CORPORATE PARENTING SCRUTINY MONITORING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The group will be made up of up to 86 Scrutiny Assembly members. In addition 2 members will be co-opted from the Children's Trust Board. The sub-group will be able to invite other people to take part in their meetings, but not to vote.

2. The group is a sub-group of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and will be the main mechanism by which scrutiny members will monitor the Councils performance in relation to Corporate Parenting.

3. The appropriate Lead Scrutiny Member will generally chair the group, although any other member of the group may chair the group. The Chairman will be appointed by the members of the group and will serve for the municipal year. If the Chairman is unable to attend a meeting the Members present will elect a Chairman for the meeting.

4. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services will attend the group at the request of the Chairman.

5. Members of this group will participate in Regulation 33 visits of Council run Children's homes. Appropriate training will be provided to enable members to accompany officers on these visits and write the associated reports. Members will report their findings back to the full group as appropriate.

6. The group will meet quarterly with children and young people in care. This is to provide an opportunity for these vulnerable young people to meet and discuss issues directly with scrutiny members. Training will be provided to help members communicate appropriately with children and young people if needed. Members of the public will not be able to attend these meetings.

7. Advice will be provided to group members by officers from the Council's Children and Young People's Portfolio, supplemented by officers from Telford & Wrekin PCT where necessary. Members will also have access to training and consultancy support subject to the cost being agreed by the Head of Audit & Democracy after consultation with the Chairman of the Scrutiny Leadership Board.

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

9. From time to time members as part of the work of the sub-group may become privy to information of a sensitive or 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.

10. The meetings will be administered by Scrutiny Services. Frequency of meetings will be agreed by group members at the start of each municipal year.

11. The group will report back to the Scrutiny Leadership Board as appropriate.

12. The Chairman of the group, or his/her representative, will attend Cabinet when necessary to feed back recommendations of the sub-group that have been reported to the Scrutiny Leadership Board. If the appropriate Lead Scrutiny Member is not the Chairman of the group, they may accompany the Chairman to the Cabinet meeting.

13. The sub-group will set its own work programme after consultation with the Head of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting and the Corporate Parenting Manager. The main task of the group will be to monitor performance of the service area by developing the expertise of the members, so they become expert members in this field. Performance monitoring for each of the Every Child Matters five outcomes should take place. However, members can look at any other issues within the service area. The following points should be taken into consideration when considering the work programme each year:

   • areas of poor performance;
   • areas of financial overspend;
   • areas receiving a high level of budgetary commitment;
   • areas where significant change is proposed or has been implemented;
   • areas where there is a high level of user dissatisfaction with the service;
   • 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.