

5th Draft

Leicester City Council

Scrutiny Review

A review of the historical context of the recent Ofsted inspection of services for looked after children.

Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission
Chaired by Councillor Moore

22nd July 2015

Background to scrutiny reviews

Determining the right topics for scrutiny reviews is the first step in making sure scrutiny provides benefits to the Council and the community.

This scoping template will assist in planning the review by defining the purpose, methodology and resources needed. It should be completed by the Member proposing the review, in liaison with the lead Director and the Scrutiny Manager. Scrutiny Officers can provide support and assistance with this.

In order to be effective, every scrutiny review must be properly project managed to ensure it achieves its aims and delivers measurable outcomes. To achieve this, it is essential that the scope of the review is well defined at the outset. This way the review is less likely to get side-tracked or become overambitious in what it hopes to tackle. The Commission's objectives should, therefore, be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time-bound) as possible.

The scoping document is also a good tool for communicating what the review is about, who is involved and how it will be undertaken to all partners and interested stakeholders.

The form also includes a section on public and media interest in the review which should be completed in conjunction with the Council's Communications Team. This will allow the Commission to be properly prepared for any media interest and to plan the release of any press statements.

Scrutiny reviews will be supported by a Scrutiny Officer.

Evaluation

Reviewing changes that have been made as a result of a scrutiny review is the most common way of assessing the effectiveness. Any scrutiny review should consider whether an on-going monitoring role for the Commission is appropriate in relation to the topic under review.

For further information please contact the Scrutiny Team on 0116 4546340

To be completed by the Member proposing the review

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1.	Title of the proposed scrutiny review	'A review of the historical context of the recent Ofsted inspection of services for looked after children'.
2.	Proposed by	<u>Councillor Moore, Chair of CYPS</u>
3.	Rationale Why do you want to undertake this review?	<p>State what prompted the review e.g. media interest /public feedback / new legislation / performance information.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <u>Ofsted found children's social care services in Leicester to be inadequate following a recent inspection (published in March 2015).</u> 2) <u>This was one of the most critical issues challenging the governance of the council in the last term</u> 3) <u>Therefore, to ensure transparency, it is imperative that the lead-up to this event should be closely examined</u> 4) <u>An understanding of this historical context is essential for a newly constituted Children, Young Persons and Schools Commission to carry out a full and effective critique of the Children's Improvement Plan</u> 5) <u>This topic is of high media / public interest</u> <p>Elected Members have a unique responsibility for ensuring that the Council and partners are effective in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.</p>
4.	Purpose and aims of the review What question(s) do you want to answer and what do you want to achieve? (Outcomes?)	<p>Defining clearly the key questions that the review is seeking to answer is critical to setting a clear scope and approach. E.g. it could be that the commission wants assurances that the service is delivering to a specific community or wants to assess the impact of a change in service.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>What were the long term processes and the context both local and national which led to the Ofsted grading?</u> 2. <u>What can be learned from successes and failures about performance management for Children's Services?</u> 3. <u>Are these covered sufficiently in the Improvement Plan?</u> <p>Scrutiny can play an important role in making sure there are robust performance and quality assurance mechanisms, clear accountability arrangements and a system of checks and balances that provide effective challenge.</p>
5.	Links with corporate aims / priorities How does the review link to corporate aims and priorities? http://citymayor.leicester.gov.uk/delivery-plan-2013-14/	<p><u>This review links to:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <u>Corporate Parenting Strategy 2014 – 2016</u>

6.	<p>Scope Set out what is included in the scope of the review and what is not. For example which services it does and does not cover.</p>	Leicester City Councils Children's Services.
Develop a draft Project Plan to incorporate sections seven to twelve of this form		
7.	<p>Methodology Describe the methods you will use to undertake the review.</p> <p>How will you undertake the review, what evidence will need to be gathered from members, officers and key stakeholders, including partners and external organisations and experts?</p>	<p><u>Evidence will be gathered from:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Examination of key events over time within safeguarding practice since previous Ofsted report 2) Interviews with stakeholders 3) Policy documents and minutes leading up to the 2015 Ofsted report, including a critique of the Monro report and the consequences of its implementation 4) Location of Ofsted report within the national context 5) The content of the Improvement Plan
	<p>Witnesses Set out who you want to gather evidence from and how you will plan to do this</p>	<p><u>The commission will review minutes of key meetings including Scrutiny and Corporate Parenting, and gather relevant evidence from:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ex executive lead 2) Director of service 3) Union representatives
8.	<p>Timescales How long is the review expected to take to complete?</p>	8 weeks
	Proposed start date	End of July 2015
	Proposed completion date	End of September 2015
9.	<p>Resources / staffing requirements Scrutiny reviews are facilitated by Scrutiny Officers and it is important to estimate the amount of their time, in weeks, that will be required in order to manage the review Project Plan effectively.</p>	Existing resources of scrutiny.

	Do you anticipate any further resources will be required e.g. site visits or independent technical advice? If so, please provide details.	Minutes of relevant meetings.
10.	Review recommendations and findings To whom will the recommendations be addressed? E.g. Executive / External Partner?	The findings of this review will be presented to: City Mayor and Executive
11.	Likely publicity arising from the review - Is this topic likely to be of high interest to the media? Please explain.	Yes, high profile issue, likely to attract wide media interest
12.	Publicising the review and its findings and recommendations How will these be published / advertised?	Commission meetings and councils website
13.	How will this review add value to policy development or service improvement?	This review will seek to be assured that the council is covering all bases in its Improvement Plan so as to provide a fair, effective and improved Children's Services.
To be completed by the Divisional Lead Director		
14.	Divisional Comments Scrutiny's role is to influence others to take action and it is important that Scrutiny Commissions seek and understand the views of the Divisional Director.	
15.	Are there any potential risks to undertaking this scrutiny review? E.g. are there any similar reviews being undertaken, on-going work or changes in policy which would supersede the need for this review?	A key recommendation from the Ofsted report is to: Ensure effective oversight and examination of data and practice by the Scrutiny Commission. It is important that Scrutiny consider their role in light of the above recommendation and if this review achieved a set of actions for Scrutiny to implement it would demonstrate to our external challengers (Improvement Board Chair, DfE and Ofsted) that we are addressing some of the issues raised about leadership.

		<p>In order for Scrutiny to fulfil its function training could be offered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted inspection framework • The role of Children's Social Care • Analysis of specific performance indicators <p>This scrutiny review as it stands presents risks to the Department as it potentially will distract from our improvement journey. The Improvement Board meets every four weeks and requires Officers to provide work which relates to the Improvement Action Plan. It is not possible to divert Officers from this work. Officer time is being focussed on the priorities for maintenance and improvement work in the service being accountable to the Improvement Board as required by the DfE/Ofsted. A number of activities have taken place which may provide reassurance to Scrutiny that lessons learnt have been taken on board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview and Scrutiny meetings April 2015 • Ofsted Improvement Seminar April 2015 • Meetings with City Mayor, DFE , Improvement Chair post Ofsted • Production of Improvement Plan which was submitted on time, signed off by Improvement Board and Executive. The feedback from Ofsted has been positive. • Presentation at Improvement Board focusing on the issues and what actions have been taken to date at the first Board. <p>It is also worth noting that the Ofsted inspection framework has changed since the 2011 Inspection, and the focus of inspections has changed.</p> <p>A clear message has been given that we have understood the improvements that need to be made and this needs to be our focus. Relationships are good with the DfE and Ofsted in terms of our response to the Inspection, the pace and the fact that the Board was established quickly. A retrospective look may place our credibility at risk and question whether Scrutiny is focussed on the right issues and perhaps should be considering their role in overseeing the Improvement Plan.</p>
<p>16.</p>	<p>Are you able to assist with the proposed review? If not please explain why. In terms of agreement / supporting documentation / resource availability?</p>	<p>Assistance will be limited. The Divisional Director will be focussed on Improvement work and will not be taken off this work to support the review. Ofsted are returning for their first a two day visit as part of their support programme and this requires preparation, input during the visit and follow-up afterwards.</p> <p>The following can be offered from the Department: a one off session with Scrutiny using the presentation that was used with the DfE/Improvement Board Chair and subsequently the Improvement Board which highlights the issues that Ofsted identified, some reflections about lessons learnt and actions that have been taken.</p> <p>Scrutiny will also have access to various minutes and reports of any formal meetings.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier, in order for Scrutiny to fulfil its function</p>

		<p>training could be offered on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted inspection framework • The role of Children's Social Care • Analysis of specific performance indicators <p>Training for Scrutiny has been identified as an action in the Improvement Plan.</p>
Name		Frances Craven
Role		Strategic Director of Childrens Services
Date		21 st July 2015
To be completed by the Scrutiny Support Manager		
17.	<p>Will the proposed scrutiny review / timescales negatively impact on other work within the Scrutiny Team? (Conflicts with other work commitments)</p>	<p>This has the potential of being a large review and it is important that the scope and rationale of the review is adhered to, in order to focus the work of the supporting officers. It may mean that whilst this review is ongoing that another review may not be able to be fully supported.</p>
	<p>Do you have available staffing resources to facilitate this scrutiny review? If not, please provide details.</p>	<p>Yes, the lead SPO should be able to adequately support this review but given the depth of work involved I will continually review this with the SPO.</p>
Name		Kalvaran Sandhu
Date		21 st July 2015