



Notice of a public meeting of Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee

To: Councillors Baker (Chair), Webb (Vice-Chair), Fenton,

Fitzpatrick, Heaton, Barker and Orrell

Date: Monday, 27 September 2021

Time: 5.30pm

Venue: West Offices, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda

2. Minutes (Pages 3 - 10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2021.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm** on **Thursday**, **23 September 2021**. Members of the public can speak on agenda items or matters within the remit of the committee.

To register to speak please visit

www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The public meeting can be viewed on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Reducing Service Cost Boards

(Pages 11 - 18)

This paper provides a summary of Reducing Service Cost Boards across Education and Skills and Children's Social Care. In particular to set out what the Reducing Cost Service Boards are, how they work, key financial pressures and what is being done to tackle these issues.

5. Work Plan (Pages 19 - 22)

To consider the Committee's work plan.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer

Jane Meller

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- Email <u>jane.meller@york.gov.uk</u>

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- · Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- · Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language. 我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese) এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali) Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku.

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

(Urdu) یه معلومات آب کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔

7 (01904) 551550



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Good ventilation is a key control point, therefore, all windows must remain open within the meeting room.

If you're displaying possible coronavirus symptoms (or anyone in your household is displaying symptoms), you should follow government guidance. You are advised not to attend your meeting at West Offices.

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The Council encourages regular testing of all Officers and Members and also any members of the public in attendance at a Committee Meeting. Any members of the public attending a meeting are advised to take a test within 24 hours of attending a meeting, the result of the test should be negative, in order to attend. Test kits can be obtained by clicking on either link: Find where to get rapid lateral flow tests - NHS (test-and-trace.nhs.uk), or, Order coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Alternatively, if you call 119 between the hours of 7am and 11pm, you can order a testing kit over the telephone.

Guidelines for attending Meetings at West Offices

- Please do not arrive more than 10 minutes before the meeting is due to start.
- You may wish to wear a face covering to help protect those also attending.
- You should wear a face covering when entering West Offices.
- Visitors to enter West Offices by the customer entrance and Officers/Councillors to enter using the staff entrance only.
- Ensure your ID / visitors pass is clearly visible at all time.
- Regular handwashing is recommended.
- Use the touchless hand sanitiser units on entry and exit to the building and hand sanitiser within the Meeting room.
- Bring your own drink if required.
- Only use the designated toilets next to the Meeting room.

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If you develop coronavirus symptoms during a Meeting, you should:

- Make your way home immediately
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You should also:

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- Do not remain in the building any longer than necessary
- Do not visit any other areas of the building before you leave

If you receive a positive test result, or if you develop any symptoms before the meeting is due to take place, you should not attend the meeting.

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1. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

Cllr Webb declared a personal non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 4, YSAB Education Recovery, in that he was a teacher.

During discussion of Agenda Item 4, YSAB Education Recovery, Cllr Fitzpatrick declared a personal non prejudicial interest in that she was a teacher, an ex-advisor and Ofsted Inspector.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2021

be approved as a correct record and then signed by

the Chair at a later date.

[5:34pm Cllr Barker joined the meeting]

The Chair noted that this Committee's draft work plan for the 21/22 municipal year had been considered by the Customer and Corporate Services and Scrutiny Management Committee and they had requested that this Committee also considered the £9m+ overspend in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and staff absence/sickness rates within the directorate. It was agreed that the home to school transport report, that was due for consideration at the September meeting, be broadened to include the overspend in SEND and that the

absence/sickness rates within the directorate be added to the unassigned list for consideration later in the municipal year.

It was agreed that an updated work plan would be emailed to Members.

3. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

4. YSAB Education Recovery

Members considered a presentation that updated them on York's education recovery.

The Chief Executive of the Hope Learning Trust was in attendance to provide an update. During her presentation, the Chief Executive informed Members that the Education Futures Group, made up of Head teachers from primary, secondary and special phases, local authority representatives and Multi-Academy Trust representatives, would:

- develop a city-wide education plan;
- support schools and families to 'catch-up', following any lost learning;
- ensure the education offer for the future met children's individual needs;
- have an integrated approach, with services working together.

The Chief Executive highlighted the importance of working together to ensure the right approach and resources were in place to ensure:

- high quality teaching for all;
- targeted academic support;
- wider strategies to support, early years, gaps in learning, enrichment, wellbeing and extending the 'school experience'.

It was also noted that:

- A survey had been launched across the city to all children, school staff, parents and carers asking for their views.
- The themes and strategies that were starting to develop included a common language approach for teaching and learning, additional tutoring and targeted interventions,

- specific continuing professional development (CPD) training programmes for staff, speech and language development in early years settings and reading and writing developments.
- The gaps within special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) had become bigger, locally and nationally and the Trust would be working to ensure the right strategies would be implemented for those children.

Members questions were answered by the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director of Education and Skills relating to targeted academic support, good quality teaching, those not in education, employment or training (NEET), the wider strategies, government announcements/funding, the working together approach and youth mental health, it was noted that:

- Targeted academic support was dependent on the individual and schools would be considering their capacity to deliver more specific interventions to support individuals/groups.
- High quality teaching should be set as standard and made available for all students, particularly those that required it most.
- Children had missed their friends and social activities but following government announcements, schools would hopefully be running as normal from September and would work with cultural partners and community groups across the city to develop in school enrichment programmes.
- The government funding allocation was based on 60% of the number of children that were pupil premium and there was a fixed fee for mainstream schools. The funding allocation did not have to be spent on the pupil that attracted pupil premium, it was for the school to decide the best fit around evidence based targeted interventions.
- A common city language approach across all schools would be developed to support teaching and teaching strategies.
- Schools must ensure their messaging around interventions was correct, to promote a culture of achievement and minimise any potential stigma.

The Chief Executive and her staff were thanked for their continued support and work throughout an incredibly challenging year.

Resolved: That the update be noted and that the outcomes of the survey be emailed to Members.

Reason: To keep Members updated on the recovery plans.

[An adjournment took place between 6:12pm and 6:20pm]

5. York Learning Annual Report

Members considered a report that presented the end of the academic year performance and data for York Learning.

The Head of York Learning, the Chair of the York Learning Improvement Board and the Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities were in attendance to present the report and answer any questions raised.

The Head highlighted the key points in her report and Members were informed that:

- In July 2019, to strengthen the scrutiny arrangements, a Stakeholder Governance Board was established, subsequently named the York Learning Improvement Board.
- The Improvement Board first met in October 2020, they meet four to five times a year and the members (York Learning Governors) of the Board were drawn from a variety of backgrounds.
- The service had performed well against the measures set out in the strategic plan for 20/21 and the service's performance in supporting 16 to 18 year old learners and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) students was a challenging financial model.
- Whilst the strong online curriculum enabled engagement from all types of learners, including the most disadvantaged, going fully online had made new engagement opportunities with the most disengaged incredibly difficult, leading to lower recruitment levels mainly within entry and lower level skills.
- Employers had not struggled to fill vacancies over the last year and due to the Covid restrictions a jobs fair did not take place. To support residents, officers had co-ordinated the Community Learning Partnership to provide a 'Learning in York' week to support those unemployed to develop their employability skills.

Apprenticeship programmes were no longer in minimum standards.

During discussion of the item and in answer to Members questions, it was noted that:

- The input and challenge over the last year from the York Learning Improvement Board had been incredibly helpful, which had resulted in adapting the strategic plan and the self-assessment report.
- The number of refugee learners had lowered slightly but families continued to progress their English skills and the family learning programme courses would continue.
- York Learning worked with a range of learners and offered various courses and apprenticeship programmes. They also offered a high needs special educational programme for 16 to 24 year olds, various essential skills (English, Maths, IT) courses for the 19+ age group, including wider adults and community learning programmes.
- A blended model would be offered moving forward and officers were hoping to hold a jobs fair later this year.
- Officers worked robustly with and moderated the different subcontracting organisations.
- Partners across the city were working together to consider the future need models across the curriculum.
- The impact of Covid had brought the need for the service to have its own venue into ever sharper relief and officers continued to consider potential options. Members were invited to visit the learning environment at the roots programme base.

Members were impressed by the wide range of services on offer including the NSPCC Look, Say, Sing, Play initiative, support for those in NEETs, the Early Talk for York offer, the refugee resettlement offer and the accommodation asylum seeker programme, and the Head of York Learning and her staff were commended for their work.

Resolved: That the performance of York Learning be noted and that an update on digital inclusion and post Covid recovery be included in the next annual report.

Reason: To help monitor the service and guide managers and ensure robust and accountable governance arrangements.

6. Holiday Activities And Food (HAF) Programme 2021

Members consider a report that highlighted the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme 2021 and provided an overview of pilot delivery during Easter as well as the plans for future delivery during the summer and Christmas holiday periods.

The Head of Early Years and Childcare Service, the Community & Partnerships Officer and Assistant Director of Education and Skills were in attendance to provide the update and answer any questions raised.

The Head of Early Years stated that:

- In November 2020, the government announced that the HAF programme would be expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The programme would be aimed at children aged 5-16 who were on free school meals so they could be supported to eat healthy and take part in enriching activities to support their wellbeing.
- York had been allocated £383,000, which was based on the January 2021 free school meal head count.
- The government had given flexibility to local authorities to treat the Easter holidays as a pilot of activities to inform a fuller delivery later in the year. A small range of Covid safe activities were offered in the Westfield and Clifton areas in line with current lockdown guidelines and 62 children engaged.
- Officers had engaged with the regional HAF network to understand good practice and a local steering group had been set up to support the coordination of a local programme and to work with a wide range of partners to achieve implementation.
- The communications team would promote the menu of activities and links would be made available on City of York Council (<u>www.york.gov.uk</u>) and YorOk (<u>www.yor-ok.org.uk</u>) websites.
- Referral processes were robust and came via schools to ensure children were identified and encouraged to participate.
- York had a rich and diverse provision of community partners and organisations and over 20 providers had been commissioned to deliver the HAF programme during the summer holidays for eligible children.

 Conversations were taking place with York's special schools to consider if some activities for children with more complex needs could be offered.

During discussion of the item and in answer to Members questions, it was noted that:

- It was more challenging to engage older children, particularly during the summer months and officers recognised that the engagement process for this age group would require a different approach to the primary provision. Officers would draw on the experience of already existing providers who were working with secondary aged children.
- The provision of meals during activities was an important aspect of the programme and it had been challenging to find suppliers that met the national school food standards, as well as conform with the allergen requirements.
- A range of providers and partners in the city had engaged in developing ideas on how to offer provision now and in the future, with a mapping exercise currently taking place to understand any gaps across the city.
- The HEF programme would be provided across 4 weeks of the summer holidays.

Officers were thanked for their report and for the impressive work achieved in such a short space of time.

Resolved: That the report be noted and an update be provided to the Committee at a future meeting.

Reason: To keep Members updated.

Cllr Webb, Vice-Chair, in the Chair [The meeting started at 5.30pm and finished at 7.36pm].

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Children, Education and Communities Policy 27 September 2021 and Scrutiny Committee

Report of the Assistant Director, Education and Skills and the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care

Reducing Service Cost Boards

Summary

1. This paper provides a summary of Reducing Services Cost Boards across Education and Skills and Children's Social Care. In particular to set out what the Reducing Cost Service Boards are, how they work, key financial pressures and what is being done to tackle these issues.

Recommendations

2. This report is for discussion and comment, there are no options put forward for consideration. However, support from the Scrutiny committee is sought in the ongoing efforts to reduce service costs whilst meeting the needs of children, young people and families.

Reason: To ensure the Committee are kept up to date with progress in reducing service costs.

Education and Skills Reducing Costs Board

3. The Education and Skills Reducing costs board meets fortnightly and membership consists of the heads of service plus a principal account from the CYC finance team, it is chaired by the Assistant Director, Education and Skills. In February 2021, Budget Council approved £564K of general fund savings to be realised from the Education and Skills teams budgets and these savings have been delivered through the restructure of the Education and Skills teams. This restructure has reduced the number of posts across Education and Skills by 14.3 full time equivalent posts (including two grade 12 posts). The remaining teams have been re-organised to deliver a 0-25 Education service.

- 4. The DSG is also under considerable pressure with a £5m in year deficit and a cumulative deficit of £10m to address through the development and implementation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) recovery plan. The plan will need to be shared with and approved by the Department for Education and progress on delivery of the plan reported to Schools Forum. The current overspends have been created by accelerating care costs, increases in the number and costs of managing education, health and care plans (EHCPs) and increasing costs of SEND transport. The majority of the spend on SEND is from the High Needs block of the DSG, this includes the funding of posts in the Council's SEND Services teams.
- 5. In 2020/21, the LA received just over £19m in the High Needs Block of the DSG and total expenditure was just over £24m. Of this £19,937,650 was spent on place and top up funding in schools, AP, ERPs and post 16 colleges and in funding out of area placements. A reduction in commissioned places at Hob Moor Oaks has been agreed in 2021-22 and also at the Danesgate Community.
- 6. The current place funding and top up via bandings will be reviewed as part of the DSG recovery plan and will be benchmarked against regional and stat neighbours.
- 7. SEN services continue to experience pressures related to requests for statutory assessment. The percentage identified as SEN support (9.6%) saw no change between 2019 2020 however, the percentage with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) increased by 0.20% and is on a rising trend this mirrored the national rate of increase. This is in part due to the number of plans being maintained beyond the age of 19, but also by an increase in the number of requests for statutory assessment in the primary phase (0.30% increase in 2020). In order to monitor and reduce costs a weekly financial tracker has been put in place for the EHCP panel and for home tuition. This is being used to monitor in year variation. Work has been done to refresh the terms of reference for the EHCP panel with the request to assess being separated from the decisions about resourcing a plan.
- 8. Combined Panel receives requests for out of area provision both pre and post 16. During 2020-21 panel has been reviewing requests and identifying opportunities to end current out of area placements and to refuse requests for new out of area placements. This is bringing additional legal challenge and there has been an increase in requests for mediation and tribunal (though tribunals still remain below national, regional and stat neighbour averages). In order to ensure that the local

offer can meet need we have identified key areas where in city provision needs to be further developed:

- a. Provision for those children and young people with complex autism with SEMH as the presenting need
- b. Provision to develop independent living skills for those with SLD/PMLD post 19 – this is currently being looked at as part of the PfA work taking place. Many requests for Henshaws are linked to independent living skills.
- c. More opportunities to develop routes to employment through a wider variety of traineeships and supported internships

Children's Social Care Reducing Service Costs Board

- 9. The Children's Social Care Reducing Service Costs Board meets on a monthly basis and membership consists of heads of service, service managers plus a principal account from the CYC finance team, it is chaired by the Assistant Director for Children's Social Care.
- 10. The budget for Children's Social Care remains under significant pressure with the 2021/22 quarter one financial monitor projecting a year end overspend of £5,952k. This is clearly significant and as a result of multiple factors. These include the impact of COVID-19 on families, the increased population of children and young people in care, placement sufficiency, continued used of agency staffing and costs associated with our ongoing work to improve services in order to keep children and young people safe.
- 11. York is not alone in facing these challenges. The national independent reviews of children's social care, published in June 2021¹, showed a 32% increase in child protection plans and a 24% increase in the population of children in care (national data from 2009/10 to 2019/20). The report highlights the challenge nationally 'The cost of children's social care is escalating and funding is increasingly skewed towards acute services and away from effective help. It is getting harder to meet children's needs within the current system and if we don't take urgent action to prevent this, costs will continue to rise and the situation of children will deteriorate.'
- 12. Whilst the independent review of children's social care identifies national and systemic challenges we can see elements of these

¹ https://childrenssocialcare.independent-review.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/case-for-change.pdf

reflected in the pressures being faced locally. The Children's Social Care Reducing Service Costs Board focuses on safely reducing costs by overseeing service activity in a number of key areas. Monthly reports are produced by service managers in order to set targets and review spending. Key areas include:

- d. Placement finding, commissioning and support including foster carer recruitment, enquiries, assessment and foster carer vacancies. We can see progress being made in this area:
 - The most recent digital recruitment campaign ended in February 2021 and we have continued to receive a steady stream of enquiries totalling 19 enquiries in a 3 month period (April to June).
 - ii. The quality of the applicants has improved. We have recently received applications from people who have experience of working with teenagers and also carers wishing to transfer from an IFA, reflecting the positive impact of our digital recruitment campaign.
 - iii. We are part of the White Rose Group fostering recruitment partnership and any applicants interested in becoming a foster carer for York, are passed directly to us.
 - iv. Our Skills to Foster preparation training course has been rewritten and is more flexible to meet the needs of applicants and also in ensuring applicants understand what the fostering role entails.
 - v. The 2 year recruitment target beginning April 2020 was 12 carer approvals. Through the digital media campaign, we are on track to exceed this target.
- e. Children in Permanent Placements including reducing care episodes and placement costs. Monthly reports have shown that progress in this area has been made. When the number of looked after young people began to increase there was an increased use of costly residential provision. Where possible young people have been moved into more appropriate foster placements. This has reduced costs of placements and York's costs are now more in line with what would be expected for the current population of children in care.

- f. Exit planning for Children and Young People in Care. There have been 9 children adopted from April to August. This is up 3 compared to the same period in 2020 and already level with 2018/19 & 2019/20 year end performance.
- g. Agency costs and recruitment of permanent social workers. A specific workforce group is focused on developing a stable and experienced workforce and reduce spending on agency social workers. We are taking a dual approach of 'grow our own' with two Frontline pods having now trained up 10 Newly Qualified Social Workers who have moved into the service. Alongside this we are currently introducing a social worker 'career grade' in order to recruit and retain more experienced social workers.
- 13. We continue to face significant budgetary pressure, as is the case in many local authorities. The Reducing Service Cost Board is an important component in our wider improvement activity to reduce costs and ensure that children are safe. We have identified a number of continued focus in the next 12 months.
 - h. There is a strong need to strengthen the earliest preventative support across our partnership to manage demand in targeted and statutory services.
 - i. Fully delivering our workforce and recruitment strategy to develop new social workers alongside ensuring sufficient experienced social workers. This will be supported by the completion of our current restructure and the introduction of a new 'career grade' to recruit and retain experienced social workers.
 - j. Securing local foster carers and placements to allow children to return to York and step down from residential care.
 - k. Securing appropriate placements for teenagers with complex needs.

Implications

Financial

14. The financial implications set out in the paper are correct.

Human Resources (HR)

15. This paper makes reference to staff changes in Education and Skills and Early Help. Consultation with staff in scope of those reviews are managed and supported in line with the Councils relevant Policies and Procedures. Staff in scope have been consulted on the proposals as have trade union colleagues.

Legal

16. There are no implications.

Crime and Disorder

17. There are no implications.

Information Technology (IT)

18. There are no implications.

Property

19. There are no implications.

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For further information please contact the author of the report

Abbreviations used in this report

AP – Alternative Provision

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CYC - City of York Council

DSG - Dedicated Schools Grant

EHCP - Education, Health and Care Plan

ERP - Enhanced Resource Provision

IFA – Independent Fostering Agency

LA - Local Authority

PfA - Preparing for Adult Hood

PMLD- Profound Multiple Learning Disabilities

SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SEN – Special Educational Needs

SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health

SLD - Specific Learning Disability



Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny CommitteeWork Plan 2021/22 Municipal Year

	Dates of Committee Meetings	Item One	Item Two	Item Three	Item Four
CEC	Tuesday 8 June 2021 (Forum)	Work Planning 2021/22 Municipal year			
CEC	Tuesday 6 July 2021	YSAB report - Recovery Curriculum	York Learning annual report – set-up of improvement / Governance board	Youth services / Holiday Activities and Food fund report	
CEC	Tuesday 14 September 2021 (Forum)	Early Help strategy – multi-agency	Early Years sufficiency update- information report	Inclusion Review consultation results - information report	Home to School Transport report- information report

CEC	27 September 2021 (Commissioned Slot)	Highlight the work of the Reducing Costs Board and a finance update in relation to the SEND £9m overspend			
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CEC	Wednesday 6 October 2021	Bi-annual Safeguarding Partnership update report – to include Adolescence strategy	Care proceedings / Ambition Board – Business Intelligence report	Safeguarding in schools update-information report	Improvement Journey updates – to include Foster Carer strategy- information report
CEC	Tuesday 7 December 2021 (Forum)	CVS updates (strategic plan, VCS survey, volunteer hub)	Early Help via CYC Local Area Teams – to help inform Community Hubs review	Youth Mental Health scrutiny review – draft report	Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme 2021 Update
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CEC	Tuesday 4 January 2022	Cultural offer – REACH update and York Explore annual report	Community Hubs scrutiny review - interim report		
CEC	Wednesday 2 March 2022 (Forum)	Public Health in York Update	Covid 19 Update		

CEC Wednesday 13 April 2022 York Learning annual update report - to

include digital inclusion and post Covid recovery

Skills and Employment Board update

Unassigned Items

1 staff absence/sickness rates 6
within the Peoples directorate

Request for clearer evidence of where the mitigations for the overspends fall so we establish a clearer understanding of what is happening within the directorate from a financial point of view

- 2 Financal Monitor Quarter 1 (provisionally 6 October 2021)
- 3 Youth Mental Health Requested Commissioned Scrutiny Slot)
- 4 Financal Monitor Quarter 2 (provisionally 4 January 2022)
- 5 Financal Monitor Quarter 3 (provisionally 13 April 2022)

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