

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Date: Monday, 18 September 2023
Time: 4.30 p.m.
Venue: Mandela Room, Town Hall

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes - Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel - 19 July 2023 3 - 8
4. Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme - 2023/2024 9 - 18

The Scrutiny Panel will be asked to consider its work programme for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year.
5. Overview and Scrutiny Board Update

The Chair will provide a verbal update on matters considered at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 26 July 2023.
6. Date of Next Meeting - 30 October 2023
7. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered.

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
8 September 2023

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors E Clynch (Chair), J Walker (Vice-Chair), S Hill, L Hurst, D Jackson, J Kabuye, J Nicholson, M Nugent and S Platt.

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Chris Lunn, 01642 729742, chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel was held on Wednesday, 19 July 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors E Clynch (Chair), L Hurst, D Jackson, J Kabuye, S Platt and J Walker.

OFFICERS: R Brown, C Lunn and K Simmons.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors S Hill and M Nugent.

23/1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/Nature of Interest
Councillor D Jackson	Non-Pecuniary	Chair – Park End Primary School.
Councillor J Kabuye	Non-Pecuniary	Governor – Sacred Heart Primary School.

23/2 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANELS – FOR INFORMATION**

Members were advised that at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18 April 2023, a new structure for scrutiny arrangements in Middlesbrough had been agreed. As a consequence, the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel was a new panel for this year.

The minutes of the last meetings of the two former Children's Services scrutiny panels were provided for Members' information, as follows:

- Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel - 20 March 2023; and
- Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel - 14 March 2023.

NOTED

23/3 **OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Director of Education and Partnerships and the Interim Head of Review and Development Unit, Quality and Assessment and Principal Social Worker were in attendance to provide the panel with an overview of the services provided across the Directorate, and to also highlight the strategic and departmental priorities for the coming year.

The Director of Education and Partnerships provided information regarding the four areas within his remit, which regulated the education sector in Middlesbrough. These were delivered as follows:

- Achievement.
- Inclusion and Additional Needs.
- Access to Education.
- Partnerships.

Members were informed that the Achievement area comprised of several teams/services, as follows:

- Family Hubs (previously Sure Start) and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT) and English as an Additional Language (EAL).
- Safeguarding and Compliance, which dealt with concerns about families and referrals to services.
- Achievement Hubs, which worked with schools to increase achievement. Members heard that Middlesbrough had an almost fully academized system, with direct

reporting to the Department for Education (DfE). The authority held accountability for 30,000 children and their achievement. Work included undertaking inductions with new international arrivals and driving standards across all Trusts in Middlesbrough. The current focus was around attendance, numeracy and literacy, with £1.7m of DfE funding invested in this. It was explained that the vast majority of education money in Middlesbrough came from the DfE, with a £170m pot paying for teachers, utilities, etc. - a £40m allocation remained for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services.

- Literacy/National Literacy Trust (NLT).

In terms of Inclusion and Additional Needs, the teams/services involved in this work were:

- Education Psychologist Service (EPS). A brief overview of this service was provided, with reference being made to EP statements (previously SEND statements); the support provided by school staff; and work with other Local Authorities, such as Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council, for income generation.
- Sensory Teaching and Advisory Service, which ran across all five Tees Local Authorities and related to a child's audio/visual requirements.
- Inclusion Assessment and Review 0-25 Service.
- Resources and Local Offer.

Access to Education comprised the following teams/services:

- Strategic School Planning, i.e., looking at provision and determining whether Middlesbrough had both a sufficient number of schools and the appropriate types. Reference was made to special schools and the high numbers of children on roll. It was explained that since the pandemic, owing to young children not acquiring tertiary skills, the number of children with additional needs had increased dramatically. A plan for the development of a further school had been developed; reference was made to a special school that had recently been completed on Ladgate Lane. Details regarding a temporary teaching facility in Middlesbrough were also provided to the panel. A further matter for the Place Planning Team related to population changes and working with international families to place children in local schools.
- Virtual School, i.e., managing the coordination of individuals in the system. It was explained that the Virtual School discharged responsibility on the schools' behalf, monitoring and following up on progress.
- Admissions.
- Education Welfare Service Team and Elective Home Education (EHE).
- Children Missing from Education (CME), i.e., tracking children to ensure that they were where they ought to have been, and the management of People Missing Out On Education (PMOOE) (e.g. a disruptive child not receiving their 25 hour education entitlement).

Regarding Partnerships, teams/services involved in this work were:

- Youth Justice (YJ) (previously Youth Offending Service (YOS)) - Middlesbrough and Redcar. Reference was made to Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked (VEMT), which looked at exploited children and the impact of serious and organised crime in Middlesbrough, and measures for counteracting this.
- Risk Reduction.
- South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP), which looked at learning from safeguarding (e.g. guidance and training achieved following the investigation of a child death in the area), and Children's Trust, which offered a forward thinking approach to look at the impact of child poverty in Middlesbrough in comparison to other areas and identifying new ways to tackle child poverty.

In terms of the strategic and departmental priorities for the coming year, a number of these were highlighted to the panel.

In terms of challenges, these were noted as follows:

- Increasing permanent exclusions.
- Increasing Education Health and Care Plans, which had resulted in

departmental/budget overspends. A bid for £1m of DfE funding had been placed to upskill mainstream schools with the aim of preventing children from immediately being sent to special schools.

- Falling school roll contrasted with increasing pressure in some parts of town.
- Low school readiness. It was explained that Middlesbrough's more vulnerable children 'fell off' during the transition into secondary schools and this needed to be challenged. It was highlighted that wider determinants acted upon children and was not about the quality of education in Middlesbrough.
- Low attendance.

In terms of innovation and transformation, these were identified as follows:

- Inclusion model, i.e., keeping children in mainstream school and ensuring the appropriateness of facilities offered to them.
- SEND reform.
- Place planning.
- Family Hubs.
- Attendance project/White Paper.
- Turnaround/Instant Justice. The panel was informed of funding that had been received to deliver the Instant Justice initiative. Reference was made to Anti-Social Behaviour and work taking place to prevent this before children committed crime.

The Interim Head of Review and Development Unit, Quality and Assessment, and Principal Social Worker provided information regarding Children's Care.

Members heard that the service currently comprised six areas, as follows:

- Early Help and Prevention, which provided help and support to families sooner with the aim of preventing children from entering care.
- Multi-Agency Childrens Hub (MACH), Assessment and Emergency Duty Team (EDT) Link.
- Safeguarding and Care Planning and Children with Disabilities.
- Review and Development Unit, Quality and Assurance and principal Social Work.
- Residential, Supported Accommodation, Resource and Care Leavers.
- Fostering and Children Looked After (CLA).

It was explained that the service provided a range of statutory Children's Care and Early Help support, which included:

- Providing a range of preventative interventions for children and their families from pre-birth to 19 years.
- Supporting children and young people from 0-18 under Child in Need Plans, including Middlesbrough's disabled children.
- Safeguarding children and young people 0-18 under statutory frameworks.
- Offering an Edge of Care Service via a team of 24/7 Family Resource Workers.
- A Multi-Agency Exploitation Hub to support young people and families impacted by Sexual and Criminal Exploitation.
- Commissioning additional resources for those children and families being supported, including therapeutic intervention.
- Caring for and acting as Corporate Parents to Middlesbrough's most vulnerable Looked After Children and young people.
- Supporting Middlesbrough's care leavers through transition, to independence.
- Working collaboratively with Education, Health, Public Health, Police, Adult Services, Housing and Voluntary Sector partners.

In terms of impact, details were provided as follows:

- External impact: Improved outcomes for children, young people and families; Preventative Intervention reduced the need for statutory services; Safeguarding and supporting children, young people and care leavers up to the age of 25; and Apprenticeship and employment opportunities for the community.
- Internal impact: Sufficiency of placements and workforce; Savings assurances within 2023/24 budget; and Collaboration with wider Council directorates.

The key issues for the department, which were national issues and not unique to Middlesbrough, were outlined to Members as follows:

- Internal placement sufficiency.
- Recruitment and retention of permanent workforce.
- Continued recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers.
- Providing services to children and families within the financial savings plan.
- Continued focus on practice improvement (post Ofsted full inspection) to include:
 - Development and implementation of a 'Neglect Strategy' to tackle issues associated with poverty and deprivation (Domestic Abuse; Substance and Alcohol Misuse; Mental Health; and Neglect).
 - An improved offer to Middlesbrough's Care Leavers.
 - Embed Exploitation Hub.
 - Multi-Disciplinary and Multi-Agency Pre-Birth Team.
 - Further strengthen partnerships and collaboration.

Regarding priorities, the panel was appraised of the key challenges and opportunities currently being presented, as follows:

- Challenges: Delivering services within limited budget; Recruiting and retaining staff; Fragile improvements that needed embedding; High levels of child poverty and neglect; and OFSTED returning in September 2023 to inspect progress made.
- Innovation and Transformation: Exploitation hub; Expansion of children's homes; Recruitment and retention of Foster Carers; Family Hubs; Locality teams; and Expansion of the academy.

In terms of the recruitment and retention of Foster Carers, it was highlighted that the market had been very challenging. Reference was made to the competition that had been experienced from both independent agencies and other Local Authorities. There had, however, been an increase in the number of Foster Carers, as well as in the number of children's homes (of which there were currently six within Middlesbrough).

A Member made reference to the OFSTED inspection and queried the current position. In response, the panel heard that following the previous inspection, further visits by the Department for Education (DfE) and OFSTED would be taking place in September and October 2023 respectively. It was explained that the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) had resulted in an overall inadequate rating, but results in areas such as Youth Justice had been good. It was pointed out that results were representative of a particular point in time. Children's homes were inspected every six months.

A Member raised a query regarding staff recruitment and referenced the high number of interim staff currently employed by the Council and by schools. In response, Members were informed of the national difficulties in recruiting to sectors such as teaching, particularly in subjects such as science, and to permanent opportunities in Social Work and Social Care. Consideration was given to the pros and cons of permanent versus agency contracts, which included reference to such matters as workplace culture, salaries, working conditions and caseloads. It was indicated that a workforce plan, which could potentially be looked at by scrutiny, had been drafted to recruit permanent staff. Mention was made of a good conversion rate that had recently been achieved in terms of agency staff becoming permanent employees. There was strong competition across the region to attract potential employees; reference was made to initiatives such as 'golden handshakes'. Challenge from the private sector/agencies was apparent, but also from other Local Authorities in terms of outbidding on salaries. Work had taken place in the region to establish a salary cap and adherence to this was monitored. Consideration was given to the impact of the pandemic on workforce recruitment and retention; it was indicated that contact between Social Workers and their colleagues, to whom they relied upon for information and support, had been heavily restricted. It was felt that this had had significant impact on an already fragile workforce and had caused some employees to either move to agency work or leave the profession entirely.

A short discussion ensued in relation to places for children; Fosters Carers and children's homes. The panel heard that there was a capacity issue for Foster Carers nationally; difficulties had recently been experienced when services had attempted to find a late placement for a child. Fostering was competitive and posed a significant issue for Local Authorities because a number of private agencies were investment funded. There had been a shift in the market, with a number of large providers taking over smaller providers. Services also needed to be made available to move children out of area when required.

In response to an enquiry regarding preventative intervention, the need for statutory services and the involvement of local communities, Members were informed that every Family Hub had a panel of professionals and local residents to steer it. The third sector was represented and activities also captured the voice of the child. It was indicated that Middlesbrough's communities changed rapidly and services did not always maintain pace with that, with more transience being seen in the Town Centre than in suburban areas; the example of international students studying at Teesside University was provided. It was felt that increased community intelligence would help benefit this. Consideration was given to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and how well this accurately described the town.

A Member queried the main difficulties in tackling school attendance issues. In response, the panel heard that attendance issues started in primary, but became more obvious at the secondary school level. It was indicated that increased resource was available at primary level to look into this. Attendance had the most acute impact with vulnerable children: Looked After Children tended to have excellent attendance, whereas the weakest attendees tended to be the child protection cohort: joint working between police, social work and other professionals was needed in this regard. Local Authorities should have had attendance teams, and academies attendance officers, in place. It was the responsibility of individual schools to employ to these positions because academies held their own budgets, however, these roles were often the first to be deleted when budget constraints were faced. Middlesbrough was currently around three or four percentage points behind the rest of the North East region. It was highlighted that an additional £300,000 had been invested in addressing attendance performance this year. Members were informed of a pilot scheme that Middlesbrough had been chosen to participate in with Barnados, which had ran for four months and only just finished. An immediate result would not be seen, but the project had offered a very positive opportunity.

A short discussion ensued in relation to the potential sharing of services/resources with neighbouring Local Authorities. It was felt that this was possible to a degree, but success would depend on the issues being experienced by those Local Authorities involved.

A Member queried the strength of the relationship with Teesside University. In response, Members were informed that a very strong relationship existed, particularly in relation to recruitment. The University was very keen to work with the Council and vice-versa. Consideration was given to the transience of the Social Work profession, which was more active than other professions (such as teaching). Social Work was teams based - and those teams were not tied to Middlesbrough. A number of staff were currently completing apprenticeships and further development work opportunities were currently being devised. It was intended that more adult learning opportunities would become available, which would both upskill staff and encourage them to remain in Middlesbrough. With regards to international students and their children, it was explained that Children's Services wanted to be proactive in supporting families by holding pre-departure meetings, and providing information around schooling and other matters.

The panel considered school financial matters and the issues around allowing schools to continue to operate if they could not afford to do so. Consideration was given to such factors as 'parachute money' and specialist provision. Academies were responsible for the day-to-day running of schools, but Middlesbrough Council had a duty to ensure the right outcomes for students.

In response to a query regarding the placement of children in homes both within Middlesbrough and outside of the area, the panel was informed that options were currently being looked at to expand the number of children homes locally, of which there were currently six. There was a preference to place children with their own family members wherever possible. Pressure in high needs areas, such as agency costs and out of area placements, did require significant resource. It was indicated that there were plans to convert a further five

properties into children's homes, but taking into account purchasing, planning and conversion works, this would take time. It was hoped that all properties would be purchased and consented by April 2024, though the projected timeline was subject to change depending upon external factors.

In terms of back-to-school places, Members were informed of the Council's legal duty to meet sufficiency. Details regarding the permanent site at the Riverside, together with the temporary site near to the Crown Court were provided. It was indicated that a further site was required for overspill. There was increased capacity/space in more rural areas, but it was a case of whether parents were able or willing to travel, and whether an increase in resource in the Town Centre was a more viable option. If land permitted, expansion of existing schools was more cost effective than building new schools, but there were strict rules on developing land that surrounded school buildings.

In response to a query regarding procedures for permanent exclusions, Members heard that a panel hearing to determine each individual case would be arranged. There was an intervention policy/triage process in place, which involved discussion of the child involved and a respective package of appropriate support. Professional partners involved in this process included Local Authority and police staff. Following the sixth day, the Local Authority was responsible for the child's education through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Team (EMAT). It was highlighted that a significant amount of work had been undertaken to prevent exclusions from occurring.

A Member made reference to Instance Justice and queried whether this was connected to the Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner. In response, it was confirmed that it was, with activity being focused on low level offences.

A short discussion ensued in relation to Children's Services and budget constraints. The importance of having the appropriate level of resource to result in the desired outcomes was highlighted. However, ensuring value for money, efficiency and effectiveness was key.

The Chair thanked the Director of Education and Partnerships and the Interim Head of Review and Development Unit, Quality and Assessment and Principal Social Worker for attending the meeting and providing the overview. The Democratic Services Officer outlined the next steps for Members to agree the Work Programme 2023/2024.

AGREED that the information provided was received and noted.

23/4

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES FOR 2023/2024

A proposed schedule of meeting dates for the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year was submitted for Members' consideration.

AGREED that the proposed meeting dates for 2023/2024 were approved.

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL

<p style="text-align: center;">Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme 2023/2024</p>

18 SEPTEMBER 2023

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel to consider its work programme for the 2023/2024 municipal year.

REVIEW OF 2022/2023

2. At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18 April 2023, a new structure for scrutiny arrangements in Middlesbrough was agreed. As a consequence, the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel is a new panel for this year (in effect, an amalgamation of the two former children's scrutiny panels, i.e., the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel, and the Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel).

For Members' information, relevant topics considered by the two former panels in 2022/2023 were as follows:

Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel

- Behaviour, Discipline and Bullying in Schools - An Update
- Education and Covid-19 Recovery (updates)
- Free School Meals for Nursery Aged Pupils in Middlesbrough
- Learning and Education Strategy Update
- Outwood Academy Ormesby - Response to Ofsted's Findings
- School Exclusion Data (update)
- School Meals and Physical Education (update)
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) (consideration of final report carried over from 2021/2022)
- Youth Offending and Partnership Working with Schools (main review topic).

Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel

- Children's Services Improvement Journey (update)
- Ofsted Monitoring Visit (update)
- South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual Report 2021/2022
- Supporting Young People to Prepare for Adulthood and Independence (main review topic).

BACKGROUND

3. At the start of every municipal year, scrutiny panels discuss the topics that they would like to review during the coming year.
4. Work programmes are useful as they provide some structure to a scrutiny panel's activity and allow for the effective planning and preparation of work.
5. As part of the process for establishing the work programme, Democratic Services Officers gather information/views from a number of sources. Below is a list of topics which are anticipated to be of particular interest to the scrutiny panel. Members are advised that the list of possible topics is not exhaustive and that additional topics can be added and considered at the scrutiny panel meeting. Priorities from the Strategic Work Plan 2021-2024 are also listed below for information.

Suggestions

Please note that the topics marked ** fall outside of the Local Authority's remit, however, may still be of interest to the panel.

Suggestion	Details
Children in Care – Finance and Performance	Suggestion from a Councillor: "What is in place for children in care, i.e. care costs per week per child, schooling, transport, outside bodies looking after children in care in Middlesbrough, etc. How much does it cost for maintaining care homes?"
**Children's Learning and SATS Tests	Suggestion from a Councillor: "Children's Learning – Sat's tests results: how important are they and their usefulness, how are they used for our children. What is in place for those who don't do so good?"
Children's Services and OFSTED	Suggestion from a Councillor: "Discussion of the Children's services OFSTED report and how the officers plan to work on the improvements as outlined in the report in order to get the best service for young people across the town."
**Children who Struggle Making Friends at School	Suggestion from a member of the public: "There are many children out there that struggle to make friends and some even don't have any friends at all , the children in question can be bullied or find life hard. What can Middlesbrough Council do to help this group of children to make friends, feel like they are part of this world and relevant and to

	keep friends?”
Ensuring Best Value in Children’s Services	Suggestion from an Officer: “Could the panel consider a topic around Ensuring Best Value in Children’s Services?”
Improving Poor School Attendance	Suggestion from a Councillor: “Improving poor school attendance. This is an issue across schools in Middlesbrough and the poor attendance of many Middlesbrough's young people will have a detrimental effect on their future success.”
Management and Performance of Middlesbrough's Virtual School	Suggestion from a Councillor: “Middlesbrough's virtual school. Look at the work of the virtual schools as it works to support Middlesbrough's looked after children.”
**Provision and Development of Post-16 Education Places	Suggestion from a Councillor: “Provision of post-16 education places. For the committee to look at the post-16 offer for Middlesbrough's young people. To see if more places are required and what those places should offer. Impact of this on teachers in Middlesbrough? (Eton)”
Quality of Middlesbrough’s Alternative Provision	Suggestion from a Councillor: “Middlesbrough alternative provision. Looking at the quality of AP in Middlesbrough and looking at potential gaps that need to be addressed in order for all students to be in the best place for their needs.”
Safeguarding in Schools	Suggestion from an Officer: “Safeguarding in Schools – what measures are currently in place, how well are they performing and how can these be further developed?”
The Education of Looked after Children	Suggestion from an Officer: “The Education of Looked after Children – what is provision and performance like and how could this be further improved?”
The Impact of Poverty on Children’s Services	Suggestion from a Councillor: “As we are forming a strategy to tackle poverty across the town, I’d like scrutiny to have a direct involvement in shaping the policy. Would it be at all possible for scrutiny panels to investigate their issues with the aim to see how they impact levels of poverty across the town?”

Working with Permanently Excluded Children	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor:</p> <p>“Working with Middlesbrough permanently excluded. Looking at solutions to ensure Middlesbrough permanently excluded are given the opportunity to achieve success despite the barriers they face (provide increased support prior to exclusion?)”</p>
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Topical Issues

Children’s Social Worker Shortage	<p>In February 2023, The Guardian reported that children’s social workers were quitting in record numbers as they struggled to cope with more challenging caseloads stemming from austerity, the pandemic and the cost of living crisis. Quoting figures released by the Department for Education (DfE) in 2022 (also released by the LGA in March 2022), it was indicated that the number of professionals had fallen for the first time since data collection began in 2017, despite rising need. 5,400 social workers left the profession in 2022, a 9% rise on the previous year (4,995) and the highest number since 2017. Vacancies were also at a record high of 7,900, a 21% rise on 2021 (6,522). This is reflective of a myriad of challenges including the impact of the pandemic, rising demand for services, falling investment, and the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>The LGA has called for children’s services to be adequately funded so that councils have the resources to ensure social workers receive the support and reward they deserve, and to fund the family help services social workers need to refer families to.</p> <p>It is estimated that, due to mounting pressures on children’s social care, future costs are set to increase by £600 million each year until 2024/25, with more than 8 in 10 councils already in the unsustainable position of having to overspend their budgets. Rising demand means that despite increasing their children’s social care budgets, councils are having to divert funding away from family help services to protect those children at most immediate risk of harm.</p> <p><i>Sources: Community Care, DfE, LGA, LGiU, The Guardian.</i></p>
Pupil Premium	<p>The pupil premium grant is funding to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in state-funded schools in England.</p> <p>In April 2022, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) released a new evidence brief, which identified robust research that schools could use to guide their decision-making around how to use their pupil premium funding.</p> <p>The tool focuses on three central areas of school development recommended by the EEF’s tiered model - high-quality teaching, targeted academic support and wider strategies - to signpost specific evidence-informed resources on important areas of teaching and learning, such as professional development and strategies to</p>

	<p>support pupils with SEND.</p> <p>In the financial year 2023-24, pupil premium spending will increase to almost £2.9 billion. The aim was to support all schools to use the wealth of evidence of ‘what works’, evaluated by the EEF to use this funding effectively.</p> <p>Sources:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/guidance-for-teachers/using-pupil-premium</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium</p>
<p>The Impact of COVID on Learning</p>	<p>In May 2022, the Education Endowment Fund (EEF) published new research on the impact of COVID on learning.</p> <p>Four- and five-year-olds were less likely to meet the expected levels of development in 2021 than before the pandemic, with parents and schools reporting that children’s personal-social and emotional development, language, literacy, and numeracy skills had been affected.</p> <p>The research found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While all pupils’ learning had been affected, the attainment gap between socially disadvantaged students and their classmates had grown across all age groups. • There was some evidence that in primary schools, younger year groups had been the most significantly affected. • Aside from the impact on attainment, teachers had frequently reported concerns around the impact on pupil wellbeing. <p>Source:</p> <p>https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/new-pandemic-adversely-affected-young-childrens-development-with-fewer-reaching-expected-levels-by-the-end-of-reception-class</p> <p>Now one-to-two years on, the panel could look at the types of issues being experienced, and work being undertaken to address those – with a view to further developing activities in order to reduce the level of impact longer term.</p>

Updates

School Exclusion Statistics	For the panel to receive regular updates in relation to school exclusions.
Ofsted Updates	To continue to receive regular updates in relation to visits and findings of Ofsted on the progress of the Children's Services improvement journey.
Performance information	For the panel to receive regular updates in relation to key performance information.
South Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership (STSCP)	For the panel to receive an overview of the remit of the STSCP including its Annual Report.

Strategic Plan Workplan 2021-24

<p>Priority: Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Supports the following aim(s): People, Place & Business Description: We will tackle crime and anti-social behaviour head on, working with our partners to ensure local people feel safer.</p>
<p>Priority: Climate Change Supports the following aim(s): People, Place & Business Description: We will ensure our town acts to tackle climate change, promoting sustainable lifestyles.</p>
<p>Priority: Physical Environment Supports the following aim(s): People & Place Description: We will work closely with local communities to protect our green spaces and make sure that our roads, streets and open spaces are well-designed, clean and safe.</p>
<p>Priority: Town Centre Supports the following aim(s): People, Place & Business Description: We will transform our town centre, improving accessibility, revitalising unused assets, developing iconic new spaces and building more town centre homes.</p>
<p>Priority: Quality of Service Supports the following aim(s): People, Place & Business Description: We will ensure that we place communities at the heart of what we do, continue to deliver value for money and enhance the reputation of Middlesbrough.</p>

6. It should be noted that the suggested topics outlined above are exactly that, suggestions. The content of the scrutiny panel's work programme is entirely a decision for the panel to make. When considering the work programme, the panel is advised to select topics that will add value to the Local Authority's work.
7. In addition to undertaking the agreed work programme, scrutiny panels have also previously responded on an ad hoc basis to emerging issues - such as considering relevant new legislation, guidance or Government consultation documents. This approach occasionally results in further topics being identified for investigation or review throughout the year.
8. The scrutiny panel is also advised that, under the terms of the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities have a responsibility of community leadership and a power to secure the effective promotion of community wellbeing. Therefore, in addition to the scrutiny panel's generally recognised powers (of holding the Executive to account, reviewing service provision, developing policy, considering budget plans and performance and financial monitoring), panels also have the power to consider **any** matters which are not the responsibility of the Council but which affect the local authority **or** the inhabitants of its area. For example, nationally, local authorities have undertaken scrutiny work on issues such as flood defence schemes, policing matters, post office closures and rural bus services.

Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid

9. Members are asked to use the aid attached at **Appendix 1** to prioritise issues where scrutiny can make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development in order to determine which topics are suitable for inclusion in its final work programme.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

10. The scrutiny panel is asked to consider and determine suitable scrutiny topics for inclusion in its work programme for the 2023/2024 municipal year.
11. When considering its work programme, the scrutiny panel is asked to ensure that topics agreed for inclusion:
 - Affect a group of people living within the Middlesbrough area.
 - Relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake or over which the Council has an influence.
 - Are not issues which the Overview and Scrutiny Board or the Scrutiny Panels have considered during the last 12 months.
 - Do not relate to an individual service complaint; and
 - Do not relate to matters dealt with by another Council Committee, unless the issue deals with procedure.
12. It is suggested that the scrutiny panel has a mixture of working styles in its programme. This can include detailed and in-depth reviews, shorter topics, or one-off investigations.

13. Once the scrutiny panel has identified the areas of priority, support staff will draw those topics into a programme for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

RECOMMENDATION

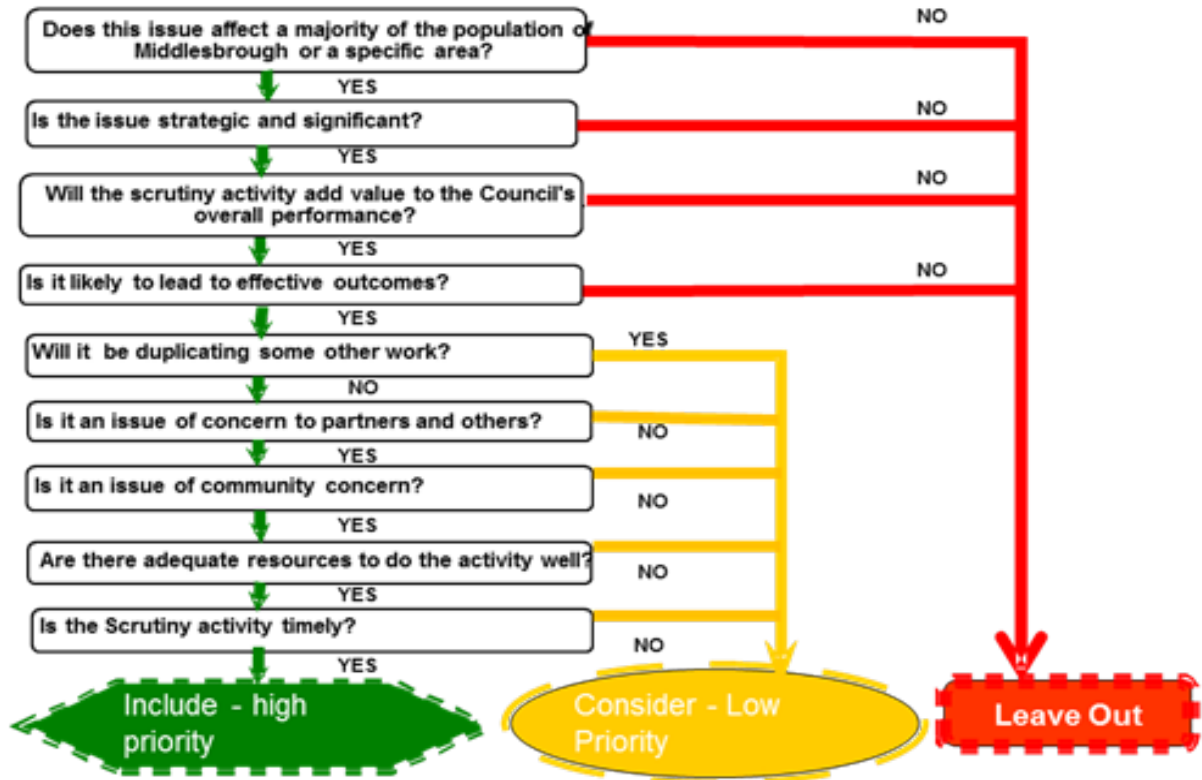
14. That, by utilising the Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid (see Appendix 1), the scrutiny panel identifies two topics it would like to include in its work programme for 2023/24, for submission to Overview and Scrutiny Board for approval.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

15. Throughout the report, reference is made to documents published by Community Care, DfE, EEF, LGA, LGiU, Middlesbrough Council, The Guardian and .Gov.uk website.

Contact Officer:

Chris Lunn
Democratic Services Officer
Democratic Services
Legal and Governance Services
Tel: 01642 729742
E-mail: chris_lunn@middlesbrough.gov.uk



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