

By: Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services
Richard Parry, Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee

To: Scrutiny Committee – 20 October 2015

Subject: **Select Committee Work Programme**

Summary: To receive an update on the Select Committee Topic Review Programme

Select Committee – Corporate Parenting

1. (1) This Select Committee under the Chairmanship of Mrs Z Wiltshire has been looking at the role of the Elected Member as a corporate parent.

(2) The Select Committee requested that the timescale of the Committee be extended to enable it to complete its evidence gathering and report to County Council in December, instead of July. In order to allow the Committee to hear evidence before this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, approval was obtained from the Chairman and spokesmen to this extended timescale.

(3) The Select Committee has held evidence gathering meetings and heard from 20 witnesses and groups of witnesses including, former children in care, foster carers, social workers, health care professionals with specific responsibility for Children in Care, and colleagues from Essex County Council. In addition Members visited the Swattenden Centre to meet with children in care; White Rocks Farm, to hear about schemes to support Children in Care, and have met social workers at St Peters House, Broadstairs. A survey of all elected members to gain an insight into their level of knowledge of their responsibilities as corporate parents has also been carried out.

Select Committee – Energy Security

2. (1) At the meeting of this Committee on 12 December 2014 it was agreed that a Select Committee on Energy Security be established when the Select Committee on Corporate Parenting had completed its evidence gathering. This topic is particularly timely as this subject was specifically referred to in the Queen's Speech.

(2) The Select Committee is due to hold its inaugural meeting on 22 October 2015 and to submit its report to Cabinet for noting and County Council for consideration in May 2015.

<p>3. Recommendation: that the progress of the Select Committees on Corporate Parenting and Energy Security be noted.</p>
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Background Papers – Nil