee to scrutinise.

### **Meeting Administration and Proceedings**

12. The Committee procedure rules as set out in the Council's Constitution apply to this Committee.

13. The meetings will follow the principles of scrutiny ie no party whip will be applied and a constructive, evidence based approach will be used.

14. If the Chair and Vice Chair (if appointed) are unable to attend a meeting the Members present will elect a Chair for the meeting.

15. All Scrutiny Committee meetings will be held in public, unless exempt information is being considered or discussed. Scrutiny Committees may appoint sub-groups to carry out investigative work as part of a review and these sub-groups may hold informal meetings but will report back their findings to the Scrutiny Committee.

16. The meetings will be administered by Scrutiny Services and Democratic Services. Frequency of meetings will be agreed by the Committee as necessary to carry out the work programme.

17. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Executive Directors, Directors and Service Delivery Managers will attend the Committee at the request of the Chair. Representatives from other organisations may be invited to attend.

### **Sensitive and Confidential Information**

18. From time to time members may become privy to information of a confidential nature. If this happens, members must maintain this confidence. Members are unable to request personal/confidential information from Officers about an individual or family.
19. Information obtained as a result of membership of the Committee is sensitive and should be treated as being confidential by members.

### **Reporting Arrangements**

20. The Chair will provide regular updates to meetings of the Scrutiny Management Board to inform the other Scrutiny Chairs of performance and budget issues relating to the remit of their Committees.
21. The Chair of the Committee, or his/her representative, will provide and present reports and recommendations of the Committee to the Council's Cabinet, Full Council or other relevant organisations when necessary.

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## Borough of Telford and Wrekin

### Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 10 July 2025

### Communities Scrutiny Work Programme 2025/26

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<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Zona Hannington – Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance & Customer Services
<b>Lead Director:</b>	Anthea Lowe – Director: Policy & Governance
<b>Service Area:</b>	Policy & Governance
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paige Starkey – Senior Democracy Officer (Scrutiny)
<b>Officer Contact Details:</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 01952 380110 <b>Email:</b> Paige.Starkey@telford.gov.uk
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Not Key Decision
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report considered by:</b>	Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee – 10 July 2025

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

1.1 It is recommended that the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee:

a) Review and agree the work programme as outlined at Appendix A.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To set the work programme for the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee as outlined at Appendix A.

#### 3.0 Background

3.1 Scrutiny now operates a two-year work programme to allow for Committees to undertake in-depth work over a longer period of time.

- 3.2 Work programmes for Scrutiny committees are reviewed annually, with a period of consultation taking place in the months running up to a new municipal year. The public, key stakeholders, and Council officers are asked to put forward scrutiny suggestions for inclusion on the coming year's work programme.
- 3.3 Following the consultation period, a draft work programme is taken to Scrutiny Management Board for comment before being sent onto individual committees for final approval.
- 3.4 The Constitution states that Scrutiny committees are to set and undertake their own programme of work, meeting as required to deliver the work programme.
- 3.5 Work programmes can be amended throughout the year if the Committee or Scrutiny Assembly deem it necessary.

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

- 4.1 For the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee to review and approve the draft work programme as outlined at Appendix A.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 There are no alternative options arising from this report.

#### **6.0 Key Risks**

- 6.1 There are no key risks arising from this report.

#### **7.0 Council Priorities**

- 7.1 A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

#### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report, though significant Council resources are allocated to supporting Children and Young People, with oversight provided by the Finance team.

#### **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 In accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference, the Committee will set its own work programme for the municipal year, it will consider matters referred to it by the Scrutiny Management Board, and may make recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council following Scrutiny.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

10.1 There are no ward implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

11.1 There are no health, social and economic implications arising from this report.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

12.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications**

13.1 There are no climate change, biodiversity and environmental implications arising from this report.

## **14.0 Background Papers**

1 Council Constitution

## **15.0 Appendices**

A Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26

## **16.0 Report Sign Off**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date signed off</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Legal Services	18/06/2025	26/06/2025	DTW
Finance	18/06/2025	19/06/2025	PT

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# Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 2025/26

Issue / Topic	Brief Description	Directorate	Council Values/Priorities	Format	Meeting Comments
10 July 2025 – Committee Meeting					
Terms of Reference	For the Committee to agree the Terms of Reference for 2025/26.	Policy & Governance	A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item	Constitutional Function.
	Outcomes:				
Work Programme	For the Committee to agree the proposed work programme for 2025/26.	Policy & Governance	A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item	Draft work programme delegated to each scrutiny committee by SMB on 19 June 2025.
	Outcomes:				

Issue / Topic	Brief Description	Directorate	Council Values/Priorities	Format	Meeting Comments
9 October 2025 – Committee Meeting					
Children's Services Ofsted Inspection Action Plan	For the Committee to monitor the progress of the action plan following the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services.	Children's Services	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.  A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item	New suggestion received for the work programme.
	Outcomes:				
Youth Support	For the Committee to review the Council's youth offer including the funding available to support youth activities such as youth clubs, education, training and employment.	Education & Skills	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.  A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item	New suggestion received for work programme.  October 2025
	Outcomes:				

Issue / Topic	Brief Description	Directorate	Council Values/Priorities	Format	Meeting Comments
5 February 2026 – Committee Meeting					
Education Attainment and Outcomes	For the Committee to review the education attainment for the Borough for 2024/25.	Education & Skills	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.  A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item	Constitutional Function.
	Outcomes:				
Telford & Wrekin Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report	For the Committee to receive the Telford & Wrekin Local Safeguarding Children Board report for the 2024/25 financial year.	Policy & Governance Safeguarding	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.	Committee Agenda Item	Constitutional Function.
	Outcomes:				

Issue / Topic	Brief Description	Directorate	Council Values/Priorities	Format	Meeting Comments
16 April 2026 – Committee Meeting					
To be determined.					
	Outcomes:				



# Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 2025/26

Issue / Topic	Brief Description	Directorate	Council Values/Priorities	Format	Meeting Comments
To be scheduled					
Children & Young People's Strategy 2025 – 2028	For the Committee to receive a briefing on the Children & Young People Strategy 2025 – 2028, outlining key priorities, initiatives, and expected outcomes.	Children's Services Education & Skills Public Health	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.  A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item	New suggestion received for the work programme.
	Outcomes:				
Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill	For the Committee to receive a briefing on the new Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill outlining the reforms to Children's Social Care and the Families First Partnership Programme.	Children's Services Education & Skills	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.  A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Committee Agenda Item/Workshop	New suggestion received for work programme.
	Outcomes:				

# Children & Young People Scrutiny Work Programme 2025/26

Issue / Topic	Brief Description	Directorate	Council Values/Priorities	Format	Meeting Comments
To be scheduled					
Elective Home Education	For the Committee to monitor the Council's statutory duty in relation to Elective Home Education.	Education & Skills	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.	Committee Agenda Item	Request to be kept on work programme by Committee.
	Outcomes:				
SEND	For the Committee to monitor the Council's provision for SEND including identification, placements and funding.	Education & Skills	Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community.  A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.	Site Visit	Request from Committee to visit SEND hub provision in Telford and Wrekin.
	Outcomes:				

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