

Overview
& Scrutiny



MEETING: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES)

DATE: Tuesday 15th June, 2021

TIME: 6.30 pm

VENUE: Ballroom, Town Hall, Bootle

Member

Councillor
Councillor Bradshaw (Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Bennett
Councillor Brennan
Councillor Grace
Councillor Howard
Councillor Killen
Councillor Lewis
Councillor McKinley
Councillor Morris

Substitute

Councillor
Councillor McGinnity
Councillor Murphy
Councillor Irving
Councillor Myers
Councillor Roche
Councillor Page
Councillor Friel
Councillor Brodie - Browne
Councillor Thomas
Councillor Sir Ron Watson

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Paul Fraser
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Telephone: 0151 934 2068
Fax:
E-mail: paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

If you have any special needs that may require arrangements to facilitate your attendance at this meeting, please contact the Committee Officer named above, who will endeavour to assist.

We endeavour to provide a reasonable number of full agendas, including reports at the meeting. If you wish to ensure that you have a copy to refer to at the meeting, please can you print off your own copy of the agenda pack prior to the meeting.

This page is intentionally left blank.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested at a meeting where a disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest arises, which is not already included in their Register of Members' Interests, to declare any interests that relate to an item on the agenda.

Where a Member discloses a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, he/she must withdraw from the meeting room by switching their camera and microphone off during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest, except where he/she is permitted to remain as a result of a grant of a dispensation.

Where a Member discloses a personal interest he/she must seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or staff member representing the Monitoring Officer to determine whether the Member should withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest or whether the Member can remain in the meeting or remain in the meeting and vote on the relevant decision.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021

4. Ethical Business Practices Working Group Final Report – Update on Recommendations (Pages 11 - 22)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

5. Work Programme 2021/22, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan (Pages 23 - 44)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

6. Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Reference Group - Update (Pages 45 - 46)

Briefing Note of the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services

7. Cabinet Member Report - June 2021 (Pages 47 - 64)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

This page is intentionally left blank

THIS SET OF MINUTES IS NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL IN".

Overview
& Scrutiny



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES)

REMOTE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 2ND MARCH, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor Bradshaw (in the Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Brodie - Browne, Brough, Doyle, Grace,
Killen, Lewis and McKinley

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Lappin

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor McCann.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

42. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

43. CABINET MEMBER REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent report from the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

Councillor Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services presented her report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update report from the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be noted; and
- (2) Councillor Lappin be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

44. DIGITAL STRATEGY - PRESENTATIONS

The Committee received presentations on:

Backhaul Network and the Liverpool City Region Digital Strategy from Andrea Watts, Executive Director – People; and

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 2ND MARCH, 2021

Sefton's Digital Strategy 2021 – 2023 from Helen Spreadbury, Senior Manager ICT & Digital. The Committee was advised that the Digital Strategy had been approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 4 February 2021 and a link to the Cabinet report and accompanying Strategy was included within the agenda.

Backhaul Network and the Liverpool City Region Digital Strategy

Andrea Watts, Executive Director – People advised that the Metro Mayor's manifesto made a commitment for LCR to be the most digitally connected area in the country and putting the infrastructure in place now to ensure that the region could be at the forefront of the digital revolution moving forward; and provided information on:

- The importance of providing a platform for transformational growth and development in LCR
- The joint venture agreement worth £30m over 15 years between LCR, its. and NGE Concessions and the anticipated £105m economic benefit over the 15-year period and the creation of 500+ jobs
- The impact of a new “motorway” for digital traffic in LCR
- The benefits for Sefton which included 43 km of network and connection to the transatlantic cable in Southport
- The timeline for the proposal and that Sefton would see some of the earliest new build construction by October 2021
- LCR Digital Strategy
- The focus on Digital Inclusion – working with Local Authorities to create/maintain a comprehensive research and evidence base; to develop and deliver an effective, all-encompassing digital inclusion programme; and redress Digital Poverty

A Member asked how many of the anticipated 500+ jobs, to be created as part of the joint venture agreement, would be Sefton based. This information would be obtained and circulated to Committee Members.

Sefton's Digital Strategy 2021 – 2023

Helen Spreadbury, Senior Manager ICT & Digital indicated that the Digital Strategy for Sefton 2021-2023 was developed in line with the Councils 2030 Vision and included significant engagement and consultation; recognised and took into account Regional and National Strategies; was a two-year strategy in line with key priorities for the Council; was an outward facing document which set out the authorities ambitions and priorities; and that internal governance was being established to robust programme development and delivery; and provided information on:

- The Strategy's objectives of the connected Council, empowering residents and business growth

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 2ND MARCH, 2021

- The governance arrangements associated with the Strategy

Members asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- Upgrading of the old analogue network infrastructure to enable improvements to be made in the speed and performance of digital connection; and the introduction of improvements such as “fibre to premises” rather than fibre to cabinet
- Reference was made to the Digital Inclusion Working Group and its Final Report approved by Cabinet in December 2018; and in particular, to a recommendation that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Employment and Skills Board be requested to consider the development of a Digital Skills Passport Scheme (incorporating numeracy, literacy and communication skills) to help Sefton residents to gain future employment, via the Learning and Skills budget to be devolved from 2019. It was suggested that the implementation of this recommendation should be pursued with LCR

RESOLVED:

That Andrea Watts and Helen Spreadbury be thanked for their informative presentations.

45. DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES AND SICKNESS ABSENCE MONITORING

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Personnel Officer that provided information of the levels of discipline, grievance and sickness absence within the Council (excluding schools).

The report indicated that the management of the workforce was an important activity to ensure that outcomes for Sefton’s communities were achieved and to ensure that the workforce is appropriately managed and motivated.

Annex 1 to the report provided a breakdown of disciplinary, grievance and capability formal cases from October 2019 to September 2020; and it was noted that the Council enjoyed a comparatively good level of cases as a result of the good overall industrial relations environment, the partnership approach that was undertaken and the work undertaken within departments; and that a lot of effort was taken to avoid formal procedures where possible.

The report also provided information on the number of employees suspended from the authority and advised that suspension took place in order to facilitate an investigation into matters which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 2ND MARCH, 2021

The report also provided statistics (Annex 2) on sickness absence within the authority for the 12 Month Period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020; and detailed the reasons for absence and referral to the Health Unit; and that the Council continued to monitor and encourage the reduction of levels of both short and long-term absence.

The report concluded by advising that the Council had a Sickness Absence Policy which operated in a partnership with trade union; that long term absence was being dealt with in accordance with overall business need and short-term absence was operated in accordance with recognised and agreed trigger points; that all policies, where applicable, were subject to modification in accordance with the Equality Act 2010; and that trade unions and management recognised the need for correct management of sickness absence to provide appropriate support to lessen the demands on employees who remained at work.

Members asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- Mental health support services provided to staff to help with their health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Whether there was any correlation between sickness absence and agile working
- Should a more achievable long-term sickness absence target be set as the current 1.8% target was continually missed

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the discipline, grievance and sickness levels and the latest information in respect of ongoing work be noted; and
- (2) the initiatives currently being implemented to monitor and encourage the reduction of levels of both short and long-term absence be noted.

46. WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2020/21; the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; and providing an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 2ND
MARCH, 2021

- (2) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 4

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	15 June 2021
Subject:	Ethical Business Practices Working Group Final Report – Update on Recommendations	Wards Affected:	All
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer		
Is this a Key Decision?	No	Is it included in the Forward Plan?	No
Exempt/Confidential	No		

Purpose/Summary

To update on the implementation of recommendations contained in the final report of the Ethical Business Practices Working Group that was approved by Council in February 2020.

Recommendations: That

- (1) The report updating on the implementation of recommendations contained in the final report of the Ethical Business Practices Working Group be noted; and
- (2) A further update report be submitted in six months.

Reasons for the Recommendation:

To comply with a Council resolution to update the Committee on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Working Group's final report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No alternative options were considered. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to be updated on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Working Group's final report.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report. The implementation of recommendations that result in efficiency savings and any necessary financial investment will be the subject of separate reports.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report. The implementation of recommendations that result in efficiency savings and any necessary financial investment will be the subject of separate reports.

Agenda Item 4

Implications:

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Financial	
Legal: Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	
Human Resources	
Equality	
1. No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly associated with this report
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None directly associated with this report
Commission, broker and provide core services: The context for the Ethical Procurement Policy centres on the legal position regarding social value in procurement as defined in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012; and the statutory duty to consider the social value of public services on contracts above the European Union procurement thresholds
Place – leadership and influencer: None directly associated with this report
Drivers of change and reform: The nature of public sector services reflects many of the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice. To embed Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice an organisation needs to be operating in line with good Corporate Social Responsibility/ Ethical Business Practice in its various roles as service provider, purchaser, employer and its engagement with the public as consumers, customers and clients.

For the purposes of the Working Group the term Ethical Business Practice was used which encompassed several key elements of Corporate Social Responsibility. The Working Group focussed on:

1. Proposing a revised Ethical Investment Policy/Strategy
2. Proposing a revised Ethical Procurement Policy/Strategy to embed Social Value

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above

Greater income for social investment: The nature of public sector services reflects many of the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice. To embed Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice an organisation needs to be operating in line with good Corporate Social Responsibility/ Ethical Business Practice in its various roles as service provider, purchaser, employer and its engagement with the public as consumers, customers and clients.

For the purposes of the Working Group the term Ethical Business Practice was used which encompassed several key elements of Corporate Social Responsibility. The Working Group focussed on:

1. Proposing a revised Ethical Investment Policy/Strategy
2. Proposing a revised Ethical Procurement Policy/Strategy to embed Social Value

Cleaner Greener: In respect of the Ethical Investment Policy there are corporate social responsibility environmental aspects, e.g., reducing direct impact on the environment by managing waste, emissions and consumption of natural resources. The Working Group did not directly include this in its inquires, as it will be embedded through Green Sefton initiatives and can be included as part of the overall revision of updating policy on Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 6408/21) has been consulted and notes there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD4609/21) is the author of the report.

Head of Strategic Support.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the meeting

Contact Officer: Paul Fraser

Tel: 0151 934 2068

Email: paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Agenda Item 4

There are no background papers available for inspection

Introduction/Background

At its meeting held on 11 September 2018 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) approved the establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of the Council's Ethical Business Practices with the terms of reference and objectives set out below.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life, which is responsible for promoting the Seven Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership) to all those involved in the provision and delivery of public services, published a report in May 2018 "The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers", which was a follow-up to their 2014 report on this issue.

The report identifies that the public want services to be delivered responsibly and ethically, regardless of provider and that high ethical standards need to be applied when managing public money. The report further states that, where this involves commercial arrangements, it is incumbent on government to design service delivery and manage the life cycle of the contract in such a way as to engender and reward high ethical standards. Clearly this is equally applicable to local government.

In last couple of years Sefton Council has agreed a number of motions and actions relating to ethical business, including: UNISON's Ethical Care Charter (February 2016) and Unite's Construction Charter (September 2018).

A number of other Councils have sought to address this, including: Birmingham [Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility](#) Dudley [Suppliers Code of Practice](#) and Preston [Fairness Charter](#) and the Working Group considered these approaches and others in order to both benchmark Sefton's position and identify appropriate and workable future approaches.

To review the topic of the Council's Ethical Business Practices, considering:

- Current Sefton practice
- Current good practice within other local authorities or similar organisations
- Areas of good practice within the Council's practices
- Areas for improvement within the Council's practices
- Recommendations for improving the Council's practices
- The provision of a policy for the ethical business practices of the Council in respect of investment, procurement and commissioning

Accordingly, the Working Group met on five occasions to undertaken such review and its Final Report, together with associated recommendations, is attached.

To set the context for the recommendations, the provision of a policy for the ethical business practices of the Council in respect of investment, procurement and commissioning can be defined by the EU definition of Corporate Social Responsibility (Ethical Business Practice) as 'the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society and organisations should have processes in place to integrate social,

environmental, ethical and consumer concerns and ensure that these are embedded into their business operations and core strategy’.

The Working Group agreed that Corporate Social Responsibility was a good overarching context for improving social impact / social value, embracing the impact of: what we do; how we do it; and what others (contractors) do for us.

An example of how this can be achieved is by the attached flowchart [Delivering Social Value within a Corporate Social Responsibility Framework](#)

Regarding Public Sector and Corporate Social Responsibility, the nature of public sector services reflects many of the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice. To embed Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice an organisation needs to be operating in line with good Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice in its various roles as service provider, purchaser, employer and its engagement with the public as consumers, customers and clients.

For the purposes of the Working Group the term Ethical Business Practice was used which encompassed several key elements of Corporate Social Responsibility. The Working Group focussed on:

1. Proposing a revised **Ethical Investment** Policy/Strategy
2. Proposing a revised **Ethical Procurement** Policy/Strategy to embed Social Value

In respect of the Environmental Aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility there were also CSR Environmental aspects, e.g., reducing direct impact on the environment by managing waste, emissions and consumption of natural resources. The Working Group did not directly include this in its inquires, as it would be embedded through Green Sefton initiatives and can be included as part of the overall revision of updating policy on Corporate Social Responsibility/Ethical Business Practice.

Finally, and in respect of the Ethical Procurement Policy (including Social Value) the legal position regarding social value in procurement as defined in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 was used; and the statutory duty to consider the social value of public services on contracts above the European Union procurement thresholds. The position regarding social value in procurement as defined in the [Contract Procedure Rules](#) was also considered

The Working Group recognised much of the good work already taking place in relation to the above and that the policy should focus on continuous improvement.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services), Cabinet and Council subsequently approved the recommendations set out in the final report; and requested also that update reports be submitted to this Committee on the implementation of the recommendations.

This is the second report updating on the implementation of recommendations. The first report was considered by the Committee on 20 March 2020. The table below sets out the recommendations and progress on their implementation.

Agenda Item 4

UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE ETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING GROUP

Recommendation

request the Head of Corporate Resources to make arrangements, via the Council’s decision-making processes, to include the revised statement of draft ethical business/investment principles as referred to below in the Treasury Management Strategy and to adopt it as part of the Council’s Policy for investment:

ETHICAL INVESTMENT POLICY

“The Local Authority at times invests surplus funds with third party organisations and institutions and the Council’s [core values](#) will play a major role in making investment decisions which will be aligned where possible to the following four overarching core principles;

- Sustainable and Responsible – manage the effect on the environment, community and for the good of society
- Value Based – invest in businesses that are aligned with the organisations core values;
- Maximising Impact – achieve a measurable positive, social or environmental impact, in addition to a financial return;
- Green – improving the environment.”

In deciding and then approving the counterparty list in which the Council will invest, the principles of security, liquidity and yield will always be the primary consideration to ensure compliance with statutory guidance. As part of this evaluation, the Council will consider ethical investment opportunities and identify and apply an appropriate weighting based on the Council’s Core Values/overarching core principles.

Where the Council deposits surplus balances overnight or for a short-term, investments will be made with financial institutions in a responsible manner (aligned to the overarching core principles/councils core values) where possible and in accordance with advice from its Treasury Management Advisor. In the event that the Council has surplus balances that it can invest for the longer term (e.g. terms over 1 year) it will exclude direct investment in financial products that do not contribute positively to society and the environment. This will include the principle that

Update

The agreed wording was included within the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council on 27 February 2020. Action on this recommendation is now complete.

investment in specific financial products whose performance is driven by off-shore trading, financial malpractice, debt swops, short selling, the arms trade and tobacco industry will be avoided. The same rigorous criteria will be used to assess whether investment in certain countries will be contrary to Sefton's [core values](#).

It is recommended that the Head of Corporate Resources, to assess whether investment in certain countries will be contrary to Sefton's [core values](#), give consideration to the exclusion of those countries on the [EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions](#) (the black list and the grey list), which aims to tackle external risks of tax abuse and unfair tax competition, within the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

In order for these organisations to be included on the Council's counterparty list they will be evaluated against the same criteria as other counterparties and assessed against the Council's core values and ethical business and investment principles/policy, including the ethical weighting to ensure balance and investments are aligned with the new policy.

The Council's Treasury Management Team will be continually engage on progress in this sector, understanding where possible that Council investments and deposits are aligned with its core values – for example, generating income for social reinvestment and not investing in such companies as highlighted above.

This approach will be supported by considering the opportunity for ethical investments as part of the development of the annual Treasury Management Strategy and engaging with the Council's Treasury Management Advisors as to whether any investment is contrary to the Council's values (including the ethical investment weighting). A specific section in the annual Treasury Management report will cover how the adopted ethical investment strategy is being applied to investment decisions.

The Local Authority publishes a list of its investments to ensure openness and transparency.”

Request the Head of Strategic Support to make arrangements, via the Council's decision-making processes, to adopt the following revised statements of ethical procurement principles/policy.

The Head of Strategic Support has advised that Since the agreement of the Ethical Investment Policy the

ETHICAL PROCUREMENT POLICY

“The Local Authority routinely procures goods and services with a range of providers and the Council’s [core values](#) will play a major role in making procurement decisions which will be aligned where possible to the following four overarching core principles;

- Sustainable and Responsible – manage the effect on the environment, community and for the good of society
- Value Based – work with businesses that are aligned with an organisations core values;
- Maximising Impact – achieve a measurable positive, social or environmental impact, as a result of a contract;
- Green – improving the environment.”

Procurement will enhance Social impact/value, including opportunities associated with national themes of Jobs: Promoting Local Skills and Employment; Growth: Supporting Sustainable Growth of Responsible Regional Business; Social: Healthier, Safer and more Resilient Communities; Environment: Protecting and Improving Our Environment; and Innovation: Promoting Social Innovation; and their outcomes and measures.

Implement and enhance a Procurement Strategy, based on the Local Government Association (LGA) National Procurement Strategy providing an effective mechanism for improving the social impact/social value from our contracted providers, particularly its focus on “Achieving Community Benefit”, which includes “obtaining social value”.

The local strategy for social value opportunities to include the increased emphasis in the refreshed Corporate Commissioning Framework and on developing an updated Social Value Action Plan.

Implement a stand-alone phased two-year Social Value Action Plan to include the guiding principles of catching up with those leading the field, going beyond compliance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, maximising the full breadth of Social Value outcomes and effectively measuring, monitoring and reporting delivery.

following actions have been undertaken.

All Procurement staff have received Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Ethical Accreditation, this training ensures that Procurement staff have built their understanding of how to behave ethically and establishes a commitment to ethical behaviour. The training is renewed annually to ensure they have knowledge of up to date good practice.

<p>The Social Value Action plan will address the areas for development identified through the self-assessment against the LGA strategy and include tangible, clear, measurable, timebound targets to improve social value.</p> <p>Maximise Social value opportunities connected with the joined-up approach across the Liverpool City Region – LCR Procurement Hub and work undertaken with Proactis and the Social Value Portal to join-up the Chest, the National Themes, Outcomes and measures and the online Measurement Tool”</p>	
<p>request the Head of Strategic Support to make arrangements, via the Council’s decision-making processes, to develop, adopt and implement a Social Value Action Plan in line with the following:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SOCIAL VALUE ACTION PLAN</u></p> <p>“The guiding principles for development of our approach to Social Value are to catch up with those leading the field; Go beyond compliance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012; maximise full breadth of Social Value outcomes; and effectively measure, monitor and report delivery.</p> <p>Self-assessment against “Obtaining Social Value” in the LGA National Strategy will provide a framework whereby we can evaluate what we already do and identify areas for improvement including assessment against the following statements, “the extent to which...”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the requirements of the Social Value Act are embedded into corporate policy; • social value awareness is embedded across all management levels; • social value themes, outcomes and measures are reported and used (including evaluating the usefulness of social accounting quantitative measures to evaluate impact); • social value requirements are embedded in the commissioning process; • social value requirements are embedded in the procurement process; • obtaining social value is part of engagement and third-party relationships; • social value requirements in contracts are managed; • social value is embedded in a wider collaborative environment; • obtaining social value is communicated and reported; 	<p>The Head of Strategic Support has advised that Standard Social Value questions are now embedded in strategic tenders, together with supporting information to advise Bidders what social value is and key local organisations and initiatives they can engage with to deliver social value. On occasions these social value questions have been customised with project specific outcomes attached.</p> <p>In order to support Social Value evaluation a specialist application called Social Value Portal has been procured. This tool allows bidders to put forward proposals tied into specific Themes, Outcomes and</p>

- social value is embedded and managed in the commissioning and procurement process.
- These can all be addressed within the scope of the guiding principles, through specific, tangible and time-bound actions in a Procurement/Social Value Action Plan.”

The policy will be reviewed on completion of the SV action Plan

Measures which and quantifiable against nationally recognised standards. We are currently trialling the implementation of Social Value Portal on two pilot projects. Once these are completed we will review lessons learnt and roll out training to Procurement staff and Commissioners.

Once Social Value Portal is live we will create a web portal and communication plan to support Suppliers to respond to our social value expectations.

On delivery of Social Value Outcomes, Suppliers will have the facility to report their delivery to Social Value Portal who will produce a dashboard of benefits delivered to Sefton Council.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 5

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	15 June, 2021
Subject:	Work Programme 2021/22, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek the views of the Committee on the draft Work Programme for 2021/22, identify potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee and identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan.

Recommendation:

That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be considered, along with any additional items to be included and thereon be agreed;
- (2) consideration be given to the selection of a topic for a Working Group review; and appoint at least 3 Members of the Committee to serve on such Working Group;
- (3) Consideration be given to items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the Work Programme referred to in (1) above; and
- (4) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2021/22 and identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny 'adds value' to the Council.

Agenda Item 5

The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues before making formal decisions.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

No alternative options have been considered as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to approve its Work Programme and identify scrutiny review topics.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from the consideration of a key decision or relating to a recommendation arising from a Working Group review will be reported to Members at the appropriate time.

(A) Revenue Costs – see above

(B) Capital Costs – see above

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None	
Legal Implications: None	
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from the consideration of reports referred to in the Work Programme will be contained in such reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the approval of, and monitoring of recommendations contained in Digital inclusion Working Group Final Report will help with the aim of ensuring that people have the capability to use the internet to do things that benefit them on a day to day basis - whether they be individuals, businesses or other entities e.g. the voluntary sector; and aim to reduce digital exclusion and the digital divide that can exist within society for a variety of reasons.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None directly applicable to this report.

See reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Commission, broker and provide core services: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the presentation on the update on the Commissioning and the Procurement Policy will raise awareness of associated issues with Members. The Working Group established by the Committee to review the Council’s Ethical Business Practices will look into ethical procurement. See also reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Place – leadership and influencer: None directly applicable to this report.
Drivers of change and reform: None directly applicable to this report. See reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: None directly applicable to this report. See reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Greater income for social investment: None directly applicable to this report.
Cleaner Greener: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the submission of the report on Air Quality Monitoring will raise awareness of associated issues with Members.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD4607/21) and the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD6406/21) have been consulted and have no comments to make. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the report will be included in those reports as appropriate

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

Contact Officer:	Paul Fraser
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2068
Email Address:	paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2021/22
- Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review
- Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Agenda Item 5

Introduction/Background

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2021/22 is set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.
- 1.2 The Work Programme has been produced based on items included in last year's Programme.
- 1.3 Members are requested to consider whether there are any other items that they wish the Committee to consider, that fall within the terms of reference of the Committee. The Work Programme will be submitted to each meeting of the Committee during 2021/22 and updated, as appropriate.

2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2021/22

- 2.1 It is usual practise for the Committee to appoint a Working Group(s) to undertake a scrutiny review of services during the Municipal Year.
- 2.2 The last Working Group established by this Committee was to review the topic of the Council's Ethical Business Practices. This review has been completed and the Working Group's Final Report was approved by Council on 27 February 2020.
- 2.3 The Committee's views are therefore sought on the establishment of a new Working Group.
- 2.4 A criteria checklist for selecting and rejecting potential topics to review is attached at Appendix 2, to assist the Committee in selecting topics and appointing Working Group(s) for the Municipal Year.

3. PRE-SCRUTINY OF ITEMS IN THE KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

- 3.1 Members may request to pre-scrutinise items from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit (terms of reference) of this Committee. The Forward Plan which is updated each month, sets out the list of items to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration during the next four-month period.
- 3.2 The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has requested that only those key decisions that fall under the remit of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be included on the agenda for consideration.
- 3.4 The latest Forward Plan is attached at Appendix 3 for this purpose. For ease of identification, items listed on the Forward Plan for the first time appear as

shaded.

- 3.5 Should Members require further information in relation to any item on the Key Decision Forward Plan, would they please contact the relevant Officer named against the item in the Plan, prior to the Meeting.

4. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 4.1 As Members will be aware, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered a report on the guidance produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government relating to Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities following on from the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny. This Committee considered the matter at its meeting held on 22 October 2019 (Minute No. 20).

- 4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees all agreed the recommendations contained in the report, one of which being that updates on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (LCRCAO&S) be included in the Work Programme report considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

- 4.3 In accordance with the above decision, information on the LCRCAO&S is set out below.

4.4 Role

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was established by the Combined Authority in May 2017 in accordance with the Combined Authorities Order 2017.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Scrutinise the decision and actions taken by the Combined Authority or the Metro Mayor;
- Provide a 'critical friend to policy and strategy development;
- Undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region; and
- Monitor the delivery of the Combined Authority's strategic plan.

4.5 Membership

The Committee is made up of 3 elected Members from each of the constituent Local Authorities of the LCR Combined Authority, along with one elected Member from both the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

Sefton's appointed Members are Councillors Hansen, Howard and Waterfield. Councillor Howard is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

Agenda Item 5

Councillor Patrick Moloney is the representative of the Liberal Democrat Group on the Committee. The Conservative Group nomination is still awaited by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

4.6 Chair

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. The Chair will be appointed at the first meeting of the Committee on 14 July 2021.

4.7 Quoracy Issues

A high number of meetings of the LCRCAO&S have been inquorate.

The quorum for meetings of the LCRCAO&S is 14, two-thirds of the total number of members, 20. This high threshold is not set by the Combined Authority but is set out in legislation.

The Combined Authority's Monitoring Officer will be looking to work with the Monitoring Officers from the other Combined Authorities to identify what problems they are experiencing with Scrutiny and how/if they had overcome them. Representations to Government would also be considered once all options locally to resolve the quorum issue had been exhausted. The CA Monitoring Officer would then be able to provide evidence to Government that the quorum level was obstructing the work of scrutiny within the CA.

4.8 Meetings

Information on all meetings and membership of the LCRCAO&S can be obtained using the following link

<https://moderngov.merseytravel.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=365&Year=0>

Latest Meeting - 10 March 2021

The latest meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 10 March 2021.

Matters considered at the meeting related to:

- Metro Mayor S Rotheram's Update
- Race Equality Declaration Of Intent
- Adult Education Budget Programme Update
- Mersey Tidal Project Update

4.9 The next meeting of the LCRCAO&S will be held on 30 June 2021 and will take the form of a work planning session.

4.10 The Committee is requested to note the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

APPENDIX 1

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

	15 JUNE 21	14 SEPTEMBER 21	2 NOVEMBER 21	11 JANUARY 22	8 FEBRUARY 22 (BUDGET MEETING)	1 MARCH 22
Cabinet Member Update Report - Paul Fraser	X	X	X	X		X
Work Programme - Update Paul Fraser	X	X	X	X		X
Service Operational Reports:						
New Ways of Working Dominic Ellis		X				
Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme - Stephan Van Arendsen/Diane Turner				X		
Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land/Asset - Management Strategy Stephan Van Arendsen/Dom Ellis			X			
“Manage my Requests” (iCaseWork) system – Statistical Update Report – Jan McMahon/Wayne Leatherbarrow			X			
Members’ Welfare Reform Reference Group – Update Margaret Jones	X	X	X	X		X
Scrutiny Review Progress Reports:						

APPENDIX 1

Air Quality Monitoring - Peter Moore/Greg Martin				x		
Public Health Annual Report Margaret Jones/Helen Armitage				x		
Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and Sickness Absence Monitoring - Mark Dale						x
Digital Inclusion Working Group – Update on Recommendations - Paul Fraser			x			
Update on Progress of LCR Digital Inclusion Strategy - Stuart Barnes				x		
Ethical Business Practices Working Group - Update on Recommendations - Paul Fraser	x			x		
“Tool-Kit” for Armed Forces Covenant - Shaun Pimblett				x		
Financial Scrutiny:						
Budget Report 2022/23 to 2025/26 - Stephan Van Arendsen					x	
Financial Performance Monitoring - Stephan Van Arendsen		x	x	x	x	
Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities – Prudential					x	

APPENDIX 1

Indicators - Stephan Van Arendsen						
Treasury Management Policy and Strategy - Stephan Van Arendsen					x	
Capital Strategy 2022/23 and Future Years - Stephan Van Arendsen					x	
Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy – Update Position Stephan Van Arendsen					x	
Robustness of the 2022/23 Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of Reserves – local Government Act 2003 – Section 25 - Stephan Van Arendsen					x	
Presentations						
Corporate Communications Update - Elena Lloyd				x		

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 2

CRITERIA CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING TOPICS FOR REVIEW

Criteria for Selecting Items
▪ Issue identified by members as key issue for public (through member surgeries, other contact with constituents or volume of complaints)
▪ Poor performing service (evidence from performance indicators/benchmarking)
▪ Service ranked as important by the community (e.g. through market surveys/citizens panels)
▪ High level of user/general public dissatisfaction with service (e.g. through market surveys/citizens panels/complaints)
▪ Public interest issue covered in local media
▪ High level of budgetary commitment to the service/policy area (as percentage of total expenditure)
▪ Pattern of budgetary overspends
▪ Council corporate priority area
▪ Central government priority area
▪ Issues raised by External Audit Management Letter/External audit reports
▪ New government guidance or legislation
▪ Reports or new evidence provided by external organisations on key issue
▪ Others

CRITERIA FOR REJECTION

Potential Criteria for Rejecting Items
▪ Issue being examined by the Cabinet
▪ Issue being examined by an Officer Group : changes imminent
▪ Issue being examined by another internal body
▪ Issue will be addressed as part of a Service Review within the next year
▪ New legislation or guidance expected within the next year
▪ Other reasons specific to the particular issues.

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 2

SCRUTINY CHECKLIST DO'S AND DON'TS

DO
◆ Remember that Scrutiny <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Is about learning and being a "critical friend"; it should be a positive process◆ Is not opposition
◆ Remember that Scrutiny should result in improved value, enhanced performance or greater public satisfaction
◆ Take an overview and keep an eye on the wider picture
◆ Check performance against local standards and targets and national standards, and compare results with other authorities
◆ Benchmark performance against local and national performance indicators, using the results to ask more informed questions
◆ Use Working Groups to get underneath performance information
◆ Take account of local needs, priorities and policies
◆ Be persistent and inquisitive
◆ Ask effective questions - be constructive not judgmental
◆ Be open-minded and self aware - encourage openness and self criticism in services
◆ Listen to users and the public, seek the voices that are often not heard, seek the views of others - and balance all of these
◆ Praise good practice and best value - and seek to spread this throughout the authority
◆ Provide feedback to those who have been involved in the review and to stakeholders
◆ Anticipate difficulties in Members challenging colleagues from their own party
◆ Take time to review your own performance

◆ DON'T
◆ Witch-hunt or use performance review as punishment
◆ Be party political/partisan
◆ Blame valid risk taking or stifle initiative or creativity
◆ Treat scrutiny as an add-on
◆ Get bogged down in detail
◆ Be frightened of asking basic questions
◆ Undertake too many issues in insufficient depth
◆ Start without a clear brief and remit
◆ Underestimate the task
◆ Lose track of the main purpose of scrutiny
◆ Lack sensitivity to other stakeholders
◆ Succumb to organisational inertia
◆ Duck facing failure - learn from it and support change and development
◆ Be driven by data or be paralysed by analysis - keep strategic overview, and expect officers to provide high level information and analysis to help.

APPENDIX 2

KEY QUESTIONS

Overview and Scrutiny Committees should keep in mind some of the fundamental questions:-

Are we doing what users/non users/local residents want?
Are users' needs central to the service?
Why are we doing this?
What are we trying to achieve?
How well are we doing?
How do we compare with others?
Are we delivering value for money?
How do we know?
What can we improve?

INVESTIGATIONS:-

To what extent are service users' expectations and needs being met?
To what extent is the service achieving what the policy intended?
To what extent is the service meeting any statutory obligations or national standards and targets?
Are there any unexpected results/side effects of the policy?
Is the performance improving, steady or deteriorating?
Is the service able to be honest and open about its current performance and the reasons behind it?
Are areas of achievement and weakness fairly and accurately identified?
How has performance been assessed? What is the evidence?
How does performance compare with that of others? Are there learning points from others' experiences?
Is the service capable of meeting planned targets/standards? What change to capability is needed.
Are local performance indicators relevant, helpful, meaningful to Members, staff and service users?

This page is intentionally left blank



SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 JULY 2021 - 30 OCTOBER 2021

This Forward Plan sets out the details of the key decisions which the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members or Officers expect to take during the next four month period. The Plan is rolled forward every month and is available to the public at least 28 days before the beginning of each month.

A Key Decision is defined in the Council's Constitution as:

1. any Executive decision that is not in the Annual Revenue Budget and Capital Programme approved by the Council and which requires a gross budget expenditure, saving or virement of more than £100,000 or more than 2% of a Departmental budget, whichever is the greater;
2. any Executive decision where the outcome will have a significant impact on a significant number of people living or working in two or more Wards

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the matters listed below may do so by contacting the relevant officer listed against each Key Decision, within the time period indicated.

Under the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, a Key Decision may not be taken, unless:

- it is published in the Forward Plan;
- 5 clear days have lapsed since the publication of the Forward Plan; and
- if the decision is to be taken at a meeting of the Cabinet, 5 clear days notice of the meeting has been given.

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made, even though they have not been included in the Forward Plan in accordance with Rule 26 (General Exception) and Rule 28 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

Copies of the following documents may be inspected at the Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle L20 7AE or accessed from the Council's website: www.sefton.gov.uk

- Council Constitution
- Forward Plan
- Reports on the Key Decisions to be taken
- Other documents relating to the proposed decision may be submitted to the decision making meeting and these too will be made available by the contact officer named in the Plan
- The minutes for each Key Decision, which will normally be published within 5 working days after having been made

Some reports to be considered by the Cabinet/Council may contain exempt information and will not be made available to the public. The specific reasons (Paragraph No(s)) why such reports are exempt are detailed in the Plan and the Paragraph No(s) and descriptions are set out below:-

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or b) to make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime
8. Information falling within paragraph 3 above is not exempt information by virtue of that paragraph if it is required to be registered under—
 - (a) the Companies Act 1985;
 - (b) the Friendly Societies Act 1974;
 - (c) the Friendly Societies Act 1992;
 - (d) the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978;
 - (e) the Building Societies Act 1986; or
 - (f) the Charities Act 1993.
9. Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992
10. Information which—
 - (a) falls within any of paragraphs 1 to 7 above; and
 - (b) is not prevented from being exempt by virtue of paragraph 8 or 9 above, is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Cabinet and Council which are held at the Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle or the Town Hall, Lord Street, Southport. The dates and times of the meetings are published on www.sefton.gov.uk or you may contact the Democratic Services Section on telephone number 0151 934 2068.

NOTE:

For ease of identification, items listed within the document for the first time will appear shaded.

Dwayne Johnson
Chief Executive

APPENDIX 3

FORWARD PLAN INDEX OF ITEMS

Item Heading	Officer Contact
Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - July Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106
Financial and Corporate Performance 2020/2021	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106
Treasury Management Outturn 2020/21	Graham Hussey graham.hussey@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4100
Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - September Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106
Sale of Ainsdale ATC and the Meadows Ainsdale	Andy Bond andy.bond@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3247
Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - October Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<p>Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - July Update</p> <p>Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Framework for Change 2020, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports</p>
---------------------------------	---

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	29 Jul 2021			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Cabinet, Chief Executive, Strategic Leadership Board, Trade Unions, Staff and relevant organisations as appropriate			
Method(s) of Consultation	Individual budget saving options / amendments to the budget will be subject to consultation – internal and external to the Council (as appropriate).			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - July Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial and Corporate Performance 2020/2021 Presentation of the Council's Revenue and Capital Outturn position for 2020/2021 together with performance information for the year			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	29 Jul 2021			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			

APPENDIX 3

Wards Affected	All Wards
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Not applicable
Method(s) of Consultation	Not applicable
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Financial and Corporate Performance 2020/2021
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Treasury Management Outturn 2020/21 This outturn report provides a review of the Treasury Management activities undertaken in financial year 2020/21 and an update to the 31st May for 2021/22 financial year.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet Council			
Decision Expected	29 Jul 2021 16 Sep 2021			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	No
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	None			
Method(s) of Consultation	Not applicable			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-	Treasury Management Outturn 2020/21			

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

maker	
Contact Officer(s) details	Graham Hussey graham.hussey@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4100

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - September Update Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Framework for Change 2020, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	2 Sep 2021			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Cabinet, Chief Executive, Strategic Leadership Board, Trade Unions, Staff and relevant organisations as appropriate			
Method(s) of Consultation	Individual budget saving options / amendments to the budget will be subject to consultation – internal and external to the Council (as appropriate).			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - September Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

APPENDIX 3

Details of Decision to be taken	Sale of Ainsdale ATC and the Meadows Ainsdale Seek Cabinet approval to the terms and conditions for the disposal of the premises			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	2 Sep 2021			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Fully exempt (Paragraph 3)			
Wards Affected	Ainsdale			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Councillors as part of the above			
Method(s) of Consultation	Updates on disposal previously reported to Cabinet			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Sale of Ainsdale ATC and the Meadows Ainsdale			
Contact Officer(s) details	Andy Bond andy.bond@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3247			

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - October Update Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Framework for Change 2020, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	7 Oct 2021			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial		Community	

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

			Impact	
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Cabinet, Chief Executive, Strategic Leadership Board, Trade Unions, Staff and relevant organisations as appropriate			
Method(s) of Consultation	Individual budget saving options / amendments to the budget will be subject to consultation – internal and external to the Council (as appropriate).			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Financial Management 2021/22 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2021/22 including the Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget - October Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet Member Brief Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) 15 June 2021</p>
--

Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty Update

The Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Cabinet Member Reference Group met on 1 April 2021. The following updates were received:

Updates from the Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty Steering Group

Officers from Public Health and Communities provided an update from discussions regarding community shop, confirming that there is still support from the Partnership.

An update was provided regarding a presentation received from Sefton CAB relating to debt issues. It was noted that CAB, foodbanks and other partners have reported an increase in demand for services and that mental health is a key issue.

Childhood poverty was also discussed with the Partnership.

Notice of Motion – Poverty Emergency

A notice of motion was put to the council meeting held 4 March 2021 declaring poverty emergency. Cabinet Members emphasised the need to be action focused in response to the poverty emergency and will be a standing item for discussion for future meetings of the Welfare Reform & Anti-Poverty Cabinet Member Reference Group.

Childhood Poverty

Public Health Officers presented a report regarding childhood poverty outlining indicators and drivers for childhood poverty, the impacts of growing up in a low impact household and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the causes and consequences of poverty.

It was noted that there was an increasing trend of those in absolute low income and relative low income families, and eligibility to free school meals prior to the pandemic.

It was emphasised that multiple causality and disadvantage can impact on whole areas.

It was discussed that for working families in poverty the increase in Universal Credit was not enough to bridge the gap.

The profile of jobs in Sefton highlighted in the report include retail, health and care, and hospitality and leisure. It was noted that these sectors are lower income, less likely to be able to work from home and include populations at higher risk of exposure to COVID-19.

It was reported that the pandemic has adversely impacted childhood poverty in a number of ways including:

- Household income
- Employment opportunities
- Access to services
- Cost of living
- Mental health
- Physical wellbeing
- Access to education, learning and development

Agenda Item 6

Prevalence of mental distress was discussed. National research shows that those with poor mental health have a 50% higher likelihood of having a low income and are 70% more likely to experience persistent poverty.

Social mobility and pay potential was discussed. It was noted that Sefton has a relatively small gap in terms of education attainment but a large gap in pay potential in employment.

It was discussed that a response to address childhood poverty in Sefton could include prevention, mitigation and provision of immediate basic needs.

Cabinet Members thanked officers involved in producing the report and acknowledged the level of expertise across the council. Cabinet members emphasised the need for this report to be the start of a call for action.

Cabinet Members agreed for a welfare reform report to be taken to Cabinet which would include an overview of the welfare reform and anti-poverty work with a specific focus upon childhood poverty.

Healthy Start Vouchers

Discussion took place regarding the healthy start voucher scheme, a government scheme to improve health of low-income pregnant women and families on benefits and tax credits. It was discussed that evidence is needed to understand where the blockers are in order to support take up of the scheme.

Breathing Space

Officers from Customer Centric Services presented a report regarding the debt respite scheme (breathing space) which will give someone with problem debt the right to legal protections from their creditors. The scheme will come into effect on 4 May 2021.

The standard breathing space is available to anyone with problem debt, giving them legal protections from creditor action for up to 60 days.

The mental health crisis breathing space is available for those receiving mental health crisis treatment, giving legal protections from creditor action for as long as the person's mental health crisis treatment, plus 30 days (no matter how long the crisis treatment lasts).

Officers provided an overview of the scheme application process and the notification process for the council as a creditor. It was emphasised that there will be a need to monitor the scheme as demand is unclear at this stage.

Officers reported that the council is working with partners to raise awareness of the scheme.

ELAS

Cabinet Members received a report providing a summary of demand and provision for the period April 2020 – February 2021. It was emphasised that figures do not fully reflect demand as temporary support has been in place. However, March 2021 figures are returning to expected levels.

Agenda Item 7

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	15 June 2021
Subject:	Cabinet Member Report – June 2021		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To submit the Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services report for the period March 2021 to June 2021 relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services report relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation:

In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No alternative options have been considered because the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

Any financial implications associated with the Cabinet Member report that are referred to in this update are contained within the respective reports.

(A) Revenue Costs – see above

Agenda Item 7

(B) **Capital Costs** – see above

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
Legal Implications:	
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from matters referred to in the Cabinet Member report will be contained in reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report. The Cabinet Member update provides information on activity within Councillor Lappin's portfolio during a previous two/three-month period. Any reports relevant to her portfolio considered by the Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committees during this period would contain information as to how such reports contributed to the Council's Core Purpose.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above
Place – leadership and influencer: As above
Drivers of change and reform: As above
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above

Greater income for social investment: As above
--

Cleaner Greener: As above

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Cabinet Member Update Report is not subject to FD/LD consultation. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the attached Cabinet Member update report will be included in those reports as appropriate

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

Contact Officer:	Paul Fraser
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2068
Email Address:	paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

Cabinet Member - (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) update report – to follow

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.2 The most recent Cabinet Member report for the Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services will be submitted to Members in due course.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET MEMBER REPORT Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) -		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Paulette Lappin	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services	June 2021

The service, as with the rest of the Council, has been focussed on supporting members, staff, residents and business in responding to and dealing with the pandemic.

Finance

Within the finance service, there has been significant activity on a number of key issues, namely

- Continuing to support the implementation of new Government grant schemes which offer financial assistance to individuals who are self-isolating and businesses that are forced to close or face significant financial challenges due to local lockdown;
- Understanding issues relating to COVID-19 that need to be met from the emergency fund and other funding sources provided by the Government;
- Understanding the impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on the Council's income sources; and,
- Reviewing the Budget Plan for 2021/2022 and the Medium-Term Financial Plan, including the potential ongoing impact of COVID-19.

The Council's Budget Report for 2021/2022 was presented to Cabinet on 11th February and Council on 4th March. This included the implications of the Local Government Finance Settlement as well as an assessment of the ongoing financial impact of COVID-19 and measures to mitigate this impact in 2021/2022.

From July reports will be presented to Cabinet on monitoring the Council's revenue and capital budgets for 2021/2022, including the impact of COVID19, and outlining new funding streams being made available to the Council.

The audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2019/2020 by EY was completed in March. The Accounts were approved at Audit and Governance Committee on 17th March.

The closure of the accounts for 2020/2021 will be completed in the next few weeks with the draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021 due to be published before the end of July.

Customer Centric Services

Customer Centric Services have just completed a busy year-end period following the despatch of the annual bills for Council Tax / National Non-Domestic Rates and benefit year-start notification letters. As expected at this time, the Contact Centre has handled a high volume of customer enquiries about Council Tax and available payment options.

COVID-related enquiries have reduced considerably, although the Business Rates team is busy preparing to pay Restart Grants to businesses re-opening following lockdown restrictions.

Agenda Item 7

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has extended the Test and Trace Self-Isolation Support Payment scheme to 30th June 2021 although there has been a significant reduction in the volume of applications received from residents.

As national restrictions continued to ease, COVID-related calls into the Contact Centre have continued to decrease. The Contact Centre stopped providing a weekend support service in mid-April and has been able to return to a pre-COVID service delivery with focus shifting from testing and vaccination enquiries to Council Tax and recovery, Cleansing and Elections.

Bootle One Stop Shop continues to support the taxi-trade by offering appointments to drivers who are required to attend in person to renew licenses. The team has also administered the Liverpool City Region taxi grant funding.

The One Stop Shop-service based at The Atkinson in Southport resumed service on 12th April 2021; initial customer demand has been low.

Risk and Audit

The **Internal Audit** team are continuing to work on delivering the internal audit plan with a current focus on providing assurance on the Covid related business grants that have been provided to local businesses both nationally and from Liverpool City Region. The Team are working with colleagues across the Liverpool City Region so that there is a consistent approach to counter fraud steps that should be in place.

Insurance Team have completed and are working on the following initiatives to improve the Council's risk management.

- The team completed a tender exercise in December 2020 to value a sample of Council properties for insurance purposes to ensure that the current rebuild values used are accurate and will protect from insurers using average clause in the event of major loss. The team is currently assisting the inspection of the buildings by the external valuer before using the output in this year's renewal
- We are working with insurers and the Council's liability insurers to robustly defend claims and in limited circumstances will pursue through the Courts claimants to recover Council costs where the claims are proven to be exaggerated
- Team also continues to work extensively with Service Teams including Highways and Tourism to improve the management of insurable risk in areas where there are high numbers of claims or areas of concern.
- The Team launched an approach for the Council's Maintained Schools which was designed to be attractive against the Government's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) scheme and was shared for consultation with the Schools Forum in December 2020 with implementation from 1st April 2021

The **Risk and Resilience Team** were actively involved in the initial Covid-19 response and were involved in a number of cells within Sefton (Business Continuity and Death Management) as well as the Surge Testing in Southport. The focus on Emergency Planning during the quarter has been on exercises and training for the loggists and volunteers. There has been a focus this year on finalising the development of Service Business Continuity Plans across the organisation enhancing the existing planning framework. The following focus will be on testing and exercising the BC Plans.

The **Risk and Resilience Team** are also working on developing a proposal for the Council's Risk Appetite as well as facilitating the updates of the Council's Corporate Risk Register working with the Risk Owners to update the risk register. Other work includes:

- Working with the Merseyside Resilience Forum
- Developing plans for the winter period

Agenda Item 7

The **Assurance Team** have been involved in the development of fraud risk assessments following the self-assessment against the CIPFA Code of Practice on Fraud for each Service Area. The team have also been involved in providing support to the provision of Covid related grants to local businesses.

As a result a range of assurance checks continues to be undertaken across Customer Centric Services, which includes refunds, Council Tax discounts and exemptions, Business Rates Reliefs and Exemptions, including Small Business Rates Relief. This work complements any audit activity undertaken during the year.

In the programme for the current year is the completion of the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy with consultation with the Strategic Leadership Board with final approval of the Cabinet later in the financial year.

For the Health and Safety Team there will be a continued focus during the next quarter of delivering the Health and Safety Improvement Plan and also the ongoing recovery programmes from COVID-19 with planned priorities –

- Continue to support to assist Managers with the recovery programmes from COVID-19.
- Continue to review, update and monitor the Health and Safety Standards and Policies, with focus on working from home, display screen and workstation assessments and stress risk assessments.
- Continue to develop the Council-wide training needs assessment which will eventually build into the health and safety training plan and provision.
- Continuing the delivery of risk assessment training for the managers who have responsibility to undertake risk assessments, in collaboration with the Corporate Learning Centre. Following up with the managers who have not responded to the initial request for their risk assessments and evaluating the quality of the risk assessments.
- Focus on improving the accuracy of incident reporting across the Council will continue to ensure incidents of threatening and abusive behaviours towards staff are reported.
- Continue to deliver a health and safety management audit and inspection regime across the Council, to schools with a Service Level Agreement with the Council and those schools where the Council retains responsibility for the health and safety as the employer. This will provide assurance that health and safety management systems are suitable and effective.

The Council has a contract with its liability insurers which includes an allocation of free training or service days to assist with implementing effective risk management across the Council. Health and Safety, including COVID-Secure audit support and school Governor training is planned for later in 2021.

ICT

The ICT Service continues to respond to changing business requirements in line with the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. As well supporting the establishment of the local Test and Trace team the ICT client team has also facilitated the setup of the local mass testing centres and more recently supported surge testing with the provision of tactical solutions to deliver connectivity requirements. In addition, the team have deployed mobile telephones as scale to support agile working. The team have also supported the live deployment of the new Customer Platform CXP, with the solution now live in the Contact Centre for C(**Page 53**)usiness processes.

Agenda Item 7

Further deployment of the new CXP solution is now planned for the forthcoming period, the new Anti-social behaviour process is now signed off for deployment and conversations are underway to go live with Bins not emptied processes. The team are now working on a plan to transfer all current business processes in Northgate to CXP with rebuild underway. In addition, the team has supported the migration and upgrade of the corporate website to the Umbraco platform with redesign work now completed and user acceptance testing in progress.

The challenges reported previously in relation to the capacity of the corporate network have now been resolved with the implementation of managed (split) tunnelling on the network. This reconfiguration directs all Microsoft 365 traffic away from the corporate network for all staff working from home thereby maximising the use of corporate networks for critical applications located in the Data Centre at St Peters.

The team have now completed two Proof of Value projects, to test out new technologies to support cloud migration. The results of these were incredibly positive, particularly for the Windows Virtual Desktop. Approval has now been granted to move forward with a full cloud migration of the data centre at St Peters to the Azure Cloud. The ICT Client team is now working closely with Agilisys colleagues to finalise the statement of work for the project, and recruitment is also underway for a temporary Project Manager to lead the Project for the authority. Proposed start date is end June 2021.

Implementation of the new Cloud Based Telephony solution has now started with the successful supplier (8x8) and build is now underway for the first group of users with testing due to start in June. The finalisation of profiling is underway for remaining teams and deployment is on track for June and July. Handsets and headsets are ordered and project remains on track.

Schools ICT – implementation of the new Connectivity Service for schools is now underway, for those schools who have taken the SLA for Connectivity. The schools already live are reporting significant improvements in the speed of their connections. Deployment across all relevant schools is due to complete early July

Further procurement activity continues at pace and the team are finalising the roadmap for the forthcoming year, Revs and Bens procurement is now completed, as is Libraries. The new Microsoft Contract was delivered on time and has resulted in an approved offer for the Council. Work is underway to finalise the contract for bulk printing and the team are also supporting Adult Services with their procurement of a new triage tool.

Property Services

The Property Services Department are a Multi-Disciplinary team delivering various services, professional advice and initiatives across the Borough of Sefton. Below are some examples of ongoing pieces of work throughout the department.

Asset Management / FM

- Ongoing work to deliver Phase 1 Asset Disposals Consultant appointed to assist.
- Asset records input and liaison with Building Maintenance colleagues for new (property based) IT system in support of Corporate Landlord Implementation Ongoing.
- Agreement of terms and reporting for Lease of various assets Ongoing.
- Negotiated and agreed Heads of Terms for sub Lease of part of first floor Magdalen House to CCG with physical decant now being developed Completed.
- Negotiated release of restrictive covenant St Wilfrid's school. This now enables ourselves to complete the land sale to Bellway with the capital receipt going to School improvement schemes and recreational facilities in the area. Completed capital receipt received.

Agenda Item 7

- Sale of Boyer Avenue garage site in Maghull by way of Auction completed and capital receipt received.
- Completed two further acquisitions of leasehold interests of residential and commercial properties at Sandbrook Way Ainsdale.
- Let a number of seasonal refreshment concessions throughout the Borough.
- Working to vacate the 1st floor right hand wing of Magdalen House to facilitate the CCG's move from their temporary home on the 4th floor to their permanent office on the 1st floor.
- Gathering and collating data for Future Ways of Working to inform decisions on Agile Working and Building Capacities.
- Ongoing management of 'day to day FM operations' to also include the COVID-19 measures and management within buildings.

Maintenance Management & Building Services

- Delivering a range of schemes in support of Corporate Buildings.
- Delivering a range of schemes in support of Education Capital programme.
- Delivery of reactive maintenance and statutory compliance services to Corporate and Educational buildings.
- Professional advice and support on a broad range of regeneration programmes.
- Development and implementation of a new coordinated (property based) IT system in support of Corporate Landlord Implementation.
- Preparing and awarding remedial works scheme to remedy Latent defects at Dunes Splashworld.
- Reviewing essential maintenance work requirements for Corporate buildings, including phasing at Bootle Town Hall.
- Delivering services in support of major adaptation to vulnerable and disabled residents.

Project Management

- Continued professional support to Growth Board on several projects.
- Completed various projects despite the current constraints.
- Provide support to other teams on asset disposal, Building Maintenance, Asset Management and Statutory Compliance colleagues.
- Developing a revised agile model proposal.

Energy Management

- Continued active support of those in fuel poverty and the most vulnerable – taking place remotely. Cabinet member briefing on 2020/21 performance being collated.
- ERDF Retrofit for the future – on track. Due to end Nov 2021.
- Local Authority Delivery of Green homes Grant (LAD, GHG)
 - LAD1b consortium of LCR LAs secured funding to retrofit low income homes to 30 homes. On track.
 - LAD2 direct award of funding from the CA to Sefton to retrofit ~215 low income private homes. CA have confirmed direct award and work is progressing well. Estates in Netherton, Litherland and Bootle with problematic insulation issues to be targeted. Scheme to end December 2021.
 - LAD3 – due to be announced in Summer 2021, Sefton officers are liaising with LCR CA to discuss options for possible bid(s).
- Works to upgrade roof insulation and improve glazing at Southport and Bootle Town Halls progressing – works currently out to tender and expected to begin June 2021 & completed by September 2021.
- Salix funding for schools withdrawn without notice – a briefing report will be presented to Cabinet member June 2021.
- Energy & Utility Dashboards for HoS to be launched June 2021
- Works to develop a decarbonisation programme for 14 buildings is underway and due to report July 2021.
- Climate Emergency

Agenda Item 7

- Annual review complete and reports to go to Member ref group 27 May, June Cabinet and July full Council. Highlights include 10% reduction in carbon footprint despite accounting for emissions for staff working from home.
- All committee reports (except planning and licencing) to include Climate assessment from May 2021 – now live.
- Dwayne Johnson interview to raise profile of Climate activities May 2021.
- General staff training e module draft ready for May 2021 launch.
- Air Quality Education and behaviour change – Immersive room being procured for Southport Eco centre. Work ongoing to promote the clean air crew website to schools across the LCR.

Legal Services

- The Legal Contracts team remains extremely busy at working above full capacity, in particular advising on all of the Council's major Growth Programme projects (the £37.5m Southport Town Deal including the proposed Marine Lake Events Centre development, the continuing Bootle/Strand regeneration), housing projects led by Sandway Homes, highways projects) and various LCR schemes (including digital connectivity, street lighting, etc.). The Covid pandemic continues to have a very significant effect on the Council's procurement and contracting activity which Legal Contracts supports, including ongoing variations reacting to the pandemic, extensions of existing contracts to ensure service continuity in a sub-optimal market for fresh procurement) and numerous Covid recovery schemes. Brexit also continues to have a transformative effect on the Council's contracting and procurement activity and Legal Contracts continues to provide proactive advice around forthcoming changes to the UK's public procurement regime (both the general regime, and the proposals for a bespoke health and social care regime) and new subsidy control (formerly state aid). The Legal Contracts team has also provided strategic advice on best practice and risk mitigation in light of the Caller Report, especially around the Council's development and regeneration projects.
- The Childcare/Adults and Education Legal Team have worked through a very difficult period for the client departments/schools throughout the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic has brought increased pressures and there has been a significant rise in court proceedings which has been a very challenging time for the team. Nationally there has been a 20% rise with children being harmed during Covid and Sefton have had a rise in care proceedings during this period which together with cases not being able to be concluded due to Covid restrictions has brought increased workloads for the team. There also continues to be a rise in international cases. The Team are currently working on cases where there is involvement from Central Authorities of Poland, Mexico, Portugal and Indonesia.
- With the lockdown restrictions beginning to ease, the adults legal team have noticed an increase in s.21A challenges. They have issued welfare applications in the Court of Protection & more recently have hopefully reached a consent agreement in what could have been a very protracted & expensive historical child sexual abuse matter.
- Given the raft of (almost daily) government guidance, the team have been involved in more Policy drafting & oversight of consultations for the setting of care home & non-residential fees.
- Another direct result of Covid has seen the increase of Ordinary Residence queries due to the Government's Hospital Discharge Policy and the team have also noticed the impact of the pandemic on Mental Health queries.

Agenda Item 7

- The Adults Team await the much anticipated Code of Practice for LPS. (Liberty Protection safeguards) and the Children’s Team are currently working with the Family Court on the Family Justice reforms.
- The property and planning team continue to act on a large volume of existing and new instructions support the estates team to deliver best value on the Councils estate assets. Together with the soon to return face to face planning committees, and a number of high profile and contentious applications looking to be determined in the near future including the 206-house development at Holgate (Thornton).
- Debt recovery :-
 - £18,000 recovered after placing charging orders on property .
 - £32,554.49. in Nursing home fees owed paid after a charge was placed on a property
 - Repossessed 5 properties and sold at auction 2 properties .
- Prosecutions and regulatory
 - Prince of Wales Hotel – prosecution for health and safety at work offences for failing to maintain iron railings that led to a member of the public falling head first down a 6 ft lightwell and sustaining life changing injuries . The Hotel was fined £86,000.
 - Fly tipping prosecution £200 fine -£160 costs
 - Prosecution for breach of a community protection notice - £500 fine , £700 costs .
 - Supported the licensing sub committees with 2 hearings for premises licences .

Electoral Services

The combined elections were successfully delivered. Following campaigns to promote safe voting and the use of absent vote facilities, the total number of people voting was 68,054.

We saw a slight fall in the numbers voting in the polling stations, but this was offset against those voting by post. The table below shows the comparative figures over the last 3 rounds of local elections.

Year	Postal Votes	Polling Station Votes	Total
2018	22006	47784	69790
2019	20729	42303	63032
2021	27251	40803	68054

It is reassuring to report that only one complaint was received in respect of the measures put in place at polling stations and that in the 2-week period leading up the election day and the counting of votes, almost 2,000 lateral flow tests were taken by staff with no positive results.

Preparations are now underway for the annual canvass of the register electors, which will start in the first week of June.

In January, the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) announced the start of their review of the Parliamentary constituencies in England. The BCE is required to report to Parliament by 1 July 2023, and they intend to publish their Initial Proposals for new constituency boundaries on Tuesday 8 June 2021.

The Queen’s Speech introduced three key areas, which will have an impact on the service and the delivery of election moving forward

Agenda Item 7

- Voter ID in polling station
- Removing the 15-year ceiling on overseas electors being able to vote in parliamentary elections
- Abolishing the fixed terms Parliaments Act

Democratic Services Team – Overview

- The Team have been working hard in ensuring the safe return to Physical Meetings whilst adhering to COVID restrictions.
- The Induction of Newly Elected Members went extremely well, all Members enjoyed the programme, documents and short videos can be accessed on the Councils library by following the link: <http://smbc-modgov-03/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13976>
- Councillor Clare Louise Carragher was Elected the Mayor of Sefton for 2021/22 and Councillor Burns was Elected Deputy Chair at the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 18 May 2021.
- The appointments of the Cabinet and the Councils Committees and Sub Committees were approved at the adjourned Annual Meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2021.
- The Team are now preparing for the New Municipal Year 2021/22 in relation to Committees and in that respect the following Committees will begin to prepare their individual Work Programmes for 2021/22:

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health)**

At the Adjourned Annual meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2021, Councillors Carla Thomas and Greg Myers were appointed Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of the Committee. The Committee's first meeting will be held on 22 June 2021 and its main task will be to set the Work Programme for the 2021/22 Municipal Year. The Committee currently has one Working Group on-going, namely for Mental Health Issues. A new Working Group can be considered once the current one has completed its review.

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)**

At the Adjourned Annual meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2021 Councillors Sue Bradshaw and Les Byrom were appointed Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of the Committee. The Committee's first meeting will be held on 15 June 2021 and its main task will be to set the Work Programme for the 2021/22 Municipal Year; and to consider the establishment of Working groups.

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)**

At the Adjourned Annual meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2021 Councillors John Sayers and Janis Blackburne were appointed Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of the Committee. The Committee's first meeting will be held on 29 June 2021 and its main task will be to set the Work Programme for the 2021/22 Municipal Year. The Committee currently has two Working groups: Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity and Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People. The Committee has agreed that no new Working Groups will be established until the current two have completed their reviews.

- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)**

Agenda Item 7

At the Adjourned Annual meeting of the Council held on 20 May 2021, Councillors June Burns and Paula Spencer were appointed Chair and Vice-Chair respectively of the Committee. The Committee's first meeting will be held on 22 June 2021 and its main task will be to set the Work Programme for the 2021/22 Municipal Year. The Committee currently has one Working Group on-going, namely for Secondary School Performance and Attainment. Any new Working Groups can be considered once the current one has completed its review.

- **Admission Appeals**

- In addition to the provision of administrative support for meetings of the Council, Cabinet, and Committees, the Section has also continued to organise and clerk school admission appeal hearings.

It is an extremely busy time for the Clerk to Education Appeals and so a full report on the progress will be submitted to the next cycle.

- **Civic & Mayoral**

Cllr Clare Louise Carragher was installed as Mayor of Sefton for 2021/22 on Tuesday 18th May, Cllr Carragher is looking forward to her term of office, she has chosen the following charities to support during her term, they are the Plaza Cinema, Sefton Children's Trust and Home Start. Work has already begun on planning some charity events during her term.

Upon Councillor Carragher's installation, it brought to a close Cllr June Burns two year term as Mayor of Sefton. Cllr Burns served the office with dedication and distinction and attended engagements when it was safe to do so.

Registrars

- The numbers of death registrations are now decreasing in line with the national trend and telephone death registrations will remain until the expiry of the emergency legislation.
- Huge demand for weddings both at the Town Halls and Approved Premises and now taking bookings for 2023.
- As there was no provision made in the emergency legislation to extend the validity period of a notice of marriage/civil partnership many couples who are having to do this process again to enable their ceremony to go ahead. In line with the other North-west authorities Sefton are not charging couples who are having to do this (but will charge for any subsequent notices that have to be given) and to-date we have written off £9300 in notice fees. This is income that we would not have received had the validity period been extended but it is having a massive impact on service demand and availability of appointments.
- The Register Offices at Southport and Waterloo re-opened to the public on 4th May (Monday, Wednesday and Friday only at Waterloo until further notice). Footfall has been relatively low at both offices apart from pre-booked appointments.
- The introduction of the Marriage Schedule System on 4th May has meant an end to the completion of marriage registers on the day of a wedding. Previously marriages were registered in a hard back book containing between 50 & 250 entries. The marriage schedule system is a similar system to civil partnership and means that a single sheet of paper (schedule) with the details of the couple will be issued to churches and will be signed by the couple & witnesses and then returned to the Register Office after the wedding (weddings that registrars attend will be Page 59 in the same way but we would already

Agenda Item 7

have the schedule). The schedule system allows for mum's name to be recorded on a marriage certificate and it also allows for step-parents and adoptive parents to be recorded up to a maximum of four parents for each party to the marriage. The schedule system will generate some income for the registration service as couples will need to purchase a copy of their marriage certificate from the register office rather than the church (£11 per certificate).

Coroners

- Inquests continue to be delivered remotely and Coroner working through backlog of inquests.

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

Operational Issues

Advice and support continues to be provided to all service areas. Predominantly, issues have been, and continue to be, related to the Coronavirus pandemic and the impact on resources in terms of staffing and service provision in all areas. Regular discussions are taking place at departmental management team meetings and with the trade unions. Meetings are being conducted through Microsoft Teams.

The majority of staff are working from home with occasional agile working at office sites as required, with social distancing measures in place. Advice to staff is that working from home is to continue until proposals for future ways of working have been agreed. Reviews and restructures across the organisation are being dealt with in the context of the current situation.

Smart testing sites at Aintree and Bootle have closed, however, a testing site in The Strand is to open shortly with the majority of staff being temporarily redeployed

Matters relating to disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work have been lesser than usual, but where necessary, formal meetings have been held via Microsoft Teams. Advice and support in the management of sickness absence, particularly Covid-19 related absences, has been the main focus. Formal action under the sickness absence policy and procedures was put on hold when the pandemic started, but this is now being gradually addressed.

Pay & Grading and Establishment Control Team

Job evaluation continues relative to all Council and School posts for new or revised roles. Job evaluations are also conducted relative to any operational and service reviews to maximise efficiencies as part of restructuring exercises across the Council. Team members are involved in service reviews and work to support transformational proposals and potential changes to service delivery. Current restructuring exercises include Education Excellence and Children's Services.

The Establishment Control team are then responsible for building any revised structures and changes to reporting hierarchies into the Councils operating systems.

The Establishment Control Panel takes place every 2 weeks to consider requests in relation to the release of vacancies and the approval of any changes to the Councils Establishment. All establishment changes are mapped to ensure correct payments are made, hierarchical organisational structures are appropriate and operational processes such as My View and Sickness Absence monitoring are effectively maintained.

Agenda Item 7

Establishment Control review safeguarding checks held against posts e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS formally CRB), Health Care Professional Council (HCPC) etc. with Heads of Service and amend as required. The team manages and controls the temporary end dates relative to all fixed term contracts and provides establishment control information reports for the Council and schools.

Regrading applications and appeals are processed in line with the Council protocol.

The team undertakes the review of HAY graded positions for new posts and the evaluation of HAY posts stemming from any revised proposals to the HAY grading structure.

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services have amended the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service relative to the calculation of Term-time only (TTO) salaries. Team members were involved in the adoption of the NJC advisory model and the revised calculations have been processed from September 2020. A number of potential Employment tribunal claims have been submitted seeking backdating of these revised Terms and Conditions and officers will work through these claims to progress as appropriate and in line with any legal precedent. In line with the ET decision these claims have been “stayed” until November 2021 pending an Appeal decision ruling.

The team manage the Matrix contract relative to the recruitment of all Agency workers. Agency recruitment is currently at an all time high to deal with the demands across Childrens Services and the new Government initiative Kickstart programme offering 6-month job placements for young people aged 17-24 on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.

The team manage sickness absence data, including production of management reports, sickness absence analysis and quarterly absence figures for SLT. Team members have been heavily involved in COVID 19 testing administration via the Government portals and the production of managers guidance relative to track and trace, isolations requirements etc.

One of the Team members is on the project team responsible for mapping future ways of working for Council staff when Covid-19 is no longer placing restrictions on how the workforce can behave and building on the changes and adaptations made since March 2020 and how they can be reviewed, refined or extended to further the ambition of the Council for maximising a flexible approach to how it functions.

Transactional HR Payroll & Pension (THRP) Services

A decision was taken In December 2020 to move from ResourceLink to Midland iTrent for the Payroll HR System. It will go live June 2021 and the first live payrolls to be processed on Midland will be for July 2021.

A small project team has been set up and the system is being designed by Midland to meet Sefton’s requirements. Parallel run for April is currently progressing and once balanced, then parallel runs will be done for May and June 2021. There are 51 separate payrolls to parallel run and balance to the penny. Consultants from iTrent have been on site in St Peters to help THRP staff with the parallel run.

Most THRP staff are continuing to work from home this has gone well. Some processes have had to be changed and the staff have embraced these changes There are some staff who have to still go into the office due to various issues, Internet, paper etc. The number of staff going into the office is being closely monitored.

The Team have recently:

- Year end returns – P60s etc.

Agenda Item 7

- End of year pension returns
- Processing furlough monies and claims to HMRC
- Weekly to Monthly pay
- Collecting staff emails so staff can access their pay documents online

They are currently looking at the following:

- Teachers pensions Monthly data collection (MDC) moving to Monthly Contribution Reconciliation (MCR) from 1st July 2021

Occupational Health

During February, March and April 2021, a total of 175 referrals for SMBC employees were made to the Health Unit. This is approximately 8% more than the same period 12 months previously.

The majority of referrals during this period were from Education Excellence (47.4%%), Locality Services (13.7%) and Adult Social Care (13.7%). As usual the main reasons were stress and mental health related (50.3%), chronic medical illness (17.1%) and musculoskeletal (16.0%).

Given the number of requests for therapy support the Health Unit has agreed to provide an additional 20 sessions (a mixture of counselling and CBT) per week for 6 months. This should help employees access support as quickly as possible. The cost for this should be recouped from the recharges to external organisations that use the HU services.

The Health Unit's service provider contracts are due for renewal from 1 January 2022. The procurement process for this will begin once authorisation from Cabinet Member is obtained.

The Health Unit's "resident" OH Physician, Dr J Boag is due to retire on 30 June. He will be replaced by Dr Ada Chrys-Chikere who will continue to provide the OHP service via remote consultations for the time being.

Workforce Learning and Development (CLC)

Apprenticeships

Staff enrolled on the **Level 6 Social Work Apprenticeship Degree** and the **Level 7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship Degree programme (MBA)** are continuing with their studies and are making good progress.

We've launched two new apprenticeship standards called the **Level 4 Children, Young People and Families Practitioner** and the **Level 5 Children, Young People and Families Manager**, for staff working in Children's Social Care and Localities. 6 staff have enrolled onto the Level 4 and 3 staff on the level 5.

We recently launched a new qualification called the **Level 4 Senior Housing Property Management Apprenticeship**. 1 member of staff is currently enrolling onto the course.

Training delivery

The Workforce Learning and Development Team have worked incredibly hard since the Covid-19 outbreak to adapt the way we deliver classroom training – this includes offering virtual training using MS Teams and adapting existing classroom courses to eLearning, pre-recorded webinars, self-help guides and commissioning new eLearning courses. Examples include:

- **Safeguarding Adults and Children's Awareness eLearning** will replace the pre-recorded webinars/classroom courses from J

Agenda Item 7

- **Health and Safety eLearning Portfolio.** A full portfolio of Health and Safety is now available to Council staff. Courses include Health and Safety Awareness, Risk Assessment, Fire Safety at Work, Food Safety Level 2 and Manual Handling of Objects, Asbestos Awareness, Control of Hazardous Substances to Health (COSHH) and Display Screen Equipment. We launched a Service Level Agreement (SLA) in April 2021 to provide schools with unlimited access to our Health and Safety eLearning for an annual fee.
- **Climate Change eLearning** – Working with the Environmental Health Team to develop a new eLearning to raise awareness of Climate Change, what it is and what it means for the Council. This is due to go live early June 2021.
- We're currently delivering essential **First Aid and Fire Warden** socially distanced classroom training in line with current Covid-19 guidelines.
- **Early Help Assessment Launch Events** – 350 delegates from across the partnership attended these events to find out about the new Early Help assessment and how it can be used to engage with families.

We continue to work closely with the Care Homes cell to develop an **Education and Training Programme** for Care Homes, Community Services and recipients of direct payment affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme includes local and national resources covering the following topics:

- Infection, Prevention and Control
- Medication
- End of Life Care
- Bereavement
- Moving and Handling
- Look after You – Health and Wellbeing Resources
- Further sources of support

The resources are updated on a fortnightly basis and are available in PDF format and as separate eLearning modules on Me Learning.

Supported the implementation and roll out of the SURGE testing programme across Southport.

Workforce/Organisational Development

Currently supporting Children's Social Care to deliver on a number of identified improvements following the recent Ofsted Inspection. We are also involved in the Council of 2023 programme and are working on actions which include a refreshed PDR process, succession planning, talent management, and development of the One Council Network and the Values sub-groups.

Strategic Support

The Communications team continue to be at the heart of all activity across the Council and are playing a critical role in supporting all areas of the Council in order to ensure that residents and business are informed at the earliest opportunity of all key issues and information is provided in a clear and concise manner. All internal and external communication channels are being used extensively. The team has worked closely with national colleagues (DHSC and PHE) and local partners from the Merseyside Resilience Forum and our 2 local CCGs, to ensure clear, concise and timely information is available to all our communities in relation to a new Variant of Interest (VOC) being identified in Sefton (initially in the Formby area). Local residents are encouraged to get tested at one of three mobile test sites.

Agenda Item 7

The Procurement team is playing a key role in many initiatives across the Council including the procurement Cloud based telephony, Network connectivity for schools, Sefton at Work CRM, and Libraries RFID kiosks. Work relating to providing an effective mechanism for improving the social impact/social value from our contracted providers, particularly its focus on “Achieving Community Benefit”, which includes “obtaining social value has continued. The team will prioritise this work over the coming months as it will play a key part in recovery.

Business Intelligence team are continuing to support many work streams across the Council including Economic Regeneration, Education Excellence, Adult Social Care, Children’s Social Care and Public Health Services. Key areas of work include daily analysis of Covid-19 pandemic data, processing of National Shielding Service referrals and submission of vulnerable children & young people returns to the DfE. Another key area of work is collating local data in respect of the national immunisation preparation. Furthermore, the teams continue to deal with complaints, subject access requests, consultation & engagement activities and managing the project to digitise the Council’s historic paper records.

The Commissioning team are working with Children’s and Adults Services as would be expected in order that both services can respond effectively by supporting care providers. Again this will be a critical function and activity as the Council responds to the protection of its most vulnerable.

The Strategic Support team continue to support the delivery of COVID testing in the borough, including the recent surge testing and supporting the Outbreak Management Board. The team continue to promote the use of accessible information and have facilitated workshops for Members, with further sessions scheduled. The team also continue to support the Demand Management programme of work including promotion activity for Foster Care Fortnight in May, #Whywecare which involved a virtual event for foster carers to say thank you.