

Overview
& Scrutiny



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

DATE: Tuesday 1st March, 2022

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 John Sayers
Councillor Friel
Councillor Brodie - Browne
Councillor Thomas
Councillor Sir Ron Watson

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Paul Fraser
Senior Democratic Services Officer
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See overleaf for COVID Guidance and the requirements in relation to Public Attendance.

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.

COVID GUIDANCE IN RELATION TO PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

In light of ongoing Covid-19 social distancing restrictions, there is limited capacity for members of the press and public to be present in the meeting room indicated on the front page of the agenda at any one time. We would ask parties remain in the meeting room solely for the duration of consideration of the Committee report(s) to which their interests relate.

We therefore request that if you wish to attend the Committee to please register in advance of the meeting via email to debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk by no later than **12:00 (noon) on the day of the meeting.**

Please include in your email –

- Your name;
- Your email address;
- Your Contact telephone number; and
- The details of the report in which you are interested.

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We have been advised by Public Health that Members, officers and the public should carry out a lateral flow test before attending the meeting, and only attend if that test is negative. Provided you are not classed as exempt, it is requested that you wear a mask that covers both your nose and mouth.

A G E N D A

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, including from the public gallery, 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 - 24)

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2022

Minutes of the Remote Informal Meeting of the Committee held on 11 January 2022

4. Social Value from Development Supplementary Planning Document (Pages 25 - 32)

Report of the Head of Regeneration and Housing

5. Work Programme 2021/22, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan (Pages 33 - 72)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

6. Cabinet Member Report - December 2021 to February 2022 (Pages 73 - 94)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

7. Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance and Sickness Absence (Pages 95 - 102)

Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services

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

Overview
& Scrutiny



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

MEETING HELD AT THE BALLROOM, TOWN HALL BOOTLE
ON TUESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Bradshaw (in the Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Brennan, Grace, Howard, Killen, Lewis
and McKinley

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Lappin

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Morris.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

28. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 be approved as a correct record.

29. ANNUAL REVIEW OF ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ASSET DISPOSAL POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy set out the vision and aspirations for the effective management of the Council's corporate asset portfolio and the role it played in supporting and shaping the Council's agenda for the 2030 vision; that aside from its staff the Council's next biggest resource was its land and property, and therefore, it was vital that this resource was managed and used effectively and efficiently to ensure that the Council derived maximum benefit from its assets in support of its strategic aims and priorities; that the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy would provide a framework for the planning, prioritisation, management and funding of the Councils asset base and that this was a statutory document that the Council was required to have in place and would be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy were attached as appendices to the report.

This report would also be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings to be held on 10 February and 3 March 2022 respectively.

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 8TH
FEBRUARY, 2022

RESOLVED:

That the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy be noted.

30. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2022/23

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, which explained that the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities was introduced following the Local Government Act 2003; and detailed measures / limits / parameters (Prudential Indicators) that were required to be set each financial year; and that the approval of these limits would provide a benchmark to measure actual performance against, to help ensure that the Council complied with relevant legislation, was acting prudently and that its capital expenditure proposals were affordable.

The report went on to explain that the Council was required to approve Prudential Indicators for the following items:

- (i) Capital Expenditure;
- (ii) Financing Costs/Net Revenue Stream;
- (iii) Capital Financing Requirement;
- (iv) External Debt;
- (v) Treasury Management Indicators.

These indicators were presented in the following within the report and summarised at annexe A.

The report concluded that having established the Prudential Indicators, the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services would monitor them during the year and report on actual performance to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis; and that an outturn report of performance against the Prudential Indicators would be presented to both Cabinet and Council following the financial year end.

This report would also be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings to be held on 10 February and 3 March 2022 respectively.

The report concluded by seeking comments to Council which will be considered as part of the formal approval of the Prudential Indicators for 2022/23.

A Member sought information on how the Council would administer the recently announced £150 council tax rebate for those in England whose homes were in council tax bands A to D.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Prudential Indicators, as detailed within the report, as the basis

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY, 2022

for compliance with The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities be noted;

- (2) it be noted that the relevant Prudential Indicators would be revised, as required, and that any changes would be submitted to Cabinet and then to Council for approval; and
- (3) it be noted that the estimates of capital expenditure may change as grant allocations are received.

31. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2022/23

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that set out the following proposed policy and strategy documents:

- a) Treasury Management Policy (Annex A);
- b) Treasury Management Strategy (Annex B); and
- c) Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement (Annex C)

The report concluded by requesting the Committee to provide any comments to the Council that would be considered as part of the formal approval of the Treasury Management Policy, Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provisions Policy Statement.

This report would also be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings to be held on 10 February and 3 March 2022 respectively.

Members asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- In respect of the Treasury Management Strategy and credit risk, how the Council would only invest with institutions of high credit quality that met certain criteria such as “are non-UK and domiciled in a country which has a minimum sovereign Long-Term rating of AA-“; and how such criteria aligned with the Council’s approval of ethical investment statements and principles
- Due diligence undertaken regarding tax avoidance issues and how the Council’s Treasury Management advisors ensured that the Council’s investments accorded with policies to prevent this
- The use of derivatives as a financial instrument for the management of risks and their compliance with the Council’s approval of ethical investment statements and principles
- How financial organisations were aware of local authorities being mindful to invest ethically and how such organisations tailored their products accordingly
- The need for a clear audit process to ensure the transparency of investments
- Whether the Council had more to gain or lose with interest rates being very low

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 8TH
FEBRUARY, 2022

- The impact of inflation on Council budgets and capital schemes

RESOLVED:

That the report setting out the proposed policies and strategy documents which include the objectives and operation of the Council's Treasury Management functions, the manner in which the Council will manage its investments and the methodology used to set aside revenue provision for the repayment of debt be noted.

32. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23 TO 2026/27

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that explained that the Capital Strategy set out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions were made and considered the impact of these decisions on the priorities within the Council's Core Purpose and Framework for Change Programme and the promises made in the 2030 Vision for Sefton; that at the heart of the Capital Strategy was the Council's core objective to continue to deliver financial sustainability; and that as such a flexible capital investment programme was more important than ever as a method to stimulate and enable economic growth and strategic investment, ensuring best use of existing assets and of generating future income streams to pay for and deliver day to day services.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the report was the Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2026/27

The report would also be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings to be held on 10 February and 3 March 2022 respectively.

The report concluded by seeking comments to Council that would be considered as part of the formal approval of the Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2026/27.

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2026/27 be noted.

33. ROBUSTNESS OF THE 2022/23 BUDGET ESTIMATES AND THE ADEQUACY OF RESERVES – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003 - SECTION 25

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, which explained that to comply with statute, the Chief Financial Officer was required to report to Council prior to the approval of the budget and the setting of the Council Tax, to give assurance that the budget was robust and that there were adequate reserves and balances.

The report explained that the budget for 2022/23 had been developed whilst the Council continued to deal with the ongoing financial impact of the COVID pandemic on a number of key services and income sources; that this impact would continue for years to come and the understanding of impact and identification of mitigation measures was a key feature of the 2022/23 budget and would be a key feature of budgets to come, thus increasing the complexity of budget setting and also the financial pressure on the Council as this would impact financial sustainability; that as with the previous financial year, developing a robust set of budget estimates for the financial year 2022/23 had been incredibly difficult and both these estimates and the risk profile of the Council would continue to change fundamentally over the next 12 months; and that the budget proposed however, represented the most accurate position that was available at the current time and like during the financial year 2021/22, regular updates would be required to be presented to Cabinet and Council in order that informed decision making could take place during the year in order to maintain financial sustainability.

With regard to the Council's core budget the report advised that over the last 12 months, the Council budget for 2021/22 included a number of short term financial measures and support to mitigate the financial implications of the pandemic and that a number of these were met via central government support provided for a specific purpose and some required Council support; that moving into 2022/23 a lot of this support would come to an end and the budget estimates had had to be updated to take account of the longer term impact of the pandemic on key services and income streams, with continued uncertainty around whether this impact was permanent or temporary; and that the areas of the Council's budget where a residual impact remained and consideration had been given to it in this budget included:

- Business Rates Income;
- Council Tax Income;
- Adult Social Care Budget;
- Children's Social Care Budget;
- Leisure Income; and
- Cost of Waste Disposal

The report detailed the following factors had been considered as part of the budget process for 2022/23:

- Impact of Previous Years' Budget - 2021/22
- Central Government funding
- Maintaining Service Delivery
- Inflation and Annual Cost Increases
- Financial Management
- CIPFA Financial Resilience Index and the CIPFA Financial Management Code

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 8TH
FEBRUARY, 2022

- Management of Risk
- Capital Strategy and Strategic Investment
- External Advice

Regarding the Reserves Strategy 2022/23 the report provided information on:

- The General Fund
- National considerations such as the impact of economic climate on Council costs and anticipated reductions in Government funding
- Local considerations such as planned changes in service delivery methods / contracts; the impact of rising demand for services; legal challenges; and balance sheet risk
- Budget setting assumptions such as sensitivity of the budget assumptions and the Council's significant earmarked reserves
- Management / Member actions including the provision of clear corporate / Member messages and the three-year Medium-Term Financial Plan and One-year budget
- Earmarked reserves
- Capital reserves
- School reserves

The report concluded that as a result of consideration of the issues contained within the report, the budget proposed was a robust budget package and the opinion provided was in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.

This report would also be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings to be held on 10 February and 3 March 2022 respectively.

RESOLVED: That it be noted that:

- (1) the Local Government Act 2003, (section 25 as amended) requires the Chief Financial Officer to report formally the issues of an opinion as to the robustness of the estimates made and the tax setting calculations; and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves; and
- (2) the Council will have regard to the matters raised in this report during the final stages of determining the budget for 2022/23.

34. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PLAN 2022/23 – 2024/25 AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that explained that on 10 February 2022, Cabinet would be asked to recommend to Council a Budget Plan for 2022/23; that on 3 March 2022, the Council would be

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY, 2022

asked to consider and approve the Budget Plan for 2022/23 – 2024/25 and the level of Council Tax for 2022/23; and provided the Committee with:

- An assessment of the Council's current financial position and approach to the 2022/23 Budget Plan and preparation for the additional two-year budget period 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- An update on the Government's announcement of resources that are available to the Council for 2022/23.
- The Council's current financial position and the assumptions built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- The proposed Budget for 2022/23; and
- The proposed Capital Programme for 2022/23.

The report set out the financial strategy of the Council and the national and local financial context within which it is operating; and indicated that the Council had a statutory requirement to remain financially sustainable and to balance its budget every year; and that the Council's Framework for Change Programme was a comprehensive and ambitious programme that sought to support the delivery of the Council's core purpose. As would be expected with a programme of this size and complexity that spanned a number of financial years, the detailed proposals had been and would continue to be the subject of change as they were developed and ultimately implemented.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix A Individual School Budgets 2022/23
- Appendix B Draft Council Budget Summary 2022/23
- Appendix C Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

This report would also be considered by Cabinet and Council at their meetings to be held on 10 February and 3 March 2022 respectively.

The report concluded by requesting the provision any comments to Cabinet regarding the Budget Plan for 2022/23 – 2024/25 and setting the Council Tax for Sefton Council for 2022/23.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- in respect of the financial settlement for schools next year was there any additional provision for the ongoing impact of covid to support supply teachers who may be required
- in respect of income from the Strand Shopping Centre reference was made to the forecast that losses of £1.700m would be experienced in 2021/22; that the current business case forecast that this income loss would reduce by £1.200m in 2022/23 (to £0.500m); but would increase again by £0.300m in 2023/24 (to £0.800m)

Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 8TH
FEBRUARY, 2022

- Analysis of the Council's budget was complex and at times it could be difficult for Members to adequately scrutinise proposals
- The potential for a waterway between the Strand shopping centre and the new Everton football ground at Bramley Moore dock; and the wider regeneration impact the football ground proposal could have on the south Sefton area
- The setting and collection of business rates
- The Council's recovery policy to pursue council tax and business rate arrears
- The receipt of New Homes Bonus payment and how it was allocated within the Council's budget; and it was noted that the payment did not directly benefit communities that experienced housing growth in their areas
- An assertion was made that the government's Levelling-Up agenda did not provide any new money for wide-ranging plans but allocated money already announced in the previous spending review
- Capital budget strategy should be subject to scrutiny to ensure compliance with ethical business policies and the Council's core values
- How Sefton's population decline could have a negative impact on the Council's overall funding position as part of the government's Review of Relative Needs and Resources

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 be noted;
- (2) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services and his staff be thanked for the production of the detailed reports for consideration at this meeting and their overall efforts in formulating the Council's budget for consideration by Council; and
- (3) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services be requested to arrange a training session/presentation to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Local Government finance and the Council's budget setting processes.



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

REMOTE INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Bradshaw (in the Chair)
Councillors Byrom, Grace, Howard, Killen, Lewis,
Mckinley and Morris

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Lappin

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Brennan.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

28. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was noted that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 would be submitted for approval to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 8 February 2022.

29. UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF LIVERPOOL CITY REGION DIGITAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

Further to Minute No. 44 of 2 March 2021 the informal meeting of the Committee received a presentation from Andrea Watts, Executive Director (People) updating on progress of the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy (the Strategy).

Ms. Watts highlighted:

- How does LCR compared with the north west and the UK in relation to internet usage within the last 3 month
- The progress to date on the CA strategy and that digital inclusion was now a priority set out in the CA's Corporate Plan; that Digital Inclusion working group had been re-established to identify areas of digital inclusion activity for the CA priorities; and that the CA's Digital Infrastructure project includes a substantial social value element that had significant ambitions towards supporting digital access and inclusion, as well as jobs and apprenticeships
- The elements of digital inclusion in respect of connectivity, equipment and skills
- The next steps and aspects relating to LCRCA Digital Inclusion Group being re-established to drive the approach; that Sefton had its own emerging Digital Inclusion Strategy (as a borough rather

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

than a Council); the links to all elements of Sefton's Digital Strategy ; and efforts to maximise opportunities to link all aspects together

- A reminder of Sefton's Digital Strategy 2021 – 23 under the headings connected Council; empowered residents; and business growth

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- 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. The passport would help local employers to map digital skills to jobs for local residents; and allow the targeting of super output areas in the borough. It was acknowledged that the Working Group's recommendations had been submitted to the Liverpool City Region and that the LCR was considering its own way forward on this matter. When Sefton's own Digital Inclusion Strategy was complete it could be shared with the Committee
- It would be helpful to match digital skills to available jobs; and it was suggested that colleges needed to work with employers to match students and their skills to jobs. Members were informed that a meeting would be held shortly with Hugh Baird College and this suggestion would be raised with them
- Reference was made to the EU Leonardo programme which helped to fund vocational education and training courses across Europe and which the UK would not now benefit from; and a concern was raised that dividends that the Government indicated would be available to the UK after leaving the EU had not been used to introduce similar programmes
- Were there any groups that the Council felt they were not reaching and if so, how could this be remedied? It was stated that it was hard to map all activity in this area because there were many groups offering services, such as libraries. It was hoped that gaps would be addressed by the Digital Inclusion Strategy
- Could work be undertaken with the DWP to identify gaps? It was confirmed that the Council was working with the DWP on this

RESOLVED:

That Andrea Watts be thanked for her informative presentation.

30. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

The informal meeting of the Committee received a presentation from Elena Lloyd, Corporate Communications Manager updating on corporate communications. Ms. Lloyd highlighted:

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

- Information about the Council's website which had around 2,000 pages; was maintained by over 70 web editors – coordinated by Corporate Communications Team acting as gatekeepers; and that 5,032,051 unique page views were made - spending average of 1min 13secs on page
- MySefton with 319,608 unique page views spending an average of 2mins 12secs on the page
- Facebook – had 11,400 followers; up by 1,348 new followers since December 2020 that was increase of nearly 12% in a year
- Twitter - 24,010 followers (up 1,600 / 6.6% increase)
- Instagram - 4600 followers (up 18.7% on 2020)
- Linked In - 6800 followers (5.3% increase on 2020)
- That by the end of 2021, the Corporate Communications Team had issued approximately 450 press releases and dealt with over 300 incoming media enquiries; and that a high proportion of proactive work had again been based around COVID-19 and had involved continuing use of Margaret Jones' (Director of Public Health) profile as a trusted voice in releases, interviews and videos
- Other Corporate Communications activity in relation to 'boots on the ground' vaccination campaign in Derby and Linacre wards; major long-term plans such as Bootle and Crosby consultations and redevelopment campaigns; Southport's development through the Town Deal and the successful publication of the popular redevelopment of Southport Market; issues local people were facing including Universal Credit cuts and fuel poverty, as well as national education funding; May 2021 local elections; and work with Green Sefton and Children's Services concerning the recruitment of foster carers

RESOLVED:

That Elena Lloyd be thanked for her informative presentation.

31. AIR QUALITY UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 25 of 12 January 2021 the informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Head of Highways and Public Protection that updated on local air quality management activities/actions in Sefton during 2021.

The report indicated that Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) was introduced under the Environment Act 1995 and that evidence had shown that certain atmospheric pollutants were linked to poor health; that the Act placed a statutory duty on all Local Authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas and produce a yearly Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) which provided a detailed account of air quality in its area; and that as a result of ongoing monitoring and assessment air quality in the majority of Sefton had been shown to be of a good standard and levels were well within the National Air Quality Standard Objectives; but

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

that there were however areas in the South of the Borough, where due to high levels of traffic, and other localised sources, levels of NO₂ were above or close to the national standard. Accordingly, Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) had been declared in the four locations at:

- A5036 Princess Way and Crosby Road South Junction, Seaforth
- A5058 Millers Bridge and Derby Road Junction, Bootle
- A565 Crosby Road North and South Road Junction, Waterloo
- B5422 Hawthorne Road and Church Road Junction, Litherland

The report also provided information on:

- real time automatic monitoring stations; the use of diffusion tubes to measure monthly NO₂ levels at 80 sites across the Borough; the impact of Covid-19 on NO₂ Automatic Monitoring Results and NO₂ diffusion tube results in 2020;
- particulate matter
- PM2.5 monitoring
- A summary of monitoring results in 2020
- Actions to improve air quality which included Sefton Clean Air Zone Outline Business Case, Joint Sefton/ Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Emissions Enforcement Project, Low Cost Sensor co-location project Sefton /JMU and the DEFRA grant funded domestic solid fuel behaviour change project

The report concluded that air quality in the majority of Sefton was within NAQS Objectives and that action plans were in place to work towards compliance in the four AQMA areas; that the main on-going priority in Sefton for the coming years was to fully understand the effects that the predicted increase in HGVs due to port expansion would have on air quality and how this could be mitigated; that the the development of the Outline Business Case for a Sefton based CAZ under the overarching Clean Air Plan was almost complete and would aim to address these concerns in some detail; and that understanding the ongoing impact Covid would have on air quality in the coming years was also a priority.

The Committee also received a presentation from Greg Martin, Principal Environmental Health Officer that focussed on the following points:

- Local Air Quality Management
- The four Air Quality Management Areas
- Air Quality Monitoring –Automatic sites
- NO₂ Diffusion tube Monitoring including the results of the monitoring and the impact of Covid-19 on the results
- Particulate Matter¹⁰ Monitoring Results
- Actions to improve air quality including the Sefton Clean Air Zone outline business case; Joint Sefton/ Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Emissions Enforcement Project; Sefton /JMU Co-

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

Location Study; DEFRA Grant funded Educational behaviour change Project; and DEFRA solid Fuel Study

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- Available data on traffic flows/standing traffic on Moor Lane Crosby associated with the knock-on effect from Brooms Cross Road
- The impact of pollutants on patrons using the beer garden of the public house at the junction of Crosby Road North/South Road Waterloo
- What pressure could be put on Peel Ports to reduce the impact of HGV traffic movements from the dock estate
- Clean Air Zone proposals and increases in the number of electric car charging points and how this will assist with the development of a low carbon transport strategy
- Sefton had not received any Government funding for the introduction of a Clean Air Zone study so real commitment had been shown by the Council to pursue this issue from its own resources
- Some people wishing to make journeys by cycle, for work or leisure purposes, could be deterred from doing so because of having to use busy roads

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report updating on local air quality management activities/actions in Sefton during 2021 be noted; and
- (2) Greg Martin be thanked for his informative presentation.

32. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME, COUNCIL TAX BASE 2022/23

Further to Minute No. 89 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 January 2022 the informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that provided details of the review of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2021/22, and recommending that there was no change to the scheme for 2022/23 for working age claimants; together with an updated Council Tax Base for Sefton Council and each Parish area for 2022/23.

Regarding the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) the report indicated that each financial year, the Council must consider whether to revise or replace its local CTRS; and that the Council must approve and adopt the 2022/23

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

CTRS by 11 March 2022, After consideration of the factors outlined in the report it was proposed that the local CTRS for 2022/23 remain unchanged for working age claimants.

Regarding the Council Tax Base the report indicated that in accordance with Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended, the Council was required to set a tax base for both Sefton Council and each Parish Area for 2022/23 before 31 January 2022.

The Council Tax Base Report 2022/23 was attached as Annex A to the report.

The Committee was advised that at its meeting held on 6 January 2022 the Cabinet had resolved (Minute No. 89) that:

- (1) the contents of the review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2021/22 be noted;
- (2) the Council be recommended to agree that there are no changes to the existing Scheme for 2022/23 for working age claimants;
- (3) the Council be recommended to approve the relevant Council Tax Base for Sefton Council and each Parish Area as set out in Annex A to the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report detailing the review of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2021/22, recommending that there was no change to the scheme for 2022/23 for working age claimants; together with an updated Council Tax Base for Sefton Council and each Parish area for 2022/23, together with the decision of Cabinet on this matter be noted.

33. 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 - JANUARY UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 79 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2 December 2021 the informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that advised of:

- (1) the current estimated financial impact of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget;
- (2) the current forecast revenue outturn position for the Council for

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

2021/22;

- (3) the current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2021/22; and
- (4) the monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of August 2021 relating to:
 - the forecast expenditure to year end;
 - variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members;
 - updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects are also presented for approval.

The Cabinet had resolved (Minute No. 79) that:

A. in respect of the Revenue Budget:

- (1) the current financial implications of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget together with the key issues that will influence the final position, be noted;
- (2) the current position relating to the 2021/22 revenue budget be noted; and
- (3) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2021/22 revenue budget be recognised and it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and to ensure that financial sustainability can be achieved; and

B. In respect of the Capital Programme:

- (1) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme, as outlined within paragraph 7.1 of the report, be noted;
- (2) the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 October 2021 of £17.340m (paragraph 7.5); and the latest full year forecast is £50.675m (paragraph 7.7), be noted;
- (3) the programme outputs and progress to September (paragraph 7.5), be noted;

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

- (4) the supplementary capital estimates (paragraph 7.10), be approved;
- (5) it be noted that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services, to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council, as outlined within paragraph 7.11 of the report.

RESOLVED:

That the financial monitoring report and the decision taken by Cabinet in respect of this matter be noted.

34. "MANAGE MY REQUESTS" (ICASEWORK) SYSTEM - STATISTICAL UPDATE REPORT

The informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Head of Strategic Support that provided an update on the adoption of the "Manage my Requests" iCasework system (the system) for capturing, managing and reporting all customer complaints, representations and feedback across the Council including the number and nature of complaints by Service in the last 12-month period.

The report indicated that the system supported a 'digital by default' process, whereby all information requests and complaints were accepted, administered, responded to and archived electronically. Members of the public that did not have direct access to the internet could have their requests logged by proxy through the Contact Centre or at the One Stop Shops.

Paragraph 2 of the report provided statistical information on the numbers of complaints and inquiry management; that I-Casework showed that the Council received 1,607 representations in the 12-month financial period (1/04/2020- 31/03/2021), an increase on 52.1% on the previous 12-month period; and thAT 840 of these representations were complaints.

The report concluded that it was imperative that the system was maintained in a timely fashion to prevent drift and escalation and accordingly, The Chief Executive and the Head of Strategic Support continued to emphasise the importance for representations, complaints and MP enquiries to be responded in a timely manner to ensure statutory compliance and scrutiny. The Senior Leadership Board had also been asked to consider and discuss the position in their Divisional Management Teams with a view to:

- Improving the management of complaints and enquiries

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

- Ensuring the open complaints and enquiries recorded on i-casework are actioned to required timescales
- Identifying and addressing any training or support needs

Members of the Committee asked questions/made comments on the following issues:

- the difference between an enquiry and a complaint; and whether this had any bearing on the small numbers of complaints received
- the closure time to deal with complaints, how many were resolved immediately over the telephone and the average time to resolve complaints

RESOLVED:

That the report updating on the adoption of the “Manage my Requests” iCasework system be noted.

35. ETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT – UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Further to Minute No. 5 of 15 June 2021 the informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that updated 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.

The report highlighted responses from the Head of Strategic Support in relation to a recommendation concerning the adoption of ethical procurement policy.

RESOLVED: That

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

36. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2021/22; 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; providing an update on

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and providing an update on the Armed Forces Covenant/Toolkit.

The report indicated that following consultation with officers two suggestions had been made for potential topics for consideration by Working Groups; and that the topics related to Corporate Communications and Covid-19 and Cyber Security.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (2) the Corporate Communications Manager and the Senior Manager ICT and Digital be requested to submit scoping documents, in respect of Corporate Communications and Covid-19 and Cyber Security respectively, to the next meeting of the Committee to enable Members to determine a topic for a Working Group review;
- (3) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
- (4) the update on the Armed Forces Covenant/Toolkit be noted.

37. WELFARE REFORM AND ANTI-POVERTY REFERENCE GROUP - UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 24 of the meeting held on 2 November 2021 the informal meeting of the Committee considered a Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty update of the Head of Health and Wellbeing and Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

The update provided information on the latest meeting of the Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty (WRAP) Cabinet Member Reference Group and in particular on activities associated with:

- Community Pantry
- Poverty Emergency and Childhood Poverty in Sefton
- Holiday Activity Fund and Summer Food Programme
- Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme
- Healthy Child Voucher Programme
- Strategic Branding and Marketing
- Requests for action

Councillor Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services presented the update.

RESOLVED: That

Agenda Item 3

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY, 2022

- (1) the update on the operation of the Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group be noted; and
- (2) Councillor Lappin be thanked for her update.

38. CABINET MEMBER REPORT - NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 2021

The informal meeting of 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.

A Member of the Committee referred to the appointment of a Customer Journey Development Lead as detailed in the ICT section of the Cabinet Member report; and suggested that it would be helpful if the appointed officer could engage with elected Members on this matter

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.

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Agenda Item 4

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 1 March 2022
Subject:	Social value from development Supplementary Planning Document		
Report of:	Head of Regeneration and Housing	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Planning and Building Control		
Is this a Key Decision:	N	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	N		

Summary:

Social value is a term that relates to wider social, environment and economic benefits from decisions. Planning decisions on development proposals can be a key way to secure social value benefits for local people. The Sefton Local Plan already secures a wide range of social value benefits in Sefton. However, there is the scope to look at what areas of social value are currently not being maximised and address this through a Social Value SPD.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) That the report setting out the proposed scope of the Social Value from Development Supplementary Planning Document be noted.
- (2) To make comments on the suggested scope of the Social Value from Development Supplementary Planning Document.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

For information and to seek wider views on the scope of the proposed Social Value from Development Supplementary Planning Document.

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

To not produce a Social Value SPD. This would not allow the Council to maximise employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities from new development.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

Agenda Item 4

(A) Revenue Costs

None

(B) Capital Costs

None

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
None	
Legal Implications:	
None	
Equality Implications:	
There are no equality implications. The Social Value SPD itself will have equality implications and these will be set out when approval is sought for that document.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The Social Value SPD will ultimately look to secure greater access for local people to new jobs and training opportunities
Commission, broker and provide core services: None
Place – leadership and influencer: None
Drivers of change and reform: None
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The Social Value SPD will ultimately look to secure greater access for local people to new jobs and training opportunities
Greater income for social investment: None
Cleaner Greener: None

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6705/22) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4905/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

Contact Officer:	Derek McKenzie, Ian Loughlin
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 3558
Email Address:	derek.mckenzie@sefton.gov.uk, ian.loughlin@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Agenda Item 4

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Social Value has become an important principle of how to integrate the needs of communities into the decision-making processes of public and private sector organisations. Often financial considerations can be paramount in decision-making and this can be to the detriment of local people. By embedding the principle of social value within the decision making proves this can help build capacity with local communities, make them more resilient and accepting of change.

2. What is Social Value?

- 2.1 Social value is a broad term but relates to the wider economic, social and environmental benefits that can be secured through decisions or actions. The focus of social value may be different depending on the decision or action that is being considered. For example, the social value benefits you may wish to secure by looking at the way an organisation procures services will likely be different from the social value benefits secured through management of public buildings or through the consideration of a large development proposal. Nonetheless, they will each have maximising economic, social and environmental benefits at their core.

3. What is a Supplementary Planning Document?

- 3.1 Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) are planning documents that can build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. As they do not form part of the development plan, they cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan. They are, however, a material consideration in decision-making. They should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.
- 3.2 Unlike a Local Plan, a supplementary planning document can be approved by the Council without the need for external examination. However, a supplementary planning document must be made available for public and stakeholder engagement prior to its adoption.

1. What would a Social Value Supplementary Planning Document cover?

- 4.1 The Sefton Local Plan set out a range of policies that look to secure benefits that could be considered social value. This includes:

- new housing

The Local Plan (Policy MN1) sets out a requirement to provide over 11,500 homes over the plan period

- affordable housing

The Local Plan (Policy HC1) requires that all housing schemes of 15 homes or more should contribute towards the provision of affordable housing at a rate of 30% of the scheme (15% in Bootle and Netherton)

- 'accessible and adaptable' homes

Local Plan policy HC2 requires that on housing schemes of 50 homes or more, at least 20% of the market homes should be designed to meet Building Regulations M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings'.

- areas of public open space on new developments

Local Plan policy EQ9 requires that on large housing schemes of 150 or more homes (or on smaller schemes that do not have accessible open space nearby) should have new areas of open space within the development at a rate of 40m² of open space per new home. The open space should include new children's play equipment.

- contributions to public transport

Local Plan policy IN2 sets out that new development should be supported by a range of modes of transport. If improvements to public transport are identified as being necessary, these will be secured through a planning condition or obligation.

- contributions towards new primary school places

Local Plan policy IN1 sets out that new development may need additional infrastructure to support local population growth. In some areas the need to expand primary school provision has been identified and how we secure this, and how much, is set out in the Education Contributions Developer note.

- mitigation measures to protect Sefton's coast

Local Plan policy NH2 sets out the need that new development should avoid adverse impacts on Sefton's internationally important nature sites, or, if impacts cannot be avoided, mitigated. The Council have a note for developers which sets out an approach that developers can opt in to demonstrate compliance with this policy and national guidance.

- flood mitigation measures, ecological benefits

Policy EQ8 of the Local Plan sets out how flood risk from and within new developments should be avoided, reduced or mitigated against.

- high quality landscaping

Policy EQ9 of the Local Plan set out that development proposals should incorporate appropriate landscaping schemes, including the provision of new trees. Recently, national guidance introduced the need for new roads to be tree lined.

- high quality design

Policy EQ2 of the Local Plan is a detailed policy looking at various aspects of design including site context, site design and layout, buildings and structures and

Agenda Item 4

how development at the urban edge should be designed to blend with surrounding countryside.

- improved access routes

Local Plan policy IN2 sets out that new development should be supported by a range of good access points. If improvements to existing and/or new access points are identified as being necessary, these will be secured through a planning condition or obligation.

- protection of heritage assets

Local Plan policies NH9-15 sets out the Council's approach to protecting Sefton's various heritage assets, including listed buildings, conservation areas and historic parks and gardens.

- climate change measures

Local Plan policy EQ7 looks to secure energy efficiency measures within new developments, including the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

- provision and protection of employment land

Local Plan policy MN1 identifies a need for over 80ha of new employment land in Sefton over the plan period. Policy MN2 identifies these sites. Policy ED3 seeks to protect existing employment land from alternative development.

- protection of town centres

Local Plan policy ED2 sets out the approach for new town centres uses, such as retail, leisure, offices hotels etc, and provides a sequential approach that prioritises such developments in our existing centres.

- measures to improve health and recreation

The Local Plan includes several policies that can have a beneficial impact on health, such as those above on housing, access, open space and climate change. Additional Policy EQ10 looks to limit the proliferation of hot food takeaways and Policy EQ5 looks to restrict development in areas of low air quality.

4.2 A number of the policies in the Local Plan, that secure the benefits above are, are expanded upon through a supplementary planning documents or information notes. It is important to note that these supplementary planning documents and information notes do not introduce any new policy requirements but set out how the Local Plan policy works in practice. These include:

- Affordable Housing
- Contributions towards education
- Open Space
- Nature Conservation

- Sustainable Travel

- 4.3 It is not intended that the Social Value SPD will replicate, replace or expand upon the existing guidance that already secures a range of social value benefits. It will, however, provide a clear cross reference to what social benefits the Council already secures, and the policies/documents that do so. However, there is the potential for the Social Value SPD to consider any areas that the current Local Plan and range of SPDs do not currently cover, providing this is within the scope of what is permitted to be included according to the planning regulations.
- 4.4 Planning Policy officers have been looking at social value SPDs from other local authorities and the key focus of these has been around securing employment and training opportunities. This is an area that the current SPDs are silent on, and a benefit that could a Social Value SPD could seek to secure. This is not to say the Council don't already secure job and training opportunities as part of new development, but there is an opportunity to set out more clearly what we want to achieve, maximise those benefits and do this in a more consistent way.
- 4.5 Local Plan policy SD2 'Principles of Sustainable Development' sets out a whole range of considerations that the Council we look to apply. This includes the need 'to improve access to services, facilities **and jobs**' [our emphasis]. Policy IN1 'Infrastructure and Developer Contributions' sets out that 'social, community, environmental and physical infrastructure will be protected, enhanced and provided where there is an identified need to support sustainable communities'.
- 4.6 Therefore, so long as it can be clearly demonstrated there is a need for the provision of jobs and training opportunities it is considered that it would be justified that a Social Value SPD could look to maximise jobs, training and apprenticeships from new development. It is not considered that demonstrating this need will be an issue. Therefore, the Social Value SPD will look to focus on securing new jobs, training and apprenticeships from new development.
- 4.7 This can be done in a number of ways, such as requiring a developer of major schemes to sign up to an employment charter, ringfencing a number of jobs for Sefton residents, prioritising interviews for vulnerable and underrepresented groups, maximising the opportunities in the local supply chain and provided training and apprenticeship opportunities in the borough. The Social Value SPD will explore these opportunities and set out the approach to secure and monitor these.

2. Next Stages

- 5.1 It is expected that a draft Social Value SPD will be prepared and approved for public engagement for May 2022. This will be subject to a 6-week engagement to July 2022 and adoption will be sought in September 2022.

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Agenda Item 5

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	1 March 2022
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 Work Programme for 2021/22, identify potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; and to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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 as detailed in paragraph 2 of the report; 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; and

Agenda Item 5

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.

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

This report is not subject to LD and FD comments. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the report will be included in those reports as appropriate.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

(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

Agenda Item 5

- Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review
- Cyber Security Scoping Document
- Corporate Communications and Covid-19 Scoping Document
- Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Introduction/Background

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

- 1.1 The Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2021/22 was approved by the Committee on 15 June 2021 as 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 Committee currently has no appointed Working Groups.
- 2.3 At its Informal Meeting held on 11 January 2022 the Committee considered two potential Working Group topics for review.

Corporate Communications and Covid-19

To assess the changes instigated by Corporate Communications in communicating with residents during the Covid-19 pandemic; the impact the changes have had; and how such changes shape the future of the Council communicating with its communities

Cyber Security

To assess cyber security threats to the Council; Sefton's approach to the threats and what the organisation can do to continually manage the risks presented by investigating organisational behaviour, culture and approaches to cyber risk.

- 2.4 The Informal Meeting requested that the Corporate Communications Manager and the Senior Manager ICT and Digital submit scoping documents, in respect of

Corporate Communications and Covid-19 and Cyber Security respectively, to this meeting of the Committee to enable Members to determine a topic for a Working Group review.

In accordance with this decision copies of the scoping documents are attached. See Appendix 4 and 5.

2.5 The Committee's views are therefore sought on the establishment of a new Working Group.

2.6 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

Agenda Item 5

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.

Councillor Sir Ron Watson is the representative of the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

4.6 **Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. Councillor Steve Radford, a Liberal Party and Independent Group Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Chair for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

4.7 **Quoracy Issues**

In the past 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.

Following an update request to the LCRCA the positive news is that last year (20/21) was the most successful yet as only one meeting had been inquorate. A potential reason is that the remote meetings provided greater flexibility for

Members and so supported increased attendance.

The membership for this year's LCRCAO&S has seen quite a big change, with only five of the 20 Members returning. An introductory session for Members has been held and the importance was stressed about attending the Committee so that business could be transacted.

The M9 Group is the collective body for the Mayoral CA's who meet frequently with representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The quoracy issue was raised by the M9 Group with MHCLG back in March 2020. However, since then other matters including the Covid-19 pandemic have become more pressing.

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>

4.9 The last meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 20 January 2022. The Committee considered the following items:

- Combined Authority Budget Report 2022/23
- LCR Combined Authority Corporate Plan 2021-24 - Biannual/Q2 Performance Report 2021/22
- Appointment of Substitute Scrutiny Member to the LCR Audit and Governance Committee 2021/22
- Liverpool City Region Pathway to Net Zero - Overview And Progress Update
- Equality Strategy Draft Vision and Objectives

4.10 The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on 16 March 2022.

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

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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
Update on Sefton’s Social Value from						X

APPENDIX 1

Development Supplementary Planning Document Derek McKenzie						
Scrutiny Review Progress Reports:						
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	

APPENDIX 1

Financial Performance Monitoring - Stephan Van Arendsen		x	x	x	x	
Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities – Prudential Indicators - Stephan Van Arendsen					x	
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		
Reduction of the data centre footprint requirement as Council ICT servers and						

APPENDIX 1

applications are moved to the cloud Dominic Ellis						
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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?

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 MARCH 2022 - 30 JUNE 2022

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, Oriol 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
Outcome of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for a Sefton Clean Air Zone (CAZ)	Greg Martin greg.martin@sefton.gov.uk
Water Self Supply Services (2022 - 2025)	Stephanie Jukes stephanie.jukes@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4552
Pendle Drive Litherland	Andy Bond andy.bond@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3247
Annual Health and Safety Report	David Eden david.eden@sefton.gov.uk
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 - March 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
Land at Holgate Thornton	Andy Bond andy.bond@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3247

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Outcome of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for a Sefton Clean Air Zone (CAZ) Following approval to develop an Outline Business Case for a Sefton based CAZ the purpose of the report is to advise Cabinet of the completion of the OBC, the outcomes of the detailed study, to provide recommendations and agree on the next steps.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	10 Mar 2022			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

Exempt Report	Open
Wards Affected	All Wards
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Peel Ports; National Highways: Liverpool City Council; Air Quality Member Ref Group; O&S Committee; Cabinet Members
Method(s) of Consultation	Meetings; Briefings; Update Papers/Presentations
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Outcome of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for a Sefton Clean Air Zone (CAZ)
Contact Officer(s) details	Greg Martin greg.martin@sefton.gov.uk

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Water Self Supply Services (2022 - 2025) A review of 12 months of the Council becoming a self supply licensee. With a recommendation for remaining self supply for the period 2022 - 2025.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet Council			
Decision Expected	10 Mar 2022 21 Apr 2022 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 10/02/2022 to 10/03/2022. Reason: work is ongoing in relation to the procurement exercise			
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	To be confirmed			

APPENDIX 3

Method(s) of Consultation	Finance, procurement and legal teams
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Water Self Supply Services (2022 - 2025)
Contact Officer(s) details	Stephanie Jukes stephanie.jukes@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4552

SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Pendle Drive Litherland To seek approval to the principal terms provisionally agreed subject to the receipt of planning permission for the sale of the Council's freehold interest in land and buildings at Pendle Drive in Litherland			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	10 Mar 2022			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	No
Exempt Report	Part exempt (Part 3)			
Wards Affected	St. Oswald			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Officers			
Method(s) of Consultation	Meetings and e-mails			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Pendle Drive Litherland			
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	Annual Health and Safety Report
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Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

	The report provides Cabinet with assurance on the progress made to implement the Council's Health and Safety policy during the 2020/21 financial year.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	10 Mar 2022			
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	Corporate Health and Safety Committee, SLB and Cabinet Member			
Method(s) of Consultation	Meetings and emails.			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Annual Health and Safety Report			
Contact Officer(s) details	David Eden david.eden@sefton.gov.uk			

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 - March 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	10 Mar 2022			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes

APPENDIX 3

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 - March 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	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	7 Apr 2022 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 02/12/2021 to 07/04/2022. Reason: to resolve issues associated with the timing of surveys for the planning application in respect of the site			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Fully exempt (Part 3)			
Wards Affected	Ainsdale			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Councillors as part of the above			

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 3

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	Land at Holgate Thornton To seek approval to the terms and conditions provisionally agreed for the sale of the Council's freehold interest in the land for housing development			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	26 May 2022 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 03/02/2022 to 26/05/2022. Reason: further information is required in order that a validation of costings/valuations can be obtained			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Fully exempt (Part 3)			
Wards Affected	Park			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Councillors			
Method(s) of Consultation	Previous reports submitted for Asset Disposal and subsequent updates.			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Land at Holgate Thornton			
Contact Officer(s) details	Andy Bond andy.bond@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3247			

SEFTON COUNCIL



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (Cyber Security Working Group)

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 4

MEMBERSHIP

Members nominated by the O&S Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OBJECTIVES

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) has agreed to establish a Working Group to assess Sefton's approach to the management of Cyber security threats to the Council. A recent audit report evidenced that the authority already has in place robust ICT procedures and processes to significantly reduce the risk, including the implementation of technical controls to stop Cyber Attacks as well as an ongoing programme of system updates and patching in line with best practice recommendations. However, research suggests that human error is involved in more than 90% of security breaches. The working group will therefore focus particularly on organisational behaviour, culture and approaches to Cyber Risk across departments, outside of direct control of the ICT Client Team.

Technology is only one of the tools available for securing the councils network, and in determining effectiveness of Sefton's Cyber protection the Working Group may need to consider how well other tools are or could be applied, including: Education (promoting and encouraging compliance through an understanding of the benefits and consequences of compliance/non-compliance, e.g. sharing Cyber updates at Team meetings ; and response to campaigns (change your password, complete essential system updates).

In the context of Council activity the purpose of the ICT team is to implement best practice standards in order to secure the Councils network security. These requirements and standards impact on everyone and all ICT Users are required to respond to changes in the requirements and complete the necessary tasks to protect the council information assets examples include

- Changing network passwords in line with best practice standards as notified, this should be a 15 character password as minimum
- Applying software updates to machines as required
- For team managers to share briefings and updates in related to Cyber as provided to the Senior Management Team
- Reporting any potential Cyber Attack
- Ensuring Business continuity plans take account of the total loss of ICT

APPENDIX 4

It will be necessary for the Working Group to:

- Understand the Cyber Risk faced by all public sector organisations and the potential impact, both financial and otherwise, that this could have for Sefton Council
- To understand the current approach to Cyber Security in the Council both from the internal ICT team, all Council Services and members
- To evaluate the options that exist for further improving Cyber Security in the Council
- To recommend any improvements to behaviour, approach and culture in respect of Cyber Security

HOW WILL THE REVIEW CONTRIBUTE TO CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY MOTION

(Note: the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, at its meeting on 10 September 2019, agreed that Working Group Scoping documents should include a section providing details of how each review would contribute to the terms of the [Climate Change Emergency motion](#))

Not applicable

METHODS OF ENQUIRY

- **Review of Cyber Security in the Public Sector and Sefton Practice including**
 - Analysis of current Sefton practice
 - Desktop research in to practice and incidents elsewhere
 - Witness interviews with officers, members, stakeholders, experts and other organisations
 - Possible conference calls with experts and other organisations

TIMESCALES

TBC

OFFICER SUPPORT

Lead Officer: Helen Spreadbury (Senior Manager ICT and Digital)

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 4

OTHERS WHO WILL BE INVOLVED

The review is likely to involve the following witnesses and sources of information and advice

- ICT Security team Agilisys /ICT Client Officers
- Council Officers
- Members
- Experts and representatives from other Councils or similar organisations

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING TO CABINET/COUNCIL

Timetable of committees, link into the planning chart, type of report/minute

APPENDIX 4

PLANNING CHART

The Planning Chart is an example of the way reviews could/should be planned.

It is recommended that realistic time frames in which to carry out tasks should be considered including possible delays for public holidays and Council business. Effective planning suggests that more planning time be built into the chart.

Start date TBC

Activity	MONTH							
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8
Scoping								
Consider Documents								
Witness Interviews								
References								
Initial Findings								
Draft Report								
O&S Cttee Considers								

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 4

Submit to Cabinet (if appropriate)									
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Ten Step Process Flow Chart

Committee agrees Working Group membership and appoints Chair/Lead Member

Working Group complete scoping document determining terms of reference & timetable.

Working Group submit scoping paperwork to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

Background research undertaken and evidence collected.

Working Group meet to determine questions they wish to ask witnesses.

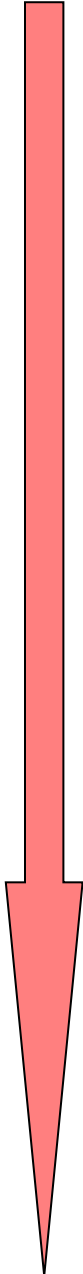
Working Group make any necessary visits & additional evidence obtained.

Witness hearings take place & responses written up by support officer.

Working Group review headings for the final report.

Working Group and support officer draft final recommendations and approve final report.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives final report and recommendations and how they should be taken forward.



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SEFTON COUNCIL



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

(Corporate Communications and Covid-19 Working Group)

Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 5

MEMBERSHIP

Members nominated by the O&S Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OBJECTIVES

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) has agreed to establish a Working Group to assess the changes instigated by Corporate Communications in communicating with residents during the Covid-19 pandemic; the impact the changes have had; and how such changes shape the future of the Council communicating with its communities.

In the context of Council activity, the purpose of Corporate Communications is to inform (or even signpost and warn) our internal and external audiences (staff, stakeholders, partners and communities). Many behaviour-change campaigns have also been delivered by the Corporate Communications Team.

It will be necessary for the Working Group to explore:

- The range of communications activity the Council is responsible for;
- The purposes and objectives of the communications activity;
- Who the intended audience is;
- The nature of any potential and actual impact (positive or negative), from the communications activity
- The effectiveness of communications activity, such as changes in behaviour
- How we influence behaviour change in the community through standard channels

It will be necessary for the Working Group to consider:

- How and what the Council has communicated with stakeholders (staff, residents and partners) during the pandemic
- How the Council communicated with hard-to-reach communities and what lessons can be learnt for maintaining and improving these channels in the future
- Accessibility of communications activity and channels
- How we communicate with young people, given that this audience does not want to follow the council on social media, so what alternative communications channels should be used to get messages to this group.

It will be necessary for the Working Group to review:

- Current Sefton Corporate Communications Activity
- Areas of good practise within the Council
- Good practise within other local authorities or similar organisations
- Areas for improvement within the Council's policies and practise
- Recommendations for improving the Council's policies and practise

APPENDIX 5

HOW WILL THE REVIEW CONTRIBUTE TO CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY MOTION

(Note: the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, at its meeting on 10 September 2019, agreed that Working Group Scoping documents should include a section providing details of how each review would contribute to the terms of the [Climate Change Emergency motion](#))

Not applicable

METHODS OF ENQUIRY

Dependent upon the refined scope of the review, to include:

- Analysis of current Sefton practice
Available statistics on current Sefton practice such as social media reach and website traffic
- Desktop research into practise elsewhere
- Witness interviews with officers, stakeholders, experts and other organisations
- Surveys – did an intended audience see a Council message and did they do or change as a result
- Possible site visits / conference calls with other teams such as the contact centre, experts and other organisations

TIMESCALES

To commence in June 2022

To be completed in June 2023

OFFICER SUPPORT

Lead Officer: Elena Lloyd (Corporate Communications Manager)

Democratic Services Officer: Paul Fraser

OTHERS WHO WILL BE INVOLVED

The review is likely to involve the following witnesses and sources of information and advice

- Council Officers such as Martin Driver, (Communications Team Lead), Jayne Vincent (Engagement Lead), One member of the Accessible Information Group (TBC), One Young Advisor (TBC)
- Members
- Experts and representatives from other Councils or similar organisations

APPENDIX 5

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING TO CABINET/COUNCIL

Timetable of committees, link into the planning chart, type of report/minute

PLANNING CHART

The Planning Chart is an example of the way reviews could/should be planned.

It is recommended that realistic time frames in which to carry out tasks should be considered including possible delays for public holidays and Council business. Effective planning suggests that more planning time be built into the chart.

Activity	MONTH												
	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
Scoping													
Considerments													
Visits													
Site Visits													
Initial Findings													
Draft Report													
O&S Cttee Considers													
Submit to Cabinet (if appropriate)													

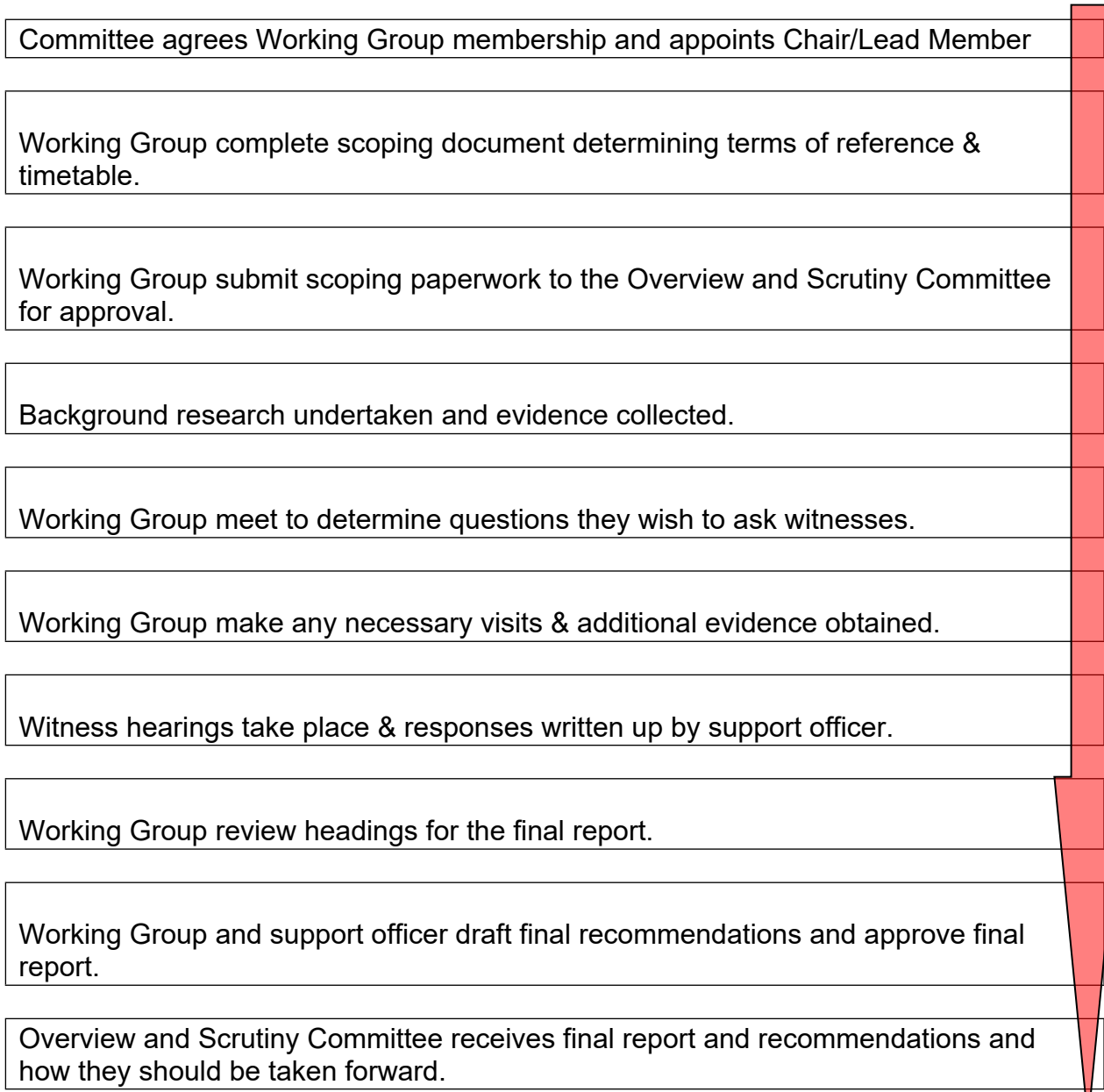
APPENDIX 5

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Agenda Item 5

APPENDIX 5

Ten Step Process Flow Chart



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Agenda Item 6

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	1 March 2022
Subject:	Cabinet Member Report – December 2021 to February 2022		
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 December 2021 to February 2022 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 6

(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
<p>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.</p>	

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

<p>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.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: As above</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer: As above</p>
<p>Drivers of change and reform: As above</p>
<p>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above</p>

Greater income for social investment: As above
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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.

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Appendices:

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

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 is attached to the report.

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CABINET MEMBER REPORT		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) -		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Paulette Lappin	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services	February 2022

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

- 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.

From July reports have been, and will continue to 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 latest report (position as at the end of December) was presented to Cabinet on 3rd February and indicated that an underspend of £1.946m is currently forecast against the Council's revenue budget. The final monitoring report of 2021/2022 will be presented to Cabinet on 10th March.

The suite of budget reports was presented to Cabinet on 10th February (and Overview and Scrutiny on 8th February) and will be presented to Budget Council on 3rd March. As in previous years a follow-on report will be published in the week before Cabinet to include details of levies and precepts as well as any updates to grant allocations and the capital programme.

The draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021 was published at the end of July with the final Statement of Accounts being presented to Audit and Governance Committee on 15th December. The audit is still to be completed (although nearly all work has been finalised) but should any further amendments be required since that Committee, the Chair has been granted delegated authority to approve the final Statement of Accounts following these changes.

The work to close the accounts for 2021/2022 will commence shortly, with the revenue and capital outturn position to be reported to Cabinet in July.

Customer Centric Services

The outbreak of the Omicron variant resulted in a significant increase in workloads across Customer Centric Services leading up to the Christmas period and into January 2022; workloads were re-prioritised to prepare for payment of the latest round of Government-funded grant payments to leisure and hospitality businesses affected by the Omicron restrictions. The Benefits service has experienced a further significant increase in applications for support payments from residents told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

Agenda Item 6

The scheme is currently due to end on 31st March 2022. As at January 24, 2022 a total of 7,630 claims have been received, with decisions made in 6,474 cases, i.e. 1,603 mandatory awards, 1,572 discretionary awards and 3,299 refusals. Total payments made to date are £801,500 mandatory payments and £786,000 discretionary payments.

Customer Services

Following the shutdown period, the Contact Centre experienced a high volume of telephone calls in January, with 14,500 telephone calls being handled.

With a high volume of Customer Service staff suffering with COVID-related sickness or having to self-isolate, staffing levels were reduced. Consequently, the telephony emergency message was relayed during the busier times of the month, with priority given to enquiries relating to Adult and Children's Social Care, ELAS and COVID.

As Sefton residents struggled to pay for food and utility bills, there was a notable spike in the number of ELAS telephone calls that were handled. The number of COVID-related calls also increased in January due to the fast spread of the Omicron variant with most enquiries relating to Test and Trace Self-Isolation support payments.

There was an increase in calls for Cleansing services as clinical waste collections suffered a significant disruption due to collections not taking place for a week in January. An increase in enquiries was also received due to flyers being posted to residents who are still on weekly sack collections asking for their input into a consultation about whether to introduce wheelie bins and / or communal euro bins to areas in Bootle and Waterloo.

There was an increase in telephone calls for Blue Badges (190 telephone calls in December compared to 446 telephone calls in January) with a high volume of customers progress chasing discretionary Blue Badges applications.

The busiest Council service within the Contact Centre relates to Council Tax enquiries. As Council Tax recovery resumed after a pause in December, call volumes, email and Webchat contact was high as customers respond to payment reminders and summons.

In general, contact by social media continues to increase significantly with more customers utilising the digital contact options available. Webchat continues to be well utilised, enabling Customer Service advisors to signpost customers to the relevant area on the Council website.

In January, over 2,100 customers attended Bootle One Stop Shop. This included 318 taxi drivers who were offered an appointment and 380 appointments that were offered for customers with Council Tax, Benefits, ELAS, Blue Badge and Parking enquiries. The remaining 1,403 customers were seeking general council-related advice at reception.

Southport One Stop Shop, at the Atkinson, received 441 visitors. 138 attended with a pre-booked appointment for Council Tax or Benefit enquiries and a small number for Blue Badge and Parking enquiries, while 303 customers were seeking general council – related advice at reception.

Annual Billing

Preparation and testing are well underway for the issue of approximately 135,000 annual Council Tax and Business Rates bills and benefit notifications in respect of 2022/23.

Support for Energy Prices - Council Tax Rebate

On 3rd February 2022, the Chancellor provided some initial information about support for households due to the Energy Price Cap increase, i.e. a one-off £150.00 rebate payment that will operate outside of the council tax system but council tax lists should be used to identify eligible households. In addition, discretionary funding will be provided to councils to support households not eligible for the rebate. Further detailed guidance is expected before implementation plans are confirmed.

Risk and Audit

The **Internal Audit** team are continuing to work on delivering the internal audit plan with a current focus on reviews of:

- Fostering,
- Sandway Homes,
- Homelessness,
- Schools Finance,
- AGS follow up,
- Operational In-House Services,
- Council Tax,
- Performance Management,
- Public Health Grant
- Grants assurance and a review of number of Schools.

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. We have successfully recruited to the second of the two temporary Principal Auditors positions with the staff member starting in December 2021.

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

- As highlighted in the previous update, the revaluation of a further sample of properties was completed in December 2021. Insurers are working closely with us to identify how we can use the two sampling exercise results to extrapolate across the rest of the Council's buildings.
- We have used some of the "free" as part of the insurance programme risk bursary days to develop an e-learning risk management course and are currently working with the provider to change some of the content.
- 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. We have been successful in two recent claims.
- Team continues to work extensively with Service Teams including Highways, Green Sefton and Tourism to improve the management of insurable risk in areas where there are high numbers of claims or areas of concern.
- We are currently ensuring that outstanding risk actions from surveys completed by the material damage insurer have been implemented which will help the renewal in 2022.

The **Risk and Resilience Team**. The Emergency Planning focus during the previous quarter was on following up on the training for the loggists and volunteers. We have organised follow up training for the loggists in March 2022 and have carried out an initial recruitment exercise for the loggists and expect to be able to improve our capacity to respond. There is now a training plan in place with regular meetings and training sessions for the volunteers. We are currently seeking to

Agenda Item 6

improve the numbers of volunteers available to provide additional capacity. Service Area Business Continuity Plans have been completed and we are now working through a planned programme of refreshing the existing plans as well as bringing forward plans to identify each Service Area's key ICT software and identify the Business Continuity Plan arrangements for key suppliers. We have carried out an activation plan of a number of are shortly to begin the testing of the activation of each of the Service Area's Business Continuity Plans and undertake exercises.

The **Risk and Resilience Team** are currently working on the planning for the Council's Risk Appetite which is due to take place in March/April 2022 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 revised Emergency Plan for the 2022 Grand National

The **Assurance Team** have been seconded to the Business Grants Team to provide support and assistance for the delivery of grants to local businesses until the end of June 2022.

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.
- Undertaking a planned review of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and completing the Annual Health and Safety report.
- 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.

ICT

The ICT Service continues to work on a number of significant transformation programmes as well as delivering the BAU ICT Service alongside Agilisys

The Cloud Migration project is well underway, Wave one migrations are now completed, this wave consisted of primarily test systems, it completed on time and approval was granted for payment in line with the milestone payment plan. Wave 2 has now commenced and we have our first live systems now deployed in our cloud environment, how

Agenda Item 6

due to work not completed at the discovery stage by Agilisys. Remediation is underway but there is now an impact on the delivery schedule and planned migrations. It is likely that the overall plan will be impacted by a number of weeks with some deployments now scheduled for early April. Work is also underway to plan the move of those live systems which are public facing and further communication will be issued both internally and externally well in advance of the work taking place.

Cloud Telephony deployment is nearing completion new handsets are now being deployed across all locations, including schools. We are still experiencing a delay with some KIT required for completion of the project due to the worldwide issues with stock.

Further deployment of the new CXP solution is now planned for the forthcoming period. Dedicated capacity for CXP development has now joined the team, with the focus being on the migration of the legacy services from the Northgate CRM system. Processes for Abandoned Vehicles, Electoral Registration, Sharps and Bins not emptied are all awaiting sign off prior to deployment into live.

Further to the above the team has supported the migration and upgrade of the corporate website to the Umbraco platform. The redesigned website went live on the 25th of January . The external audit agency Allable reports that the new design has resolved many of the web accessibility issues raised by the Cabinet office, and a plan is being developed to resolve the remaining issues.

Schools ICT – implementation of the new Connectivity Service for schools is now nearing completion, for those schools who have taken the SLA for Connectivity. 38 of the 41 sites are now complete with work scheduled for the remainder. Work is ongoing around the Schools Contract for support of the SIMS/FMS System (management information systems previously supplier by Capita) The new provider ESS has changed the terms of the contract and arrangements for schools which are currently under review by our legal team.

The team is also supporting the implementation of the new Bulk Print Contract and also the onboarding of a new BACs provider, both of which will deliver savings to the authority once they are live.

Procurement activity continues to be a challenge, unfortunately the Procurement consultant engaged did not have sufficient experience and we have had to release him from his contract after just three weeks. The teams is now working with the Central procurement team and an external provider to push forward with the two key procurements underway; Managed Print and Corporate Connectivity. However the gap in capacity has meant that we have had to realign resources to key Council wide projects and some of the smaller procurement projects have had to be put on hold. A permanent post is now out to advertisement.

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.
- Work on the re location of Parking Services contractor as part of Pavilion Buildings disposal.

Agenda Item 6

- Additional disposal and report to Cabinet Member for Lease of a vacant plot at Southport Business Park.
- Negotiations with Landlord of Magdalen House for the re gear of the Lease
- Commissioning market valuations for Council Assets for Homeless Hostels proposal and site in Southport.
- Asset records input and liaison with Building Maintenance colleagues for new (property based) IT system in support of Corporate Landlord Implementation Ongoing. Property Management Assistant appointed to assist with input work
- Agreement of terms and reporting for Lease of various assets ongoing at Crosby Lakeside for Hospitality Company.
- Assistance with Lease terms for inclusion in Expression of Interest documentation for procurement of an operator for Crown Buildings Enterprise Centre in conjunction with Regeneration colleagues

Project Management

- Provide professional support to Growth Board on several projects.
- Project manage various Education capital schemes.
- Provide support to other teams on Asset Disposal, Building Maintenance, Asset Management, Energy and Statutory Compliance colleagues.
- Provide support for new ways of working agile model proposal.

Energy Management

- Busy period for the affordable warmth team, supporting residents without adequate heating for range of reasons. Additional funding secured to help repair boilers or provide emergency top ups for gas/electricity meters.
- Local Authority Delivery of Green homes Grant (LAD, GHG) – Providing insulation to privately owned properties (worst/not insulated & for poorest residents)
 - LAD1b works concluding and will be fully wrapped up by 31 March 2022. (30 properties)
 - LAD2 direct award of funding from the CA to Sefton to retrofit 190 low income private homes. Works have begun after a delayed start. Two contractors are operating to complete the 190 properties plus an additional 20. An extension has been granted to deliver works until 30 June 2022, however all homes must be identified for works by 31 March 2022.
 - LAD3 & Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) – Now called ‘Sustainable warmth’ competition. A consortium bid led by the LCR was successful and Sefton have been awarded funding for an additional 307 properties with a delivery period of 1 Jan 2022 – 31 March 2023.
 - ERDF – Sefton have been offered up to £4M ERDF underspend to continue the retrofit works of RP properties. Officers are working to identify potential programmes of work across the LCR. Delivery is 2022/23.
- Works to upgrade roof insulation and improve glazing at Southport and Bootle Town Halls will conclude in Spring. All works apart from the BTH ballroom window will be completed by 31 March 2022, A full restoration and insulation of the ballroom window will entail an additional 8-9 week extension.
- Work on a Heat Decarbonisation Plan for 18 of Sefton’s buildings has been awarded to GEP and is progressing well.
- Work on the Low carbon Community Energy fund, (Net Zero LCR and NW Energy Hib) to fund a consultation & feasibility study for wind power / ground source heat at Southport (to feed Eco Centre and Dunes) with community benefits from ownership of the asset. Is progressing well. Phase 1 feasibility is complete with a report due shortly and a bid will be submitted for Stage 2 feasibility in Feb/March 2022. A presentation to members would be welcome.

Agenda Item 6

- Retender of electricity contract 2023 – 2027 complete and COR will follow with options on securing 100% green electricity.
- Retender of water utilities will be brought to Cabinet March 2022.
- Climate Emergency – review of progress has been undertaken and works for 2022/23 prioritised including risk assessment of Climate and adaptation measures, community consultation and progressing existing action plan.
- Air Quality Education and behaviour change. Southport Eco Centre – Immersive room installed. Launch event delayed due to increased Covid rates, but planned for Spring 2022. Work ongoing to promote the clean air crew website to schools across Sefton. Sefton are part of a developing LCR bid to DEFRA for funding to develop safer streets, will involve providing educational day visits at Eco Centre and producing educational materials – awaiting decision due February 2022.
- Salix funding secured to provide low energy lighting at the Atkinson, Southport, with works due to be complete by 31 March 2022.

Legal Services

Prosecutions Team

The team successfully applied for a warrant to enable environmental health officers to access and carry out works to a rear garden of a property in Maghull. The property has been overgrown and used as a dumping ground for waste for some time which was providing harbourage to rats and mice.

The team have responded to an appeal lodged by a landlord in the First Tier Property Tribunal. The landlord is appealing two civil penalties which the Housing Standards team imposed upon the landlord for failing to licence two properties within a Sefton selective licencing area.

The team represented the planning department at a first hearing in the Magistrates Court, the Council is prosecuting a landowner for failure to comply with an enforcement notice. The Defendant pleaded not guilty and the Trial has been listed for early March 2022.

The team delivered training to two substitute members of Licencing and Regulatory Committee.

The debt recovery service continue to enjoy success and bring in considerable sums to the Council. Including: business rates recovery of £110,569.91, a care charge debt of £210,000 and sundry debt recovery of £28,000.

Contract and Employment

The Legal Contracts team remains extremely busy at working at full capacity, especially advising on the Council's major projects under the Growth Programme, in particular the high profile MLEC project under the Southport Town Deal (which continues to demand a huge amount of time and resource on what is a complex and ever-evolving structure with many parties and many challenges) and continue to advise of the Crosby Lakeside Activity Centre project (including the recent high-profile termination of the main contractor Crossfield and the resulting restructure of the project delivery methodology from the original design & build contracting model to a different model involving many more procurements and direct contracts, which is complex and requires careful thought).

The team continues to support a broad spectrum of Council operations and advise on a wide range of transactions, schemes and collaborations for all departments including social care, public health, highways (including the continuing response to VIAM's recent administration), public realm.

Agenda Item 6

The team continues to be heavily involved in advising on the Council's commercialisation ventures including initiatives, and the nuanced issues around how the Council interacts with its wholly-owned companies such as SHOL, Sandway, SND. The team is also advising on the Council's initiatives to re-enter the council housing market including potential grant funding from Homes England, and on the subsidy control aspects of many funding schemes including the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda.

The Covid pandemic continues to impact the Council's procurement and contracting activity which Legal Contracts supports, including ongoing variations reacting to the pandemic, extensions of existing contracts to endure service continuity (in a sub-optimal market for fresh procurement) and numerous post-Covid recovery schemes particularly around social care provision, work restart schemes, mental health schemes, etc.

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 also continues to provide strategic advice on best practice and risk mitigation on governance in particular around the Council's development and regeneration projects including advising commissioners on procurement best practice to mitigate scope for procurement challenges.

The team provides high quality employment law advice on a range of day to day and strategic matters for both the Council and the schools in the Borough. The team also have conduct of all of the Council's employment tribunal cases and a broad range of cases for schools under service level agreements.

Property & Planning

Entering the new year, the property team remain busy continuing to support the Council's estates team and property portfolio dealing with all manner of disposals, acquisitions and other property related matters, as well as advising on initial points as the Council looks to re-enter the Council housing market. Planning matters also continue at pace including the high-profile win, defending the Council's grant of Planning Permission in the High Court on the Sainsburys (Meols Cop) (since appealed to the Court of Appeal).

Children's and Adults Social Care Team

The Children's and Adults Social Care Team have worked through a very difficult period for the client departments and continues to face unprecedented levels of demand on the service. 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 significant and sustained rise in children being deemed at risk 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.

- **Registrars**

The Registration service is required to submit an Annual Performance Report to the General Register Office (GRO) each April and the following ~~was~~ was received from GRO –

Agenda Item 6

“We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Sefton registration service for the hard work undertaken during 2020/21 and for the continued effort to maintain service delivery in the face of the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about.

Your continued meeting of the KPT for death registrations is appreciated, particularly when considering the numerous challenges local registration services have faced as a result of the pandemic and the move to an electronic process for registering deaths. We acknowledge the difficulties in meeting the target for birth registrations and the impact that the postponement of birth registrations has had in this regard. Your progress in reducing volumes of outstanding birth registrations during this extended period is noted.

We recognise the unprecedented recovery challenges around births, marriages/civil partnerships facing the service this operational year as a result of the pandemic.”

The service is continuing to see an increase in the number of death registrations compared to previous years. Death registrations are still being conducted over the phone rather than face to face as per the Coronavirus legislation.

363 wedding ceremonies were conducted at Sefton's Town Halls and Approved Venues between 1.6.21 and 30.9.21 – an increase of 14 compared to the same period in 2019.

- **Coroners**

The Coroner has held several jury inquests since the beginning of September, including some longstanding cases and the team are working hard to reduce the backlog of inquests.

Electoral Services

Key dates in the election timetable are

Publication of Notice of Election	Monday 28 March 2022
Receipt of Nominations	4:00 pm Tuesday 5 April 2022
Withdrawal of Candidate	4:00 pm Tuesday 5 April 2022
Publication of Statements of Persons Nominated	4:00 pm Wednesday 6 April 2022
Last Date for Registration	Thursday 14 April 2022
Receipt of Postal Vote Applications	5:00 pm Tuesday 19 April 2022
Receipt of Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Tuesday 26 April 2022
Appointment of Poll and Count Agents	Wednesday 27 April 2022
Day of Poll May 2022	7:00 am to 10:00 pm Thursday 5

Postal ballot packs will be issued on Thursday 21 April 2022 and Postal Vote opening sessions will commence week beginning 25 April 2022.

Counting of votes will take place immediately after the close of poll at 10.00pm on Thursday 5 May 2022. All Bootle and Sefton Central wards will be counted at Aintree Racecourse. Southport wards will be counted at Dunes Leisure Centre.

The new Election Bill is progressing through Parliament and it is expected to receive Royal Assent by June 2022. This will introduce Voter Identification at polling stations and make changes to postal voting and voting by British citizens living overseas. A detailed briefing paper will be made available to Members in due course.

Agenda Item 6

Democratic Services Team – Overview

- Due to increases in the rate of Covid infections in Sefton, the meetings of the Cabinet and Council held in January were held with reduced memberships whilst still complying with quoracy and political proportionality rules. The 4 Overview and Scrutiny Committees held in January were held remotely and on an informal basis to help stop the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

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

Committee Members met on 4 January 2022 when representatives of Liverpool University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (LUFT) attended to report on the most recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection report. The Chief Officer of the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health submitted a joint report on the Integrated Intermediate Care Strategy. The Clinical Commissioning Groups presented an Update Report and the Health Provider Performance Dashboard. Cabinet Member Update Reports were also considered. Rather than establish a traditional working group during 2021/22, Members of the Committee have previously agreed to participate in workshops on the Integrated Care Partnership.

A Special Meeting of the Committee on 31 January considered the proposals in relation to the next phase of clinical service integration for a number of services delivered by LUFT and agreed that the proposals constitute a substantial development / variation in services for Sefton residents. A Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will now be established with representatives of Knowsley, Liverpool and Sefton Councils, to consider the proposals in greater detail.

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

The Committee has been busy reviewing the update from the Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Reference Group along with scrutinising the progress of recommendations made by the Digital Inclusion Working Group. The Committee has requested that scoping documents be produced relating to the topics of cyber security; and Corporate Communications and Covid-19. The scoping documents will be considered at the meeting to be held on 1 March 2022. The budget meeting of the Committee was held on 8 February 2022.

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

The Committee's Working Groups in relation to (1) Housing Services for Vulnerable People and (2) Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity, completed their work and the Final Reports were approved by Cabinet and Council at their meetings held on 7 October 2021 and 18 November 2021 respectively. A Special meeting of the Committee was held in December 2021 to consider a called in item relating to Revised Recreation Pressure Information Note - Draft for Consultation and Development Management Purposes. The meeting to be held on 8 March 2022 will also consider a called-in item relating to Knob Hall Lane.

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

A briefing/training session of Committee Members took place recently to consider Children's Social Care Improvement in Sefton.

Committee Members met on 25 January 2022, when the Committee received a presentation by the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) that provided an update

Agenda Item 6

on actions undertaken since the Care Quality Commission (CQC) review of health services for children looked after and safeguarding in Sefton. A joint report from the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health and the Interim Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education, provided the latest update regarding the development of Sefton Place Based Partnership for Health and Social Care. The Interim Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education submitted reports on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Continuous Improvement Plan; and an overview of the Children's Services Improvement Journey. The latest Children's Services Analysis Tool (ChAT), showing data with narrative, was attached to the agenda for information. The usual Cabinet Member Reports were considered, and Members reviewed the Work Programme, including an update on the work of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group.

- **School 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 and school exclusion reviews.

Admission appeals continue to be busy for the Clerk to the Education Appeal Panel. During January we had three days of appeals, two for the LEA and one for the Archdiocese. Additionally, two days of LEA appeals are scheduled for the week commencing 07 February.

Preliminary preparations are underway for the inundation of admission appeals that follow the allocation of school places (1 March for Secondary and 19 April for Primary). This period is the busiest time of year for school admission appeals and presents very many challenges for the team in terms of time, resources, and general logistics.

The Independent Review Panel, which consider appeals against school exclusions considered an exclusion in January. Two more appeals have been submitted in the last week and arrangements are being made for Panels to consider these two separate hearings, most likely during February.

The legislation that enables school appeals to be heard remotely was brought in under Covid rules and is due to expire on 30 September 2022. Remote hearings have proved popular with Panel members and officers, additionally there has been no negative feedback from parents/guardians. In the coming months, we will be seeking the views of parents relating to remote hearings as part of a consultation process that propose to give LEAs the option to hold hearings remotely or in person on a permanent basis.

- **Civic & Mayoral**

The next main event in the Mayoral Calendar will be the Gala Charity Ball which takes place on Saturday 26th March in the Bliss Hotel, Southport, all the focus is currently switched on to this event to ensure its success.

We are currently also making preliminary works into the Mayor's Civic Heads Day which is scheduled for Monday 25th April and will give the mayor an opportunity to showcase the best of our borough to our neighbouring authorities.

- **Member Development**

The Member Development Programme 2021-2022 has run throughout the year with Members invited to attend Courses listed in the Member Development Handbook. A copy of the Handbook is located in the Mod Gov Library. Courses are held in a variety of formats, namely E-learning remotely via Microsoft Teams, and face-to-face, though the Covid

Agenda Item 6

pandemic has limited opportunities for face-to-face learning. The programme has been adapted over the year and new courses added on request by Members. Some of the sessions have been repeated to give Members further opportunities to attend if they have not previously been able to attend sessions. (e.g. Corporate Parenting and Accessible Information Awareness).

Member attendance at sessions is notified to the Corporate Learning Centre and added to Members' learning records. Members can access their individual learning records of courses attended. Members are encouraged to complete course evaluation feedback forms at the end of each session and subsequent sessions adapted accordingly if required.

An on-line feedback survey for whole of the Member Development Programme 2021/2022 was circulated to Members in December 2021. The deadline for completion of the survey was originally 10 December 2021, but due to poor response rates, was subsequently extended to 31 January 2022. The purpose of the survey is to inform development of the 2022-2023 Member Development Programme. The results of the survey will be published as part of a report Cabinet Member report on the Member Development Programme. Work is also currently being undertaken in collaboration with North-West Employers with a view to the Council working towards the achievement of a Member Development Charter.

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

Operational Issues

Advice and support are provided to all service areas regarding employment/staffing matters. Work continues in Children's Social Care and a number of key recruitments have taken place as well as guidance on staffing matters in order to help workforce improvements. The Personnel team has formed a distinct Business Support Unit which is providing support on a number of operational and HR related matters. Work in relation to Children's Social Care is providing a challenge to some other resources.

Guidance and support relative to the Coronavirus pandemic and the impact on resources in terms of staffing and service provision is also on-going. This is particularly the case in terms of the new variant and the organisation is following the pre-determined strategy.

Where possible and in accordance with operational requirements and risk assessments, employees are working from home with agile working at office sites as required, with social distancing measures in place. However, there has been an increase in the requirement for staff in Children's Social Care to attend at office sites with appropriate risk assessments being undertaken. Advice to staff generally is that working from home is to continue as was before.

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 is being taken where appropriate via Microsoft Teams.

Operational Teams appreciate the need for sensitive advice given the pressures on Employees and the Authority.

Pay & Grading and Establishment Control Team

Job evaluation is undertaken relative to all Council and School posts for new or revised roles and relative to any operational and service reviews to maximise efficiencies as part of restructuring

Agenda Item 6

exercises across the Council. Team members are involved in service reviews and work to support transformational proposals and potential changes to service delivery.

The Establishment Control team are responsible for building any revised structures and changes to reporting hierarchies into the Councils operating systems. The team members have been heavily involved in the project of implementing the new iTrent Payroll and HR system. The Managers Self Service (MSS) module has been issued to Sefton Central managers, with the exception of Children's services (which is awaiting a full review of structure) and consequently managers should be able to access all their direct reports. Queries relative to managerial hierarchy stemming from the implementation of the new iTrent system have been raised with the Establishment Control team who will investigate these and make any amendments to the structure as appropriate. Discussions are ongoing with members of the iTrent project team and Establishment control in respect of methodology for managing and maintaining employee data within iTrent going forward.

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 are effectively maintained.

Establishment Control review safeguarding checks held against posts e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service, 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 team manage the Matrix contract relative to the recruitment of Agency workers. Agency recruitment is currently at an all-time high to deal with the demands across Children's 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. A review of the sickness absence system is ongoing with officers from ICT coordinating the link between the sickness Absence feeder system with the new iTrent payroll and HR system. The link between the two systems has resulted in officers from the team having to manually input 1000s on lines of data to the Sickness Absence Feeder system to ensure that both systems work in synergy.

The JE officer working with colleagues from ICT to implement the required link between the JE database and the iTrent system. This matter is still in progress and has not yet been finalised. In addition, the JE officer is working with officers from the iTrent project team relative to the application of JE numbers within iTrent.

Transactional HR Payroll & Pension (THRP) Services

THRP went live in the new system (MHR iTrent) in a staggered approach in July and August 2021. They have now processed September 2021 to January 2022 pay and are currently processing February pay.

There were issues with some of the processes in the new system, 3rd party payments and Monthly Data Collection (MDC) for Teachers Pension and these are now mainly resolved. There are still

Agenda Item 6

issues with Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) MDC which we are working with MHR and Merseyside Pension Fund to resolve.

The staff are still learning the new system are still working extremely hard and long hours to ensure all staff are paid on time and have provided some training to colleagues in HR Operational Services and Finance.

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.

Employee Self Service (ESS) has been rolled out to the majority of employees, for viewing of payslips and to amend address, bank details etc. and paper payslips have been produced for staff who are unable to access the Internet.

Claiming expenses via ESS and approved via Manager Self Service (MSS) is now live and being promoted to staff to use.

The team are currently looking at Year End Processing, Teachers Pensions Monthly data collection (MDC) moving to Monthly Contribution Reconciliation (MCR) from 1st April 2022 and the Local Government pay award from 1st April 2021 which is still to be agreed.

Occupational Health

Health Unit

1. During December 2021 and January 2022, a total of 113 referrals for SMBC employees were made to the Health Unit. This is approximately 35% more than the same period 12 months previously.
2. The majority of referrals during this period were from Education Excellence (47.8%), Locality Services (12.4%) and Adult Social Care (11.5%). As usual the main reasons were stress and mental health related (53.9%), chronic medical illness (17.7%) and musculoskeletal (12.4%).
3. Services provided via the Health Unit continue to be provided by a mixture of telephone and video consultations and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

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 booked in some briefing sessions in December for the **Level 6 Occupational Therapy Apprenticeship Degree**. An existing employee based in Adult Social Care met the pre-requisites and was successful at internal interview stage. The applicant is currently undergoing the universities assessment procedures and will more than likely commence the course from 1st March 2022.

We commenced a procurement exercise in September 2021 using the YPO Framework. The re-procurement will identify apprenticeship training providers to deliver a range of apprenticeship standards (qualifications), to meet the Council's on-going business/organisational requirements.

Agenda Item 6

The procurement exercise will be completed by end of February 2022 and new providers will be appointed/ready to deliver apprenticeship qualifications from 1st April 2022.

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:

- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** training delivery is going well. To date, we have trained 66 Sefton Council and schools' staff and have arranged for a further 26 sessions to be delivered from 1st April 2022. We were also allocated some funding from Public Health to offer one free place on MHFA to all Sefton schools and private nurseries from January 2022.
- **My Sefton My Space Performance Development Review (PDR) template, Employee Preparation Guide and the Conversation Tool** was launched on Monday 9th August, followed by **eLearning for Staff and Managers eLearning**. The eLearning will help staff get the most out of the new PDR process including how to have an authentic conversation with others. To date, 247 staff have completed the staff eLearning and 136 managers have completed the manager's course.
- Sefton's **Training Needs Analysis (TNA)** was launched on the 5th October 2021 to capture learning and development needs for all staff/service areas from 1st April 2022. TNA submissions are being reviewed and will help us to plan and commission training programmes that are specific to each individual service area.

Workforce/Organisational Development

Currently supporting Children's Social Care to deliver on a number of identified improvements following the recent Ofsted Inspection, this includes the development of a People's Workforce Development Strategy and a refreshed induction booklet/guidance. We are also involved in the Council of 2023 programme, have launched the new PDR process called My Sefton, My Space and are preparing to launch an Induction eLearning programme for new starters joining the organisation.

We're developing a refreshed Adult and Children's Social Care progression policy to enable Social Workers to work towards Experienced / Senior Social Worker status. This can take up to 12 months to allow for the Social Worker to build experience.

We delivered a Culture session to SLB members to explore our culture and our teams from different perspectives (organisational, own peer group, service areas) and looking to the future which included the positive elements of Sefton's culture now. We are planning to replicate these sessions with Senior Managers from 1st April 2022.

Strategic Support Business Intelligence

The Business Intelligence team is 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. A priority for the service is the redevelopment of reports and provision of information for Children's Social Care, **Page 91** the ongoing service review and Ofsted

Agenda Item 6

inspection preparedness, whilst also addressing the increasing demands for data from the Adults Social Care for inspection preparedness.

The service continues to provide regular analysis of Covid-19 pandemic data, including specifically the immunisation take-up, whilst also continuing to respond to government requests for information (e.g., submission of vulnerable children & young people returns to the DfE).

In the last quarter the Service has begun to refresh the JSNA chapters Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) (sefton.gov.uk) , the Sefton People and Place Profile <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/media/1061/seftonpeopleandplaceprofile.pdf>, Sefton Ward profiles Borough & Ward Profiles (sefton.gov.uk) and the Family Wellbeing Centre profiles Site Search (sefton.gov.uk) .

The team is supporting the Integrated Care System (ICS) and leading on Population Health Management workstream.

Progress continues with the implementation of the Council's new enterprise data warehouse platform, which will enable big data analytics. Staff are being trained on the new tools and the team in working with the ICT Client and Agilisys to consider the most appropriate deployment of Power B.I. reporting and interactive visualisation software for creating reports and dashboards. However, with increasing demands capacity in the Business Intelligence team remains a concern.

The Service continues to support consultation and engagement activities, respond to complaints and subject access requests in a timely manner and provide information, advice, and guidance across the Council on matters relating to information governance and data protection.

The project to digitise the Council's historic paper records continues at pace, with work ongoing to move records stored at disparate locations to the Council's contracted 3rd party secured storage provider, taking opportunity to destroy legacy records and digitise those that are not required to be kept in original paper format.

Strategic Support

The Strategic Support team continue to support the delivery of COVID testing in the borough, including surge testing and testing in schools where required.

The team leads on the promotion and use of accessible information and advocate numbers continue to grow in the workplace. Workshops with Members have continued and further workshops are being planned throughout the year.

As part of the support provided to the Demand Management programme of work, the team has been providing project support to Adult Social Care for Day Opportunities and are now reviewing the feedback from the recent consultation exercise.

The team is also providing support to Children's Services around their staffing structure, inspection readiness and planning for Foster Care service developments. The team is supporting with consultations for the Education Strategy and the Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency Statement.

Communications

The Communications team continue to be at the heart of all activity across the Council and is 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.

Agenda Item 6

The team has worked closely with ICT and Agilisys colleagues to progress the website reskin project resulting in the launch of the new design on 26th January. The team is developing a forward plan for further enhancements, additional functionality and evolving design of the new site.

Under the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018, all public sector bodies are required to provide evidence of accessibility compliance for all websites and mobile applications. Therefore, the Communications team commissioned external web accessibility auditors, All Able, to carry out a full accessibility audit of the new site, assessing compliance against the WCAG 2.1 AA criteria. This was done on 31st January, with a draft report made available on 1st February. This identified 33 accessibility “failures”, down from 55 in April 2021. However, just 3 of the 33 issues identified were considered to be high priority requiring urgent attention.

An updated accessibility statement is being written, with support from All Able, to address how the Council intends to remedy these failures. The work required will be factored into the development plan with ICT and Agilisys for the coming months.

The Communications Team have been providing significant support to colleagues in Children’s Services; mostly focused on social worker recruitment marketing and foster carer recruitment marketing. Two campaigns were launched in January, “Everyday Angels” fostering Campaign, and “Make A Difference” social worker recruitment campaign. Already these have delivered positive results, and have received overwhelmingly positive feedback, and are starting to have an impact; with 38 prospective job applicants attending the first ever virtual recruitment fair on 9th February, organised and hosted by the communications officer.

The 2022/23 budget is currently working its way through the sign off process, with the Communications Team pulling together key messages for a range of stakeholders in relation to any potential changes to Council Tax and/or Business Rates.

The team is working closely with colleagues in Democratic Services, preparing for the upcoming local elections in May. Changes are being made to the website so that elections information, and results, can be more clearly displayed and easily understood.

Procurement

The Procurement Team continues to play a key role in many initiatives across the Council. The proposal to invest in Procurement resources is currently being progressed through Cabinet and Council.

Social Value continues to be a core part of the procurement process which is being further developed to add more value and to ensure these processes are embedded into our contracts, with suppliers being held accountable to their commitments and delivery

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Agenda Item 7

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 1 March 2022
Subject:	Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity at Work and Sickness Absence		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To provide a report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of levels of discipline, grievance, dignity at work and sickness absence within the Council (excluding schools).

Recommendation(s):

The Overview & Scrutiny - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Receive the report in terms of discipline, grievance, dignity at work and sickness levels.
- (2) Note the latest information in respect of ongoing work.
- (3) Note the initiatives currently being implemented.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The recommendations reflect the request made by Overview & Scrutiny – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services Committee for information.

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

N/A

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

Agenda Item 7

(A) Revenue Costs - N/A

(B) Capital Costs – N/A

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
N/A	
Legal Implications:	
N/A	
Equality Implications:	
There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
<p>For more information contact julia.thorpe@sefton.gov.uk or stephanie.jukes@sefton.gov.uk (tel. 0151 934 4552).</p>	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Achieving the correct application of procedures, facilitating the protection of the most vulnerable.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: N/A
Commission, broker and provide core services: Absences can have a detrimental effect upon core service delivery
Place – leadership and influencer: Correct workforce allocation allows leadership and influencing
Drivers of change and reform: N/A
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: N/A
Greater income for social investment: N/A
Cleaner Greener N/A

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6724/22.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4724/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

N/A

Implementation Date for the Decision

N/A

Contact Officer:	Marie Lambert
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 3388
Email Address:	marie.lambert@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Annex 1 – Breakdown of Disciplinary, Grievances and Dignity at Work complaints for the period 1st October 2020 to 30th September 2021

Annex 2 – Sickness Absence by Service Area for 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 This report provides Members with an update on the levels of disciplinary, grievance, dignity at work and sickness absence within the Authority (excluding schools).

1.2. The management of the workforce is an important activity to ensure outcomes for our communities are achieved and to ensure that the workforce is appropriately managed and motivated.

2. Disciplinary, Grievance and Dignity at Work

2.1 Annex 1 provides a breakdown of formal cases from October 2020 to September 2021.

2.2 The organisation enjoys a comparatively good level of cases and this reflects on the whole, both the good overall industrial relations environment, the partnership approach that is undertaken and also the work undertaken within departments.

2.3 A lot of effort is taken to avoid formal procedures where possible.

Agenda Item 7

3. Suspensions

- 3.1 In the period October 2020 to September 2021, 6 employees were suspended from duty (not including schools).
- 3.2 Suspension takes place in order to facilitate an investigation into matters which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct. Some investigations will also include a potential referral to a professional body such as the Health Care and Professionals Council. Personnel continue to press departments to resource investigations appropriately.
- 3.3 Whether a suspension is appropriate will be a decision taken by a Senior Manager with the advice of the Personnel Department.

4. Sickness Absence - 6 Month Period 1st April 2020 to 30th Sept 2021

- 4.1 During the current year the Council has changed its HR/Payroll system. The information below covers the first 2 quarters to provide 6 months' worth of the most recent data based on the new system. Going forward this report will resume to providing data for a full 12 months as previously reported.

FTE Available Days	Total Days Sickness Absence Long & Short Term	Percentage Sickness Absence	Council Set Target Percentage
356,593	18,370	5.15% (1.72% Short Term Sickness Absence 3.43% Long Term Sickness Absence)	4.0% (2.2% ST target 1.8% LT Target)
Figures Exclude Schools			

- 4.2 For comparison the data covering the same 6 month period for the previous year was 5.66% overall.
- 4.3 Support is provided across all service areas.

Reasons for Referral to Health Unit 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021

Reason for Referral to Health Unit	% Referrals (excludes school referrals)
Mental Health	47.30%
Musculoskeletal	19.50%
Medical Illness	19.00%
Bereavement	4.80%

Agenda Item 7

Reproductive	2.90%
Infections	2.40%
Post Operative Recovery	2.40%

Service Area Referrals to Health Unit	% Referrals
Adult Social Care	19.50%
Children's Social Care	12.50%
Communities	21.90%
Corporate Resources & Customer Services	11.20%
Economic Growth & Housing	4.80%
Education Excellence (non schools)	1.70%
Public Health & Wellbeing	1.70%
Highways & Public Protection	4.80%
Operational In House Services	20.70%
Strategic Support	1.20%

- 4.4 The above figures clearly demonstrate that mental health related issues are continuing to require support through the Health Unit, including for employees who are not absent from work.
- 4.5 Communities, Operational In-House Services and Adult Social Care remain the three departments (with the exception of schools) with the highest number of referrals to the Health Unit.

Initiatives

- 4.6 Strategic Leadership Board continues to monitor and encourage the reduction of levels of both short and long-term absence.
- 4.7 Sickness reports are provided to Heads of Service on a quarterly basis and on an ad hoc basis on request.
- 4.8 Managers are encouraged to manage absence in accordance with Council policy and procedures and to use the online testing package to fill any knowledge gaps. Briefing sessions and targeted training is arranged as required from the results of the online testing.
- 4.9 Targeted support will continue within departments to help with sickness absence. Since March 2020, support has been primarily in respect of advice and guidance regarding the coronavirus pandemic and this is continuing. Support through the Occupational Health Unit continues to be provided through telephone consultations, including mental health support and there is a FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) page on the Council's intranet on Covid-19 Health and Well-being.
- 4.10 The Personnel Team work closely with departments providing information and advice and appropriate levels of support, advising managers on informal

Agenda Item 7

processes and assisting managers with the more formal and complex levels of sickness absence management. The Personnel team continue to monitor sickness absence and will report to the Chief Personnel Officer any issues or trends that are cause for concern.

Managing Absence

- 4.11 The Council has a Sickness Absence Policy which operates in a partnership with trade unions. Long term absence is being dealt with in accordance with overall business need and short-term absence is operated in accordance with recognised and agreed trigger points. All policies, where applicable, are subject to modification in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.12 Trade unions and management recognise the need for correct management of sickness absence to provide appropriate support to lessen the demands on employees who remain at work.

Agenda Item 7

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Agenda Item 7

ANNEX 2

Sick Absence by Service Area for Q1&Q2 01/04/2021 to 30/09/2021 (6 month period)

Sefton Council Sickness Absence 01/04/2021 - 30/09/2021

