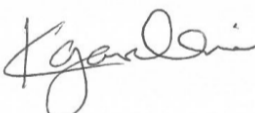


## LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Meeting / Date	<b>Cabinet</b> <b>13 July 2023</b>	
Report Title	<b>Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and Communities Scrutiny Committee</b> <b>Joint Themed Review 2022-23</b> <b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Child Safeguarding</b>	
Cabinet Portfolio	Councillor Kizzy Gardiner – Portfolio Lead Member for Children and Young People	
Report Author/ Contact details	<p>Ian Buckle – Head of Electoral and Democratic Services  <a href="mailto:ian.buckle@walthamforest.gov.uk">ian.buckle@walthamforest.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Rosie Whillock – Scrutiny Policy Assistant  Finance and Governance  <a href="mailto:rosie.whillock@walthamforest.gov.uk">rosie.whillock@walthamforest.gov.uk</a></p>	
Wards affected	None specifically	
Public Access	OPEN	
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 – Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and Communities Scrutiny Committee, Joint Themed Review 2022-23, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Child Safeguarding</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Proposed Response</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Equalities Analysis Screening Tool</p>	

### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's scrutiny committees conduct themed reviews as part of an annual work programme. This is an opportunity for a committee to engage in a sustained way with a particular topic. This year the Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee conducted a joint review on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Child Safeguarding. The attached report sets out the Committee's findings and recommendations.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Cabinet is recommended to approve the following recommendations:
- (a) That the Communities Scrutiny Committee and Children and Families Scrutiny Committee Joint Themed Review report be noted;
  - (b) That the recommendations outlined in the report be adopted and taken forward as outlined in the proposed response in appendix 2.

## 3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Committee conducted its themed review throughout 2022-23, and its approach is outlined in **appendix 1**. Officers have prepared a proposed response which is attached as **appendix 2**. Cabinet are asked to review and approve the response.
- 3.2 The full recommendations are outlined in the report (appendix 1). A summary of recommendations can be found below:
- 3.3 **Summary of recommendations**  
The Committee recommends:

1. Services must continue to champion children in care and explore innovative ways to achieve this. This must be accompanied by advocating for young people that experience disproportionality in youth justice, care and education settings.

### Youth Justice System

2. Services to consider ways to improve communication and signpost children/young people in the youth justice system to activities in the borough (such as the new Youth Hubs).
3. The Council supports the extension of the Ether program.
4. That the committee hear from police officers who work with vulnerable young people in the 'reachable moment' and seek to gain insight as to how we can divert them away from violence.

### Care Leavers

5. Services to investigate whether the payment process for those in care can be simplified to ensure young people do not miss out on experiences (such as educational trips).
6. Council to investigate why MyGuide (electric tool) is not universally used and address these barriers.
7. The criteria for access to a leaving care coach is simplified and well signposted. That services let our care leavers know that they are entitled to support until the age of 25, including telephone and face to face.
8. Adequate space is reserved within the new Children and Families hub in order for the coaches and social workers to facilitate group

activities like table tennis to allow care leavers to socialize more fully and regularly. Services to facilitate Councillor's and Care Leavers engagement by inviting Councillors to existing activities.

9. Committee task cabinet with reporting back [Should receive a report on how this will be achieved.] That all possible efforts are made to place our care leavers at the forefront of all employment, apprenticeship and training opportunities provided by Waltham Forest council and its partners/stakeholders.
10. That training for a 'care informed' approach be embedded into the relevant departments working with care-leavers (in a similar manner to the recommendations of the VAWG task and finish group regarding a 'trauma informed approach'). This training should also be made available to Councillors and be supplemented by workshops for council employees that focus on diversity and disproportionality experienced by young people in care.

#### Education

11. Council to research reasons for biases in PRU exclusions and alternative provision and work with young people whilst in and other alternative provision and work with schools address these issues.
12. Officers seek to find ways to standardise careers training across schools.

## **4. OPTIONS & ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The Committee has reviewed the Council's policy and practice, and its proposals relate to current service delivery. It is a requirement for the Cabinet to consider each individual scrutiny committee themed review and respond to the recommendations within the report.

## **5. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY PRIORITIES (AND OTHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL POLICIES OR STRATEGIES)**

- 5.1 The attached report of the scrutiny committee sets out a number of ways the themed review has taken into consideration both local and national policies in respect to its area of focus.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Formal consultation is not required for a scrutiny committee to conduct a themed review. The Committee has, however, spoken to a range of witnesses and sought a diversity of views in respect to its topic, as set out in its report.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 **Finance, Value for Money and Risk**

- 7.1.1 The recommendations have been developed so that they can be implemented within the existing budgets available to relevant services. However, if in preparing to implement the recommendations contained within the themed review report, they are not sustainable within existing resources and officers find that additional expenditure is required, a report should be brought back to Cabinet to explain either: a) why the recommendations cannot be implemented; or b) proposals to finance their implementation.

## **7.2 Legal**

- 7.2.1 Part of the Council's constitution sets out the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules including, in paragraph 5, the procedure for Policy Review and Development. This report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 6.1 of the procedure rules as a report by Overview and Scrutiny. The procedure rules provide that in carrying out any such policy review or development, Overview and Scrutiny must have regard to available budgets and resources (para.5.2) and make recommendations to Cabinet (6.1).

## **7.3 Equalities and Diversity**

- 7.3.1 The Council must further take into account its wider Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 when making a decision. The Council will consider the impact of changes that might arise as a result of implementing the recommendations on those with protected equality characteristics, in particular where there is likely to be an impact on residents or service users from any changes to, or decommissioning of existing services. In order to assist with this, an Equality Analysis screening tool has been completed and is attached as **appendix 3**.

## **7.4 Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)**

- 7.4.1 The recommendations contained within this themed review report may have a positive impact on sustainability as engagement at an earlier stage may avoid sustainability implications at a later date. The recommendations may have an additional impact on sustainability, arising from day to day operations. These concerns will be taken into consideration by relevant officers during the design and implementation phase. If in preparing to implement the recommendations contained within the themed review report, they are noted to have a negative impact on sustainability, a report should be brought back to Cabinet to explain either: a) why the recommendations cannot be implemented; b) options to curtail negative sustainability impact.

## **7.5 Council Infrastructure**

- 7.5.1 The recommendations contained within this themed review report are expected to be delivered within existing council infrastructure and resources.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government  
(Access to Information) Act 1985)**

See themed review for information.