

NOTICE
OF
MEETING

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

will meet on

THURSDAY, 21ST MARCH, 2019

At 6.30 pm

in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, MAIDENHEAD

TO: MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

COUNCILLORS EILEEN QUICK (CHAIRMAN), MARION MILLS (VICE-CHAIRMAN), SAYONARA LUXTON, NICOLA PRYER, EDWARD WILSON, WESLEY RICHARDS AND CHARLES HOLLINGSWORTH

VACANCY (OXFORD DIOCESE), VACANCY (PORTSMOUTH DIOCESE), (SECONDARY HEADTEACHER REPRESENTATIVE), VACANCY (PRIMARY HEADTEACHER REPRESENTATIVE), MR LOUDEN (SECONDARY GOVERNORS REPRESENTATIVE), MR COOK (SECONDARY GOVERNORS REPRESENTATIVE), MARTIN POST (REGIONAL SCHOOLS COMMISSIONER).

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

COUNCILLORS LYNNE JONES, HASHIM BHATTI, MAUREEN HUNT, MOHAMMED ILYAS, JOHN STORY, GERRY CLARK AND LYNDA YONG

Karen Shepherd – Service Lead Governance - Issued: Wednesday, 13 March 2019

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AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> To receive apologies for absence.	-
2.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> To receive any declarations of interest.	5 - 6
3.	<u>MINUTES</u> To consider the Part I minutes of the meeting held on January 29 th 2019.	7 - 10
4.	<u>UPDATE ON GIRL'S POLICY FORUM</u> To consider the report and note the update.	11 - 16
5.	<u>Q3 PERFORMANCE REPORT</u> To consider and note the report.	To Follow
6.	<u>UPDATE ON FOSTERING</u> To consider the report and note the update.	To Follow
7.	<u>WORK PROGRAMME</u> To discuss items for future meetings.	17 - 18

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MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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Agenda Item 3

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 29 JANUARY 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Eileen Quick (Chairman), Marion Mills (Vice-Chairman), Sayonara Luxton, Nicola Pryer, Edward Wilson and Wesley Richards

Also in attendance: Councillor Natasha Airey

Officers: Kevin McDaniel, Hilary Hall, Andy Carswell and Russell O'Keefe

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Richards, who would be late arriving to the meeting.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on December 6th 2018 be approved as a true and correct record, subject to an amendment to note Cllr Mrs Airey's apologies.

BUDGET 2019/20

The Director of Children's Services explained to Members that expenditure on statutory children's services had increased, in common with other local authorities, and there had been an overspend in the current financial year. However there had been an increase in the base budget for 2019/20, which reflected the Council's high priority to providing child safeguarding services. There was a proposed gross investment of £4.3million for children's services for the forthcoming financial year, although areas where savings could be made had been also been identified. These included reductions in spending on agency staff, and a proportionate saving related to costs of placements for children outside of the Royal Borough.

The Chairman asked the Director of Children's Services if he was satisfied that the mitigations in place in the current year were sufficient to deliver the children's services budget. The Director of Children's Services stated that significant additional costs to help support the budget were still to be recouped, including a provider backdating the cost of some out of Borough care placements. He added that other savings had been made and identified, and that he was confident the forecast outturn position was achievable.

The Chairman noted there was a significant cost difference between placement of a child with a foster family against an out of Borough placement. The Director of Children's Services said it was difficult to draw a direct comparison as local placements may incur additional costs, such as for therapeutic support which are often included in the out of borough placement costs. These were reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the therapy was appropriate.

Cllr Wilson noted that the budget for Achieving for Children had increased from £15million in 2017/18 to £24million in 2019/20. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services stated that the figure for 2017/18 was for a seven month contract rather than a full year, which accounted for the large difference. The Director of Children's Services added that the increased budget from 2018/19 took account of the high number of children who were now in receipt of support, for

whom no financial provision had previously been made. Members were informed that the budget had also been reviewed to take out unachievable income targets.

Members were informed that the Dedicated Schools Grant would be £2.2million higher in 2019/20 than the previous year, which was primarily due to the growth in pupil numbers. Of this figure, £386,000 was specifically allocated to the high needs block by central Government. Members were told that a per pupil formula had been agreed by the schools forum and all schools would receive the same amount of per pupil funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant, or higher, compared to the previous year. The exception to this would be schools where the national Minimum Funding Guarantee cuts in at -1.5%.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services said there had been an overspend of £1.3million on the Dedicated Schools Grant, and this was being monitored. She added that this was reflective of the national picture, and that neighbouring local authorities had overspends of closer to £10million. It was confirmed to Members that the Dedicated Schools Grant was already included on the Council's balance sheet, along with the balance status of all maintained schools within the Royal Borough. The Director of Children's Services informed Members that the Government was consulting on whether there should be a formal recovery plan relating to the Dedicated Schools Grant if the balance was more than 1% overspent, and whether local authorities should be liable for topping it up in the event of any overspending. There were some Judicial Reviews of this aspect currently taking place.

Regarding the Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers over the age of 16 referenced in Appendix Q, the Director of Children's Services stated that staff were confident they were the age they claim to be. If there were doubts then dental aging checks could be taken with the person's consent, although there had been no reason to do this.. Additional funding for this had been provided by the Government. Members were told that older asylum seekers generally did not incur much by way of additional funding resources, whereas younger asylum seekers would be more inclined to require funding, for example for health/trauma reasons.

The Director of Children's Services stated that the Budget had been set with a greater regard for national forecast trends, and commended the Budget to Members. He publicly thanked the officers who had helped produce the Budget, particularly as a number of difficult decisions had had to be made to reduce the amount of funding for other service areas in order to support the increased budget for children's services. Members thanked officers for producing the report. The Chairman stated it was a pity that nobody was present from the Opposition to raise any concerns about the Budget.

The Chairman informed Members that Queensmead School (an independent school) had announced the previous day, at short notice, that it would be closing. Members were informed that Holyport College had agreed to take on some of Queensmead's A Level pupils, but parents had been contacting the Council about alternative school places. Members were informed that they should refer any parents to School Admissions at the Council. The Director of Children's Services said 59 children would need to find alternative school places. A few of the pupils have Education, Health and Care plans and there might be an increase in high needs block cost as a result. Additional funding would be needed for state funded nursery places as 85% these had been paid in advance to the setting. The Director of Children's Services told Members that the arrangements to recover this was currently unclear.

It was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Panel noted the report and approved the:

- i) Detailed recommendations contained in Appendix A which included a base council tax at Band D of £961.33, including a 2.99% increase of £27.91.**
- ii) Adult social care precept to remain unchanged at £74.74.**
- iii) Fees and charges contained in Appendix D.**
- iv) Capital strategy in Appendix G.**
- v) Capital programme, shown in Appendices H & I, for the financial year 2019/20.**
- vi) Prudential borrowing limits set out in Appendix L.**

- vii) **Business rate tax base calculation, detailed in Appendix P, and its use in the council tax requirement in Appendix A.**
- viii) **Deputy Director and Head of Finance in consultation with the Lead Members for Finance and Children's Services to amend the total schools budget to reflect actual Dedicated Schools Grant levels once received.**
- ix) **Delegation to the Deputy Director and Head of Finance and Lead Member for Finance to include the precept from the Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority once the precept is announced.**

ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN PERFORMANCE REPORT

Members were told that as part of the review, staff from each of the five service areas under Achieving for Children (AfC) had been asked how far the key potential benefits identified at the outset of the contract had been realised, and how much of that had been down to the changes that had been implemented. The main highlights from the feedback related to improved engagement with residents and aligning policy frameworks across different service areas in order to improve efficiency. It had been proposed in the next Capital Work Programme that the ICS system be transferred to Liquid Logic as used in the other area of AfC to improve efficiency and help staff across all service areas to track cases more effectively. It was noted that the use of agency staff had reduced, which was seen as a benefit as using permanent members of staff meant a more consistent delivery of service.

With regards to the engagement with foster carers and the changes being led by AfC, Members were told that there were three levels of engagement an individual carer could opt for. The first was to provide foster care and use the information provided; the second was to talk about the service proposals and recruit more carers; and the third was helping with the design of particular proposals relating to foster caring. Three foster carers from the Royal Borough had chosen to be on the joint area board, and they had helped AfC address some concerns that had been raised more widely. The Director of Children's Services said that foster carers felt communication with them was good, and he had not had to take away any action points from his last informal meeting with them.

Cllr Wilson stated that 90 per cent of children in the Royal Borough went to a school that had either an outstanding or good Ofsted report, and that there were no schools that were in special measures. He asked what was being done to ensure this continued. The Director of Children's Services said that providing resources for schools not rated as outstanding or good was a priority for the Council, and support was provided through a wide range of the Council's service areas. Although a large number of schools had become Academies, they were still liaising with the Council about potential improvements. Each school in the Royal Borough had been allocated a named education officer to help maintain standards, and to enable any concerns to be escalated more efficiently and quickly.

The Deputy Director – Strategy and Commissioning said all commissioned services were being delivered, and this was being kept under review. It was considered important to stick with the service providers and allow time for their way of working to embed, and the implementation of the commissioned services was not a 'quick win'. It was felt that Achieving for Children had the better expertise to be able to provide certain services, with the Director of Children's Services giving the example of arranging family group conferencing. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services said that Achieving for Children had been selected as the service provider from six options, which had been chosen after a two year research process. She stated she was content with the level of service being provided, and there had been an improvement in the quality of staff that had been recruited. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services said that 90 per cent of the services provided by Achieving for Children were statutory, but that officers had correctly identified which areas to prioritise.

The Chairman asked if a rating system could be provided to outline the various success levels for the services listed in the report appendices. The Director of Children's Services said he would look into providing this for the next performance report. The Chairman and Vice

Chairman both said they had been reassured by the answers that had been provided by officers about the performance of Achieving for Children.

The contents of the report was noted by Members.

TENDER APPROVAL - WASTE COLLECTION FOR SCHOOLS

Members were informed that following a tendering process, Veolia had been awarded the contract to collect landfill waste from schools. In addition they had offered to include the provision of food waste bins for all schools, which had not been a previous contractual offer. Schools would be given advice on how to make best use of the food waste bins. Members were informed that litter picking equipment was not included as part of the tender, although such equipment was available from elsewhere. Collection of recycling from schools was already done separately by the Council, but the tender would ensure that Veolia would maximise the number of items that were capable of being recycled. It had been agreed to keep this as a separate contract due to the volatility of the recycling collection market.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services told Members that improving recycling and waste management in schools was a project being worked on by the Girl's Policy Forum. Part of this review had led to extra bins being installed on popular walking routes to certain schools.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Panel noted the report and:

i) Approved the award of the new schools waste contract to Veolia Environmental Services Ltd.

ii) Delegated authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services, to exercise the option to extend the contract for up to an additional two years.

WORK PROGRAMME

Members were informed that the Annual Education Report would be presented at the next meeting as it was due to be considered at March's Cabinet meeting. It was agreed that the item on the Inclusion Metrics Framework should be deferred to a future meeting.

The contents of the Work Programme was noted by Members.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the motion to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 7.38 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....



Subject:	Update on the Girls' Policy Forum
Reason for briefing note:	The Children's Overview and Scrutiny panel are interested to know how young women and girls are able to raise their voices on any policy area within the Council's purview, and indeed, beyond.
Responsible officer(s):	Elaine Keating/Lin Ferguson
Senior leader sponsor:	Cllr Airey
Date:	11 March 2019

SUMMARY

1. The Girls' Policy Forum was established in April 2018 so that the voices of young women and girls play an active role in shaping life in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
2. The Forum meets once a month to discuss policies and papers and general areas of interest to young women and girls in the area, with a view to the Forum feeding directly into policy making.
3. The Forum has already been engaged in a number of conversations including: Litter in Schools and Big Belly Bins, National Takeover Day, and the Cycle Action Plan. The Forum have invited the architects for the Nicholson centre to hear their views about the opportunities presented by regeneration.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Plan International UK report 'The State of Girls' Rights in the UK' posed the question, 'What is the current state of girls' rights in the UK?' and concluded that the answer is clear: not equal. By exploring the real experiences of girls in the UK, the report found that whilst the UK may be the fifth-richest country in the world, it is failing its girls, and failing to meet international standards set out in human rights frameworks and the United Nations new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 1.2 The report also compared girls' rights in the UK at local authority level, which showed that young women have different experiences depending on where they live. Geography plays a significant part and whilst the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is not in the worst 10 local authorities to be a girl, it is not in the top 10 either. It is known that access to excellent education,

public health services, living in a safe environment free from the fear of harm, and more, are all essential factors for young people to thrive. The Borough holds to the vision that a person's background, family income, ethnicity, postcode or any other circumstance should not be a limiting factor in their future outcomes or wellbeing.

- 1.3 The purpose of the report was that policy makers and decision makers could initially recognise the reality of the state of girls' rights in the UK is not where it both could and should be, and then act to change it.
- 1.4 Cllr Airey brought a motion to the Council in February 2018 so that the Borough could make a difference on its own patch and aspire to be the very best local authority to be a girl in the UK, from the grassroots and not just top-down. Therefore the motion sought to redress the balance in RBWM by establishing a Girls' Policy Forum.

It was resolved unanimously that the Council:

- i. Notes the Plan International report 'The State of Girls' rights in the UK' and the increasing coverage of issues where women experience a different climate to men.
- ii. Notes its leadership role and establishes a new 'Girls' Policy Forum', operated by our youth services, so that the voices of young women and girls play an active role in shaping life in the Royal Borough.
- iii. Asks the Leader to write to the schools and youth groups in the Borough to make them aware of the Forum and appoint representatives, and to commit to taking the views of the Forum into consideration when making decisions.
- iv. As a consequence, the Girls' Policy Forum was established in April 2018.

2. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The Forum provides a platform for the Council to help promote the voices of young women and girls so that they are able to enjoy all of the rights that living in the Borough and country affords in equal measures to their male counterparts.
- 2.2 The aim of the Girl's Policy Forum is that the group fed into policy making before and during the process, not after the event, so that the Council is proactively seeking to listen to young women and girls, where previously their voices had not been sufficiently heard.
- 2.3 The Girls' Policy Forum represents young women and girls living and receiving education in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

3. DETAILS - TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 The Girls' Policy Forum is aimed at 11-18 year old (up to 25 with learning difficulties) young women and girls.
- 3.2 The Forum is operated and facilitated by the Youth Service and the Youth Engagement Officer, Elaine Keating, is the main lead. The Lead Member of Children Services, Cllr Airey and the Director of Children's Social Care and Early Help, Lin Ferguson, are also in attendance.
- 3.3 The terms of the Forum run from September of one year to the following July.
- 3.4 Each year the Leader will write to schools and youth groups in the Borough to make them aware of the Forum and appoint representatives. At present we have pupils from Furze Platt, Newlands, Churchmead, Altwood and Windsor Girls who regularly attend the meetings.
- 3.5 We are keen to increase the membership to broaden the representation of young women and girls from across the borough and will enlist the staff of the Youth Service to reach some of our more vulnerable young women and girls.
- 3.6 The officers of the Council have made a commitment to take the views of the Forum into consideration when making decisions.
- 3.7 The meetings will be led by the young women and girls in attendance, who will chair the meeting, set the agenda, take minutes and appoint committees and sub groups as and when necessary. However, in the interim, Elaine Keating has been undertaking this role whilst the young women and girls increase their confidence.

4. WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

- 4.1 The most exciting opportunity to date was to have a Q&A meeting with the Prime Minister, Theresa May, on the 1 February 2019. The girls were given the opportunity to ask questions about her life, what inspired her, her education, interests and hobbies. Her advice to her younger self was "always to keep your eye on the main goal."
- 4.2 The Forum has had a number of guest speakers over the last number of months from around the Council, who have spoken about their roles and responsibilities and how the young women and girls can become involved in a range of initiatives like cycling. Gordon Oliver presented the cycling action plan and the young women and girls talked about why they don't always feel safe cycling to school and how this could be overcome.

- 4.3 There has been significant concern expressed about litter within local schools and the community as a whole. Naomi Markham, the Waste Strategy Manager from the Strategy and Commissioning team has presented to the Forum on Big Belly Bins and some posters to use in schools are currently being developed. Members of the Forum also took on a project to assess if the bins in our local streets are in the correct place.
- 4.4 The mental health of young women and girls in the Borough is also a particular concern and Sian Smith from Public Health spoke to the Forum about the feasibility of taking a project forward. Allison Bradshaw spoke to the group about the Early Help Service in the Borough and Suki Hayes also came to the Forum to talk about the Inclusion Charter.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Although this Forum has not been established for long, it has been very active, whilst also formulating how it sees itself going forward.
- 5.2 There are a number of exciting events and projects coming up over the next number of months:
- i. The designing of 2 litter posters which will be sent out to all schools in the Borough and attendance at school assemblies.
 - ii. The Forum has been asked to undertake a project around inclusion for young people, with the aim of presenting this at the Inclusion Summit in September 2019.
 - iii. Improvements to Maidenhead Town Centre, including an engagement session with the architects working for the new owners of the Nicholson centre.
 - iv. Attendance at Council management meetings in order to promote the work of the group and how the Forum can be consulted on potential policy making in a range of areas.
- 5.3 It is anticipated that over the coming months, the young women and girls who attend will feel more confident to facilitate the Forum themselves, with support from elected members and officers.
- 5.4 There are also a range of issues that the young women and girls would like to tackle over the next year:
- i. Mental health and its effects on young people.
 - ii. Genetic-engineering on animals and whether or not it should be allowed.

- iii. Should vaccines and abortion be a choice.
 - iv. The right to the best healthcare system young women and girls can have.
 - v. Charity events.
- 5.5 Members of the council's leadership team have been invited to consider how the Forums' views can be sought and reflected in policy making across the Council.

6. FEEDBACK FROM REGULAR ATTENDEES

- 6.1 "The Girls' Policy Forum helps me grow my confidence as I suggest ideas and work in a team. Also the feeling that the Girls' Policy Forum can change something for the better."
- 6.2 "It is interesting and informative, as there is a wide range of speakers who share different issues they are trying to tackle within the local community."
- 6.3 "There is a nice atmosphere among the group, which allows for more open conversations and comfort within."
- 6.4 "It is a separate opportunity from those in a school environment, allowing a chance to meet with others and discuss all aspects of the community."
- 6.5 "I believe it's an opportunity for me, a youth, to really help my borough. The achievements we have already made are brilliant and all members truly learn a lot. Everyone goes away with experience in working in teams, volunteering, speaking up and coming up with great and inventive ideas. Its has such a positive impact."
- 6.6 "I really enjoy coming to the session as we always discuss important matters in society. I also attend, so that I can have a voice in what we are discussing; I want to know what would impact upon me and other girls and women. I like the freedom of speech and the non-judgmental space to voice opinions and ideas. Most of all, it is only girls that take part. So I don't feel judged or misunderstood in anyway"

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WORK PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

ITEMS ON THE CABINET FORWARD PLAN BUT NOT YET PROGRAMMED FOR A SPECIFIC SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

REPORT	Cabinet Date
Standards and Quality of Education – A Review of the Academic Year 2017-18	April 2019

ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE ADULTS, CHILDREN AND HEALTH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

REPORT
Alternative Provision/Home Schooling
Inclusion Metrics Framework

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