

Overview  
& Scrutiny



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

DATE: Tuesday 12th September, 2023

TIME: 6.30 pm

VENUE: Committee Room, Town Hall Bootle

**Member**

Councillor  
Councillor Bradshaw (Chair)  
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor D'Albuquerque  
Councillor Evans  
Councillor Grace  
Councillor Killen  
Councillor McGinnity  
Councillor McKee  
Councillor Murphy  
Councillor Sir Ron Watson

**Substitute**

Councillor  
Councillor Harrison  
Councillor Carragher  
Councillor Shaw  
Councillor Shaw  
Councillor Catie Page  
Councillor Myers  
Councillor Thomas  
Councillor Roche  
Councillor Christine Maher  
Councillor Prendergast

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Paul Fraser  
Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Telephone: 0151 934 2068  
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**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.

# AGENDA

## 1. Apologies for Absence

## 2. Declarations of Interest

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

Where a Member discloses a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, he/she must withdraw from the meeting room, 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 - 10)

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023

## 4. Customer Contact Centre Activity - Presentation

To receive a presentation from the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services

## 5. Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity at Work and Sickness Absence

(Pages 11 - 20)

Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services

## 6. Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – September Update

(Pages 21 - 56)

Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services

## 7. Executive/Scrutiny Protocol

(Pages 57 - 74)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

- 8. Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan** (Pages 75 - 104)  
Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer
- 9. Cabinet Member Report - June 2023 to August 2023** (Pages 105 - 128)  
Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

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

MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL,  
SOUTHPORT  
ON TUESDAY 13TH JUNE, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Bradshaw (in the Chair)  
Councillors Evans, Grace, Christine Maher,  
McGinnity, McKee, Shaw and Sir Ron Watson

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Lappin

### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Councillor Bradshaw, welcomed Members to the first meeting of Sefton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) in the 2023/24 municipal year; especially welcomed Councillors Evans, McKee, Murphy and Sir Ron Watson as newly appointed members of the Committee; and expressed her thanks to Councillors Carlin, Robinson and Shaw and former Councillor Bennett for their help and involvement on the Committee during the previous year.

### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Byrom, D'Albuquerque, Killen and Murphy.

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

### 4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

### 5. DEBT MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that detailed the steps being taken to manage uncollected debt owed to the Council; indicating that the Audit and Governance Committee would be asked to recommence considering write-offs of bad debt over £10,000, with the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer reviewing requests under £10,000; and which provided an update on performance information relating to the Council's contracted Enforcement Agents.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 13TH JUNE, 2023

The report indicated that Sefton Council raised a significant proportion of its total income through local taxes and charges and had a duty to recover sums outstanding; that at a time of significant financial pressure for the Council, income collection was particularly important to ensure that valuable frontline services continued; that the management of this income was a key business area for the Council; and that the report sought to provide insight into the debt position and the risks associated with it.

The report also provided information on the Corporate Debt Policy, annual charges raised, current arrears outstanding, Council Tax and Business Rates collection performance, bad debt for write off including enforcement agent performance, bad debt provisions and future service enhancements.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the report was the Corporate Debt Policy – Revised May 2023.

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

- The management of debt relating to schemes supported by the Government
- The operation of the payment hotline that was available 24 hours a day 7 days a week
- The special payment arrangements which must be made with the agreement of the Council and could only be accepted by Direct Debit
- Regarding the Exceptional Hardship Payment Fund, who decided the criteria of “exceptional circumstances” when a claimant was seeking a reduction of their Council Tax with a discretionary award
- Did the Council have a percentage of debt write-off that it would not exceed
- The rate of increase in the amount of Sundry Debt as detailed in Table 3.2 of the report
- Was there a de minimis for pursuing council tax debt for example, if someone owed 80p would the formal process of writing to them take place

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report detailing the steps being taken to manage uncollected debt owed to the Council be noted;
- (2) it be noted that the Audit and Governance Committee would be asked to recommence reviewing requests to write-off bad debts over £10,000, with the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer reviewing requests under £10,000;
- (3) the information detailing the performance of the Council’s contracted Enforcement Agents up to 31st March 2023 be noted;

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and

- (4) the Corporate Debt Policy attached as Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

## **6. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that sought views on the draft Work Programme for 2023/24, the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee or by informal meetings of the Committee; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan; updated on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and sought views on training for Members on IT and cyber security in particular, during 2023/24.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (2) it be agreed that any future reviews during the year be dealt with by informal meetings of the Committee rather than via Working Groups; and consideration be given to the selection of a topic(s) for review at the next meeting of the Committee; and
- (3) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

## **7. WELFARE REFORM AND ANTI-POVERTY REFERENCE GROUP - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 33 of the meeting held on 10 January 2023 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:

- the cost-of-living crisis
- period poverty – a Sefton update
- Sustainable food
- Community pantry update
- Sefton child poverty launch event
- Sefton Council housing – cost-of-living challenges
- Warm hubs

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 13TH JUNE, 2023

- Emergency limited assistance scheme update

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

RESOLVED: That

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

## **8. CABINET MEMBER REPORT - FEBRUARY 2023 TO JUNE 2023**

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.

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

- The high volume of Cleansing related telephone calls received by the Customer Services Contact Centre
- Calls received by the Customer Services Contact Centre in relation to voter ID requirements at the recent local elections
- Reference was made to the 18% of calls to the Customer Services Contact Centre that were abandoned
- The operation of the One Stop Shop from The Atkinson;
- With regard to taxi licensing, concern was expressed at the low number of "black hackney cab" vehicles operating in the Southport area; and that this could impact on residents needing to use such vehicles rather than saloon type hackney vehicles
- Elected Member attendance on courses as part of the Member Development Programme; and that the description of some courses being labelled "mandatory" was not helpful
- Reasons for the delays in finalising the audit of the 2021/2022 Statement of Accounts

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update report from the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be noted;
- (2) Councillor Lappin be thanked for her attendance at the meeting; and
- (3) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services be requested to make a presentation to the next meeting of the Committee on Customer Services Contact Centre related activity including:



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COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) - TUESDAY 13TH JUNE,  
2023

- What activities are undertaken
- How has this changed since Covid-19 pandemic
- What volumes go through
- other performance information
- Why is there a difference between activity at Bootle and Southport
- What channel shift activity is ongoing

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# Agenda Item 5

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity at Work and Sickness Absence		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	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

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**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

**(A) Revenue Costs – N/A**

**(B) Capital Costs – N/A**

**Implications of the Proposals:**

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b>	
N/A	
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	
N/A	
<b>Equality Implications:</b>	
There are no equality implications.	
<b>Impact on Children and Young People: No</b>	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
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

**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
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## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7337/23) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5537/23) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

N/A

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Marie Lambert
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 3388
Email Address:	Marie.lambert@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

## 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 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.

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

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## 3. Suspensions

- 3.1 In the period April – July 2023, 5 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. Disciplinary

- 4.1 During the period April – July 2023, there have been 11 disciplinary investigations as per the table below:

Department	No. of Investigations	Outcome
Adult Social Care	1	Case on-going
Children's Social Care	1	Moved to medical suspension
Communities - (Leisure)	6	1 Case did not proceed 5 Resignations
Operational In House Services – Cemeteries	1	Employee Resigned
Operational In House Services – Cleansing	2	Cases on-going

## 5. Grievances

- 5.1 During the period April – August 2023, there have been 2 Grievances as follows:

Department	Outcome
Children's Social Care	Resolved
Operational In-House Services – Sefton Arc	On-going

## 6. Dignity at Work Complaints (DAW)

- 6.1 During the period April - August 2023, there has been 1 DAW complaint as follows:-

Department	Outcome
Operational In-House Services – Sefton Arc	On-going

## 7 Council Sickness Absence – Q4 and year end 2022/23

- 7.1 This report contains statistical data for Q4 and year end of 2022/23. The information details 'Short Term', 'Long Term' and 'All Absence' along with previous year's figures for comparison purposes. Sickness percentages are calculated as

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a proportion of the total FTE days available. Figures are in bold if the percentage is above the Council's Preferred target.

**7.2** Assistant Directors are presented with their own service area information each quarter. The information presented is dependent on all service areas maintaining and updating sickness absence records on the Absence Feeder in an accurate and timely manner.

**7.3 Service Area Analysis – Quarter 4 (January to March 2023)**

**Short Term Sickness Absence**

Short term sickness absence is defined as absence lasting less than 4 weeks for any single episode. The Council's long-standing target for short term absence is 2.2%.

<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2020 %</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2021 %</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2022 %</b>	<b>SHORT TERM SICKNESS Q4 2023 %</b>
Adult Social Care	<b>2.47</b>	1.99	<b>3.31</b>	<b>2.59</b>
Children's Social Care	<b>2.45</b>	1.41	<b>2.41</b>	1.51
Communities	<b>2.38</b>	2.18	<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.55</b>
Corporate Resources & Customer Services	1.85	1.51	2.03	1.30
Economic Growth & Housing	2.02	1.41	<b>2.33</b>	1.36
Education Excellence	<b>2.38</b>	0.67	2.07	1.73
Highways & Public Protection	1.97	1.43	1.13	0.66
Operational In-House Services	<b>2.75</b>	1.91	<b>4.56</b>	<b>3.15</b>
Public Health & Wellbeing	0.16	<b>2.65</b>	<b>3.13</b>	0.41
Strategic Support	<b>2.76</b>	2.14	2.03	0.96

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All, except 3 service areas, (based on recordings input into the system) remain under the Council target of 2.2% for short term sickness absence for Q4 for the year 2023. This is an improvement on the previous year's Q4. The year 2021 was the Covid pandemic year.

## Long Term Sickness Absence

Long term sickness absence is defined as absence lasting more than 4 weeks for any single episode. The Council's long-standing target for long term absence is 1.8%.

<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2020 %</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2021 %</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2022 %</b>	<b>LONG TERM SICKNESS Q4 2023 %</b>
Adult Social Care	<b>4.00</b>	<b>5.27</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>3.94</b>
Children's Social Care	<b>7.56</b>	<b>5.74</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>3.31</b>
Communities	<b>4.52</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>3.63</b>
Corporate Resources & Customer Services	<b>3.13</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>2.74</b>	1.61
Economic Growth & Housing	<b>2.70</b>	1.04	<b>1.84</b>	0.53
Education Excellence	<b>4.53</b>	<b>2.53</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>4.62</b>
Highways & Public Protection	<b>4.39</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>2.02</b>	1.56
Operational In-House Services	<b>3.66</b>	<b>4.74</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>3.46</b>
Public Health & Wellbeing	0.00	0.00	<b>4.67</b>	0.00
Strategic Support	<b>8.54</b>	<b>5.58</b>	<b>5.68</b>	0.00

5 service areas have a long-term sickness percentage over the Councils target of 1.8% for the Q4 of 2023. However, this is an improvement on the previous three year's Q4 figures.

## **7.4 'All' Sickness Absence Q4 – Short and Long Combined**

The Council's long-standing target for 'all' sickness is 4%



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<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2020 %</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2021 %</b>	<b>COMPARISON Q4 2022 %</b>	<b>ALL SICKNESS Q4 2023 %</b>
Adult Social Care	<b>6.47%</b>	<b>7.26</b>	<b>6.82</b>	<b>6.53</b>
Children's Social Care	<b>10.00%</b>	<b>7.15</b>	<b>7.41</b>	<b>4.82</b>
Communities	<b>6.90%</b>	<b>5.85</b>	<b>6.77</b>	<b>6.18</b>
Corporate Resources & Customer Services	<b>4.98%</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>4.78</b>	2.91
Economic Growth & Housing	<b>4.72%</b>	2.46	<b>4.17</b>	1.89
Education Excellence	<b>6.90%</b>	3.20	<b>4.43</b>	<b>6.36</b>
Highways & Public Protection	<b>6.36%</b>	<b>4.98</b>	3.15	2.23
Operational In-House Services	<b>6.41%</b>	<b>6.65</b>	<b>8.75</b>	<b>6.61</b>
Public Health & Wellbeing	0.16%	2.65	<b>7.81</b>	0.41
Strategic Support	<b>11.30%</b>	<b>7.72</b>	<b>7.72</b>	0.96

For Q4 there were 5 service areas with a percentage above the 4% Council target. The remaining 5 areas being under the 4%. All but 1 area have an improved Q4 figure compared to previous Q4 figures. The comparison over years demonstrates the fluctuating nature of long-term (and short term) sickness absence.

## 7.5 Year End Data for 2022/23

The year end position for individual service areas for 2022/23;

<b>SERVICE AREA</b>	<b>YEAR END 2022/23</b>
Adult Social Care	<b>7.17%</b>
Children's Social Care	<b>4.86%</b>
Communities	<b>5.69%</b>
Corporate Resources & Customer Services	3.39%
Economic Growth & Housing	2.74%
Education Excellence	<b>5.06%</b>
Highways & Public Protection	2.61%

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Operational In-House Services	<b>6.78%</b>
Public Health & Wellbeing	1.85%
Strategic Support	3.89%

The 2022/23 year end position for Sefton as a whole, excluding schools, with comparisons to previous years is as follows;

<b>Council All Service Areas Combined (exc schools)</b>	<b>Short Term Sickness %</b>	<b>Long Term Sickness %</b>	<b>Overall %</b>
22/23	2.08	<b>3.21</b>	<b>5.29</b>
21/22	2.08	<b>3.85</b>	<b>5.93</b>
20/21	1.25	<b>4.06</b>	<b>5.31</b>
19/20	1.82	<b>4.47</b>	<b>6.29</b>
18/19	1.92	<b>4.34</b>	<b>6.26</b>
17/18	1.88	<b>3.87</b>	<b>5.75</b>
16/17	1.89	<b>3.86</b>	<b>5.75</b>
15/16	1.92	<b>4.19</b>	<b>6.11</b>

It should be noted that any omissions to recording system will impact these figures. In addition, the increase in agency workers will impact on the figures provided for the departments concerned as agency workers sickness absence is NOT recorded on the Councils Sickness Absence figures. The year end figure of 5.29% is an improvement on previous years bearing in mind the above comments.

Assistant Directors are provided with the figures for their service area on a quarterly bases and are asked to ensure that:

- sickness absence records are maintained in a timely manner using all the reporting data available to them within the system fully and accurately.
- managers keep their skills refreshed with online sickness absence training and effectively manage employee absences.
- health and wellbeing is discussed on a regular basis during one-to-one sessions
- managing absence is prioritised seeking appropriate advice from Corporate Personnel or the Health Unit as required.

## **8 Initiatives undertaken by the Council**

- The Strategic Leadership Board continues to monitor and encourage the reduction of levels of both short and long-term absence.
- Sickness reports are provided to Assistant Directors on a quarterly basis and on an ad hoc basis on request.

- 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, following the results of online testing.
- Targeted support continues within departments to help with the management of sickness absence.
- The Personnel Team work closely with departments providing information and advice and appropriate levels of support, advising managers on informal processes, and assisting managers with the more complex and formal levels of sickness absence management.
- The Personnel team continue to monitor sickness absence and report to the Chief Personnel Officer any issues or trends that are cause for concern.
- The Occupational Health Unit provide Counselling and CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) on a face-to-face basis. In addition, a specific type of CBT known as Eye Movement Desensitisation, is also available if declared appropriate by the OH physicians. Telephone and video call appointments can be arranged if that is preferred method for individual.
- Physiotherapy appointments are also arranged through the OH Unit as are pension assessments for ill health, ill health pension appeals and deferred pension cases.

## **9 Managing Absence**

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.

- 9.1** 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.

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Tuesday 12 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – September Update		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>			
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	Yes	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	Yes
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To inform **Overview and Scrutiny** of:

- 1) The current position relating to the 2023/24 revenue budget.
- 2) The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2023/24.
- 3) The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of July 2023:
  - 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.
- 4) The latest performance management information for 2023/24.

## Recommendation(s):

**Overview and Scrutiny** is recommended to:

### Revenue Budget

- 1) Note the current position relating to the 2023/24 revenue budget.
- 2) Note the actions being taken to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced position.
- 3) Note the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2023/24 revenue budget and acknowledge that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed, and remedial actions put in place, to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved.

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- 4) Note the requests for specific supplementary revenue estimates funded from additional grant funding referred to in the report.

## **Capital Programme**

- 5) Note the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 8.1).
- 6) Note the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 July 2023 of £7.195m (paragraph 8.16); the latest full year forecast is £63.999m (paragraph 8.17).
- 7) Note the requests for specific supplementary capital estimates funded from additional grant funding referred to in the report.
- 8) Note that the Council will procure an updated Stock Condition Survey for Crosby Library.
- 9) Note 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 (paragraphs 8.21-8.23).

## **Performance**

- 10) Note the latest position relating to key performance measures.

## **Reasons for the Recommendation(s):**

To ensure Overview and Scrutiny are informed of the current position in relation to the 2023/24 revenue budget.

To provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2023/24 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

To ensure Overview and Scrutiny are informed of key performance information.

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

N/A

## **What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

### **(A) Revenue Costs**

The report indicates that for 2023/24 an overspend position of £6.782m is currently forecast and that further work is being undertaken to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced position. Further

mitigating actions may be required to ensure the Council returns to a balanced forecast outturn position-if these actions are not available within the approved budget, existing reserves and balances may need to be used.

**(B) Capital Costs**

The Council’s capital budget in 2023/24 is £64.106m. As at the end of July 2023 expenditure of £7.195m has been incurred and a full year outturn of £63.999m is currently forecast.

**Implications of the Proposals:**

<p><b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b>                  Currently an overspend position of £6.782m is currently forecast for 2023/24, pending further work to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies. Further mitigating actions may be required to ensure the Council returns to a balanced forecast outturn position. However, it should be noted that significant pressure and risk remains in a number of areas, particularly relating to Children’s Social Care. If budgets experience further demand and inflationary pressure during the remainder of the year further corresponding savings or financial contributions will need to be identified and approved by members.</p>								
<p><b>Legal Implications:</b>                  None</p>								
<p><b>Equality Implications:</b>                   There are no equality implications.</p>								
<p><b>Impact on Children and Young People: Yes</b>                   The report highlights the current financial position relating to services provided for Children and Young People.</p>								
<p><b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>                   The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a positive impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a neutral impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a negative impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table> <p>The allocations of capital funding outlined in section 8 may be spent on projects that will have a high climate change impact as they could relate to new build, rebuild, refurbishment, retrofit and demolition proposals. Environmental consideration will be taken into account when specific projects are designed and tendered – which will help to mitigate negative impacts.</p>	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	No
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	No							

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## **Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:**

Effective Financial Management and the development and delivery of sustainable annual budgets support each theme of the Councils Core Purpose.

<b><u>Protect the most vulnerable:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Facilitate confident and resilient communities:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Commission, broker and provide core services:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Place – leadership and influencer:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Drivers of change and reform:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Greater income for social investment:</u></b>
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See comment above
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<b><u>Cleaner Greener:</u></b>
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See comment above
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## **What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

### **(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources & Customer Services is the author of the report (FD 7348/23)

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD 5548/23).

### **(B) External Consultations**

N/A

## **Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Paul Reilly
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**Appendices:**

The following appendix is attached to this report:

APPENDIX A – Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2025/26  
APPENDIX B – Performance Information 2023/24 – Quarter 1

**Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 2 March 2023, Members approved the Budget for the financial year 2023/24. This budget was developed throughout the preceding nine months and took account of all known issues. Within that report, and as with previous years, the inherent financial risk within the budget, especially with respect to Children's Services, was identified. This was further reflected within the reserves' strategy for the Council, as reported in the Robustness Report also presented to Budget Council.
- 1.2 This report is the second of the Council's monthly budget monitoring reports and updates the revenue forecast outturn position for all services, including the initial pressures that have materialised since the budget was set.
- 1.3 The report also outlines the current position regarding key income streams for the Authority, namely Council Tax and Business Rates. Variations against expected receipts in these two areas will also affect the Council's financial position in future years.
- 1.4 The capital section of the report informs Members of the latest estimate of capital expenditure for 2023/24 and forecast expenditure for 2024/25 and 2025/26. The capital budget to date is presented in paragraph 8.1. Paragraphs 8.2 to 8.19 review progress of the capital programme, including additional capital schemes. Finally, paragraphs 8.21 to 8.23 confirm that there are adequate levels of resources available to finance the capital programme.
- 1.5 As previously reported, this report will include performance information and key risk management areas on a quarterly basis. Due to the timing of the Cabinet meeting in July the performance information for the first quarter of 2023/24 was not yet available so is included within this report. The Corporate Risk Register areas at the end of the first quarter were presented to Cabinet in July within the Financial and Corporate Performance 2022/23 report.

## 2. Revenue Budget 2023/24 – Forecast Outturn Position as at the end of July 2023

- 2.1 Members are provided with updates of the Council's forecast financial revenue position each month during the financial year from July.
- 2.1 It is acknowledged that this is only the second full budget monitoring report of the year so forecasts will include a number of assumptions on anticipated expenditure and income for the remainder of the year that will invariably be the subject of change. Forecasts will continue to be refined and a full review of all budgets and assumptions will be undertaken to refine the forecasts further for the Mid-Year update report that will be presented Cabinet in November. In addition, that report will outline remedial actions to be implemented to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position, potentially including the adoption of financial principles used in previous years.
- 2.2 As at the end of July 2023, the forecast outturn shows a net overspend of **£6.782m**, the majority of which relates to potential additional pressure within Children's Social

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Care and the potential impact of the local government pay award. It should be noted that the majority of services are reporting a balanced position or are implementing local remedial actions to return a balanced position at this stage. As with all organisations at this time, the Council is operating in a very challenging financial environment. However, it is vital that the Council achieves a balanced forecast outturn position to ensure its financial sustainability. Proposed actions to meet any forecast overspend will be reported to future Cabinet meetings.

2.3 The table below highlights the variations across services that make up the £6.782m forecast overspend:

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Variance to June</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Services</b>				
Strategic Management	3.906	3.941	0.068	0.033
Adult Social Care	110.598	110.598	0.000	0.000
Children's Social Care	80.081	85.042	4.791	-0.170
Communities	11.551	11.551	0.000	0.000
Corporate Resources	5.972	5.972	0.000	0.000
Economic Growth & Housing	6.409	6.409	0.000	0.000
Education Excellence	15.305	15.629	0.376	0.052
Health & Wellbeing	19.620	19.620	0.000	0.000
Highways & Public Protection	10.672	10.672	0.000	0.000
Operational In-House Services	16.160	16.840	0.530	-0.150
Energy Costs	4.200	4.200	0.000	0.000
Additional Pay Award Provision	4.333	5.833	1.500	0.000
<b>Total Service Net Expenditure</b>	<b>288.807</b>	<b>296.307</b>	<b>7.265</b>	<b>-0.235</b>
Council Wide Budgets	14.203	13.872	-0.483	-0.152
Levies	36.193	36.193	0.000	0.000
General Government Grants	(84.086)	(84.086)	0.000	0.000
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>255.117</b>	<b>262.286</b>		
<b><u>Forecast Year-End Deficit</u></b>			<b><u>6.782</u></b>	<b><u>-0.387</u></b>

2.4 The key areas relating to the outturn position are as follows:

- **Adult Social Care** – The current forecast assumes that the Adult Social Care budget will break-even during 2023/24. However, there are a number of significant assumptions and uncertainties that could impact on this position before the year-end. The service has also committed to a number of efficiencies and savings that amount to £5.7m, in order to meet the savings approved as part of the approved

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2023/24 budget plus additional ones to meet the additional budgetary pressures arising from the increases in provider fees approved at Cabinet meetings in June 2023. The achievement of these savings will be carefully monitored throughout the year.

- **Children's Social Care** – The current forecast for the service shows a potential overspend of £4.791m. However, there are a number of significant assumptions and uncertainties that could impact on this position before the year-end.

Members will be aware that the 2023/24 approved budget included an additional £21m of investment in the service based on the requirement for additional staffing (including some temporary funding for additional agency costs whilst more permanent staff are recruited to, including International Social Workers and from staff coming through the social work academy) as well as additional resources to reflect the number of packages at the time, some potential growth as well as resource for inflationary pressures.

The current forecast for staffing is that it will broadly remain within budget as the impact of the initiatives above start to have an impact. This will require robust monitoring through the year. There are a clear set of assumptions driving this forecast in terms of when expensive managed / project teams will leave the Council as new staff are onboarded from the International Social Worker cohort and the academy. If these assumptions change then the forecast will be revised.

Certain areas of accommodation and support packages are forecast to overspend, partly due to additional packages in the late part of 2022/23 and early part of 2023/24. As mentioned in reports last year, packages initially have been at a higher cost than previously seen. However, recently improvements in practice have resulted in more children being placed in more appropriate settings at a lower cost. This is expected to continue throughout the year. Work is currently being undertaken to review forecasts for all types of care settings based on a number of children being in higher cost settings for shorter periods, which is expected to significantly impact on the forecast. In addition, where numbers and costs of Children with Disabilities has increased, specialist work is being undertaken to ensure health are making the appropriate contributions to the cost of care.

This is the key aspect of this financial forecast- the service is stabilising and as this takes place the review of placements will also be undertaken. At present the assumption is that all support, unless known otherwise, will continue for the whole of the financial year and for a number of placements this will not be the case. Senior managers are reviewing these, and the forecast will be updated accordingly in addition to the health contributions that are due.

As part of this work a further review of demand will be undertaken. This again will inform the forecast- the service is currently starting to stabilise and that will inform that estimate. Members will recall that in the budget reports it was advised that a tolerance of 5% on the budget could be expected based on advice from the DfE commissioner- based on the service budget that would amount to £4m. This current forecast is slightly higher than that at present before the outcome of the additional reviews is to be built in.

An update on these reviews, and their impact on the forecast, will be provided to the next Cabinet meeting. In considering this forecast, work will also be undertaken to determine if any of this pressure is temporary or permanent in nature and needs reflecting in future budget setting processes.

- **Corporate Resources** – At first quarter review the service is forecasting a balanced position. Based on the latest information, functions within the service are forecasting an underspend of £0.497m. However, there is pressure within the ICT budget from inflation on contracts that is in excess of the provision made and a loss of income from School SLAs as a result of a change in the contractual arrangement enforced by the provider for which the Council has no control. These two pressures amount to £0.600m, meaning an initial pressure of £0.103m exists. As stated, all services are underspent, and additional cost control will be required between now and the year end to deliver that balanced position and this position will be updated at mid-year review.
- **Economic Growth and Housing** – The service is showing a balanced position. However, based on the latest information, functions within the service are forecasting an overspend of £0.611m, although the service are currently examining forecasts. Additional cost control will be required between now and the year end to deliver that balanced position and this position will be updated at mid-year review.
- **Education Excellence** – The current forecast shows a potential net overspend of £0.376m, which relates to the provision of additional SEND staff. The service are reviewing all forecasts to identify areas that may be able to offset this additional pressure and this position will be updated at mid-year review.
- **Operational In-House Services** The current forecast shows a potential overspend of £0.530m. This relates to a number of areas across the Service, but mainly in Catering and the security service. The service is reviewing all forecasts to identify areas that may be able to offset these additional pressures, including from recharging additional costs being incurred, and this position will be updated at mid-year review.
- **Additional Pay Award Provision** – The approved Base Budget included a provision for the 2023/234 pay award of around 4.5%. This was line with most other local authorities who had budgeted for similar amounts. The offer from the National Employers for local government services body is for a fixed increase of £1,925, with a minimum of 3.5% (similar to the increase in 2022/23). For Sefton, this equates to an increase in the pay bill of about 6.0% or an additional £1.500m above the amount included in the 2023/24 budget. It should be noted that this offer has been rejected by trade unions who have balloted their members on whether to undertake strike action.

### 3. Revenue Budget Summary 2023/24

- 3.1 An overspend of **£6.782m** is currently forecast. However, as mentioned in section 2, this is a forecast early in the financial year based on a number of uncertainties and assumptions. Additional work will be undertaken across service areas to refine the forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced budget position. In Children's Social Care forecasts will be refined to take into account the improvements in practice that have seen children being placed in

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more appropriate settings, as well as the anticipated reduction in the number of Looked After Children.

- 3.2 As mentioned, the Council must achieve an overall balanced position to ensure its financial sustainability. Once forecasts have been refined, if an overall forecast overspend remains a remedial action plan to meet the residual balance will need to be produced and presented to members for approval. This may include measures previously used by the Council to reduce budget pressures.

## 4. **Additional Revenue Grant Funding**

### **Market Sustainability Improvement Fund (MSIF): Workforce Fund**

- 4.1 On 28 July 2023, the government announced it is providing a further £570 million of ringfenced funding across 2023/24 and 2024/25 to local authorities to improve and increase adult social care provision, with a particular focus on workforce pay. The Market Sustainability Improvement Fund (MSIF): Workforce Fund will total £365m in 2023/24 and £205m in 2024/25.
- 4.2 Sefton will receive £2.319m from in 2023/24 with a potential to receive £1.493m in 2024/25 if allocated on the same basis. It should be noted that these are one-off amounts with no indication any funding will be available beyond 2024/25.
- 4.3 The funding has a particular focus on workforce pay. It is expected that this additional funding is used to support more workforce and capacity within the adult social care sector, including to help ensure that appropriate short-term and intermediate care is available to reduce avoidable admissions and support discharge of patients from hospital when they are medically fit to leave.
- 4.4 However, the additional funding is designed to have the same flexibility as the original MSIF (included in the Adult Social Care Base Budget for 2023/24) to meet local pressures, and so local authorities can choose to use the funding to:
- Increase fee rates paid to adult social care providers, particularly as we continue to prepare for the implementation of charging reform.
  - Increase adult social care workforce capacity and retention.
  - Reduce adult social care waiting times.
- 4.5 Services in scope for the funding have been expanded to include all care home categories and Supported Living.
- 4.6 There are grant conditions associated with the funding, which in summary are that:
- Local Authorities must allocate their full funding allocation from the grant on adult social care, as part of a substantial increase in planned adult social care spending. Local authorities must confirm that this has been added to their existing ASC budgets.
  - Local Authorities must evidence improvement in at least one of the target areas using Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) performance metrics. The

target areas chosen should support the most pressing needs in the local authority area.

- Local Authorities must provide a final report in May 2024 on spend and progress. This must record all DHSC target area metrics: workforce recruitment and retention, reducing waiting times and increasing fee rates.
- 4.7 Cabinet is therefore requested to recommend to Council the approval of a supplementary revenue estimate for £2.319m in 2023/24 funded from the grant. It is proposed that, in line with delegated authority for decisions on use of previous similar funding, that decisions on the use of the funding are delegated to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care.

## **UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Place Based Business Support**

- 4.8 The Council has been allocated a revenue grant of £782,414 from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) for the 2023/24 (£360,745) and 2024/25 (£421,669) financial years. This funding is provided to deliver Place Based Business Support. This will focus on activities such as: supporting existing businesses; supporting business start-up; job creation; advice and guidance; brokerage into national and UKSPF programmes, including innovation signposting; and key account and relationship management of SMEs and larger businesses companies.
- 4.9 Cabinet is therefore requested to approve a supplementary revenue estimate of £782,414 (2023/24 £360,745 and 2024/25 £421,669) for Place Based Business Support, to be fully funded by the grant allocation from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF).

## **5. Council Tax Income – Update**

- 5.1 Council Tax income is shared between the billing authority (Sefton Council) and the three major precepting authorities (the Fire and Rescue Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Authority – Mayoral Precept) pro-rata to their demand on the Collection Fund. The Council's Budget included a Council Tax Requirement of £160.236m for 2023/24 (including Parish Precepts), which represents 84% of the net Council Tax income of £191.139m.
- 5.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of July 2023 is a surplus of -£0.015m. This variation is primarily due to: -
- The surplus on the fund at the end of 2022/23 being higher than estimated (-£0.314m).
  - Gross Council Tax Charges in 2023/24 being higher than estimated (-£0.300m).
  - Exemptions and Discounts (including a forecasting adjustment) being higher than estimated (+£0.599m).

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- 5.3 Due to Collection Fund regulations, the Council Tax surplus will not be transferred to the General Fund in 2023/24 but will be carried forward to be recovered in future years.
- 5.4 A forecast surplus of £2.045m was declared on the 17 January 2023 of which Sefton's share is £1.716m (83.9%). This is the amount that will be recovered from the Collection Fund in 2023/24. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2024/25 and future years.

## 6. **Business Rates Income – Update**

- 6.1 Since 1 April 2017, Business Rates income has been shared between the Council (99%) and the Fire and Rescue Authority (1%). The Council's Budget included retained Business Rates income of £62.388m for 2023/24, which represents 99% of the net Business Rates income of £63.018m. Business Rates income has historically been very volatile making it difficult to forecast accurately.
- 6.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of July 2023 is a surplus of -£11.199m on Business Rates income. This is due to:
- The surplus on the fund at the end of 2023/24 being higher than estimated (-£9.916m).
  - Increase in the gross charge on rateable properties (-£0.141m).
  - A number of reliefs announced for 2023/24 were assumed in the NNDR1 return with the loss of income as a result of these reliefs covered by Section 31 grant payments. It is now forecast that the value of these reliefs will be less than anticipated (-£1.008m).
  - Adjustments relating to prior years (-£0.134m)
- 6.3 When taking into account the lower Section 31 grants due on the additional reliefs, a net surplus of £10.493m is forecast.
- 6.4 Due to Collection Fund regulations, a Business Rates deficit will not be transferred to the General Fund in 2023/24 but will be carried forward to be recovered in future years.
- 6.5 A forecast surplus of £12.836m was declared in January 2023. Sefton's share of this is £12.708m. This is the amount that will be distributed from the Collection Fund in 2023/24. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2024/25 and future years.

## 7. **High Needs Budget**

- 7.1 Cabinet and Council have agreed to receive quarterly reports from the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education and the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) with regard to the High Needs budget and the changes that are proposed, details of sufficiency planning, the Council's engagement on the Delivering Better Value Programme and the current high needs



deficit and the risk around future central government decision making in respect of this deficit.

- 7.2 The latest quarterly report was presented to Cabinet in July, providing detail on the current monitoring position relating to the High Needs budget.
- 7.3 As part of the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme, the Council has provided an implementation plan to the Department for Education (DfE) which included a grant application for additional funding to support the changes required. The Council has now received confirmation from the DfE that their DBV Programme Board has given indicative approval of the implementation plan which they say, “demonstrates an aspiration to deliver significant improvements to services for children and young people with SEND alongside significant financial benefits over the next five years”. Sefton is due to receive £1.000m of funding from the DfE, subject to final approval by the DBV Programme Board. Cabinet is therefore requested to recommend to Council the approval of a supplementary revenue estimate for £1.000m in 2023/24 funded from the grant.

## 8. Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26

### Capital Budget

- 8.1 The Capital Budget and profile of expenditure for the three years 2023/24 to 2025/26 is as follows:

<b>2023/24</b>	<b>£64.106m</b>
<b>2024/25</b>	<b>£58.986m</b>
<b>2025/26</b>	<b>£17.659m</b>

- 8.2 The following updates have been made to the capital programme budget since the initial budget report to Cabinet in July:

- **Adult Social Care** – the Cabinet Member for Adult Social care has, under delegated authority, approved revised budgets for the Wider Social Care programme and Community Equipment Stores funded from the Better Care Fund – Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). The total amount approved was £4.935m for Adult Social Care and £0.762m for Children’s Social Care.
- **Communities** – £0.074m has been added to the budget under delegated authority for a scheme to create tech rooms at Sefton’s Libraries funded by grant from the Library Improvement Fund.
- **Economic Growth & Housing** – £0.221m has been phased into 2024/25 for the Enterprise Arcade Project which will now start on site in quarter three due to the time needed to complete contractor procurement.
- **Education Excellence** – £0.500m has be phased into 2024/25 for a building alterations scheme at Litherland Moss pending the transfer of the school building back to Local Authority control.

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- 8.3 The following block capital grant allocations were approved by Council in March following recommendation by Cabinet for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2023/24:

<b><u>Capital Grant</u></b>	<b>2023/24</b> <b>£</b>
<b>Education Excellence</b>	
Schools Condition Allocation	2,207,934
<b>Highways and Public Protection</b>	
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	8,154,000

- 8.4 Authority has been delegated to Cabinet Member to assign funding to individual capital schemes up to a value of £1m for Highways and the Schools block allocation listed above. The list of schemes for 2023/24 has been fully developed and will be presented to the individual Cabinet Members for approval noting that schemes in excess of £1m have already been approved by Council in July. A full list of the approved capital schemes will be presented in future reports to Cabinet.

## **Local Authority Housing Fund**

- 8.5 Sefton has been granted funding under round two of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF). This fund helps UK councils to provide accommodation to families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK through Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes and who are accessing bridging hotel accommodation. The intention of the LAHF round two is to address immediate pressures as well as increasing the stock of affordable homes for the future.
- 8.6 The total funding available to Sefton is £1,300,000 to purchase a minimum additional 12 family sized homes and one family sized temporary accommodation to families currently residing in bridging accommodation.
- 8.7 DLUHC have confirmed that it is prepared to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council to release the funding. Cabinet is therefore requested to recommend to Council the approval of a supplementary capital estimate for £1.3m to include the scheme in the capital programme for 2023/24.

## **Local Transport Capital Block Funding – Pothole Fund**

- 8.8 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) has received additional grant funding from the Department of Transport to be spent on highways maintenance and improvement within the Liverpool City Region in 2023/24. This funding is in addition to the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement block allocation reported to Cabinet and Council in March 2023.
- 8.9 The LCRCA proposes to make a total sum of £628,487 available to Sefton to spend exclusively on improvements to and maintenance of roads within the borough. The payment of grant will be made pending the signing of a Grant Funding Agreement.
- 8.10 Cabinet is therefore recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate for the Pothole Fund for inclusion in the Highways capital programme subject to the acceptance and signing of the Grant Funding Agreement with the Combined Authority.

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund

- 8.11 Following Government approval of the Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) allocations to the Liverpool City Region, a report outlining the initial allocations of funding to Sefton Council for local authority led elements of that Investment Plan was presented to Cabinet in January 2023.
- 8.12 Formal grant agreements for the UKSPF were issued in March 2023 and following this there has been an increase to the amount of funding allocated and a split in the funding between revenue and capital elements for delivery of projects under each workstream. A breakdown of the revised amounts is shown below.

<b>Revised Allocations</b>	<b>Capital £</b>	<b>Revenue £</b>
Green, Resilient and Safe Communities	423,819	218,382
Local cultural arts and heritage	134,317	268,634
Town Centres	58,764	193,080
UK SPF Programme Management	-	140,518
	<b>616,900</b>	<b>820,614</b>

- 8.13 Sefton has therefore been awarded an additional amount of £241,744 giving a total allocation of £1,437,514 compared to the original amount of £1,195,770 reported in January to Cabinet and then approved by Council.
- 8.14 A delayed start to the UKSPF programme as a whole has resulted in delays for some local authorities to get mobilised and consequently LCRCA have asked all local authorities to review their projects and associated spend profiles for the remainder of the programme until March 2025. LCRCA have asked for a Change Control to be submitted for any variances and to consider any proposed changes. Sefton has reviewed the above programme (all projects and spend profiles) and whilst there are some small adjustments, most of the projects are spending as anticipated and within the threshold shown. A Change Control is still required and has been submitted to the LCRCA and is awaiting approval.
- 8.15 In order to add these revised allocations to the capital programme Cabinet is therefore recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £241,744 for the additional grant and a budget virement from revenue of £375,156 to correctly allocate a total budget of £616,900 in the capital programme funded by the UKSPF pending acceptance of the Change Control by the LCRCA.

## Crosby (Waterloo) Library

- 8.16 The Council recently announced that Cabinet had given consideration as to how refurbishment of the existing Crosby Library in Waterloo could be included in the Crosby Village project. It was announced that both schemes would be progressed as separate schemes - continuing to deliver the Crosby Village scheme whilst at the same time retaining the existing library in Waterloo. Cabinet is therefore asked to note that the Council will procure an updated Stock Condition Survey for the existing library in Waterloo.

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## **Budget Monitoring Position to July 2023**

8.17 The current position of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of July 2023 is shown in the table below. It should be noted that budgets are profiled dependent upon the timing of when works are to be carried out and the anticipated spend over the financial year. The budget to date in the table below reflects the profiles of each individual scheme.

	<b>Budget to July</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure to July</b>	<b>Variance to July</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b><u>Services</u></b>			
Adult Social Care	1.521	1.536	0.015
Children's Social Care	0.106	0.106	-
Communities	0.257	0.253	-0.004
Corporate Resources	0.578	0.585	0.007
Economic Growth & Housing	2.258	2.217	-0.041
Education Excellence	0.449	0.460	0.011
Highways & Public Protection	1.882	1.882	-
Operational In-House Services	0.156	0.156	-
<b><u>Total Programme</u></b>	<b>7.208</b>	<b>7.195</b>	<b>-0.013</b>

## **Capital Programme Forecast Outturn 2023/24**

8.18 The current forecast of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of 2023/24 and the profile of budgets for future years is shown in the table below:

	<b>Budget 2023/24</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Budget 2024/25</b>	<b>Budget 2025/26</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b><u>Services</u></b>					
Adult Social Care	8.026	7.919	-0.106	2.094	1.847
Children's Social Care	0.662	0.662	-	0.100	-
Communities	0.754	0.795	0.041	0.106	-
Corporate Resources	2.620	2.627	0.007	-	-
Economic Growth & Housing	24.279	24.276	-0.003	40.607	14.592
Education Excellence	8.902	8.855	-0.047	5.474	-
Highways & Public Protection	15.452	15.452	-	6.343	0.322
Operational In-House Services	3.412	3.412	-	4.262	0.898
<b><u>Total Programme</u></b>	<b>64.106</b>	<b>63.999</b>	<b>-0.107</b>	<b>58.986</b>	<b>17.659</b>

A full list of the capital programme by capital scheme is at **appendix A**.

8.19 The current 2023/24 budgeted spend is £64.106m with a budgeted spend to July of £7.208m. The full year budget includes exceptional items such as £20.142m for Growth and Strategic Investment projects, £1.096m for the Brownfield Housing Development fund, £0.760m for Sustainable Warmth Schemes, £2.000m for a

# Agenda Item 6

Highways project at Millers Bridge, a £3.041m project for Southport Pier Decking, and a scheme to upgrade to LED Street Lighting (£3.606m).

8.20 Typically, on an annual basis the capital programme spends in the region of £25-30m. Given this typical annual level of spend it is likely that reprofiling of spend into 2024/25 will occur as the year progresses.

## **Programme Funding**

8.21 The table below shows how the capital programme will be funding in 2023/24:

<b><u>Source</u></b>	<b>£m</b>
Grants	49.152
Prudential Borrowing	8.936
Capital Receipts	3.511
Contributions (including Section 106)	2.507
<b><u>Total Programme Funding</u></b>	<b>64.106</b>

8.22 The programme is reviewed on an ongoing basis to confirm the capital resources required to finance capital expenditure are in place, the future years programme is fully funded, and the level of prudential borrowing remains affordable.

8.23 The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services will continue to manage the financing of the programme to ensure the final capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council.

## 9. **Performance**

9.1 The Council recognises the importance of performance management and service areas report regularly to Cabinet Members, Health & Wellbeing Board and Overview and Scrutiny on service-related performance and key corporate activity.

9.2 Members will also be aware that a detailed, comprehensive Corporate Performance is reported annually to Cabinet in July as part of the Financial Outturn report. Such an approach is the basis for reporting quarterly performance to Members as set out in Appendix B.

# Agenda Item 6

## APPENDIX A – Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2025/26

<b><u>Capital Scheme</u></b>	<b>Budget</b>		
	<b>2023/24</b> £	<b>2024/25</b> £	<b>2025/26</b> £
<b>Adult Social Care</b>			
Disable Facilities Grants – Core Grants (DFGs)	3,000,000	-	-
Occupational Therapy Support for DFGs	663,774	-	-
ICT Development & Transformation	1,129,007	34,591	-
ICT Connectivity in Care Homes and Support Living	100,000	-	-
Fall Prevention Schemes	45,000	-	-
Care Home Improvements	475,449	200,000	-
Changing Places	51,327	-	-
Integrated Health and Wellbeing on the High Street	-	400,000	-
Short Term Assessment Unit	860,000	860,000	1,847,000
New Directions Programme Development	206,038	195,000	-
Technology Enabled Care	464,383	-	-
Community Equipment Provision	400,000	-	-
Double to Single Handed Care Equipment Provision	150,000	-	-
Community Equipment – Specialist Projects	232,435	-	-
Community Equipment Stores Improvements	65,000	-	-
Programme Support	122,922	-	-
Digitising Social Care	50,000	405,000	-
Community Based Falls Equipment	10,200	-	-
<b>Children’s Social Care</b>			
Support for Fostering Placements	99,370	100,000	-
Community Equipment Provision	270,000	-	-
ICT Development & Transformation	193,545	-	-
Springbrook Refurbishment	28,923	-	-
Springbrook Vehicle	70,000	-	-
<b>Communities</b>			
Leisure Centres – Essential Works	396,748	-	-
Libraries – Centres of Excellence	172,176	105,843	-
Sefton Libraries Live	30,000	-	-
Library Improvement – Tech Rooms	73,857	-	-
Neighbourhoods Projects	80,886	-	-
<b>Corporate Resources</b>			
Council Wide Essential Maintenance	1,785,785	-	-
Sustainable Warmth Schemes	760,092	-	-
ICT Transformation	73,812	-	-
<b>Economic Growth &amp; Housing</b>			
Cambridge Road Centre Redevelopment	57,069	-	-
Crosby Lakeside Redevelopment	707,154	-	-
Strategic Acquisitions – Ainsdale	39,880	836,423	-
Marine Lake Events Centre	15,483,014	37,792,340	14,517,367
The Strand – Maintenance and Improvements	40,000	375,000	75,000
Enterprise Arcade	1,239,692	387,077	-

# Agenda Item 6

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £
Transformations de Southport	1,425,000	1,075,000	-
Bootle Canal Side Business Plan	470,392	-	-
The Strand – Repurposing Programme	680,000	-	-
Housing Investment	-	33,960	-
Social Housing Allocations Scheme	13,590	-	-
Brownfield Fund for Housing Development	1,082,336	-	-
Southport Pier	3,040,588	107,679	-
<b>Education Excellence</b>			
General Planned Maintenance	245,605	30,249	-
Schools Programme	3,070,170	4,853,883	-
Sporting Betterment of Schools	1,583,215	-	-
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	4,002,706	590,000	-
<b>Highways and Public Protection</b>			
Highways Programme	6,146,662	1,411,500	322,000
Highway Maintenance	3,700,000	-	-
LED Street Lighting Upgrade	3,605,580	3,662,630	-
Millers Bridge	2,000,000	-	-
Transport Growth Programme	-	1,268,620	-
<b>Operational In-House Services</b>			
Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management	1,285,195	1,916,883	898,000
Countryside Stewardship	11,659	-	-
Crosby Marine Lake Improvements	10,803	-	-
Parks Schemes	64,409	833,569	-
Tree Planting Programme	108,885	19,769	-
Golf Driving Range Developments	2,197	280,280	-
Ainsdale Coastal Gateway	-	866,175	-
Green Sefton – Vehicles, Plant & Machinery	149,487	-	-
Refuse Collection & Recycling	-	345,000	-
Vehicle Replacement Programme	1,779,494	-	-
<b><u>Total Programme</u></b>	<b>64,105,511</b>	<b>58,986,471</b>	<b>17,659,367</b>

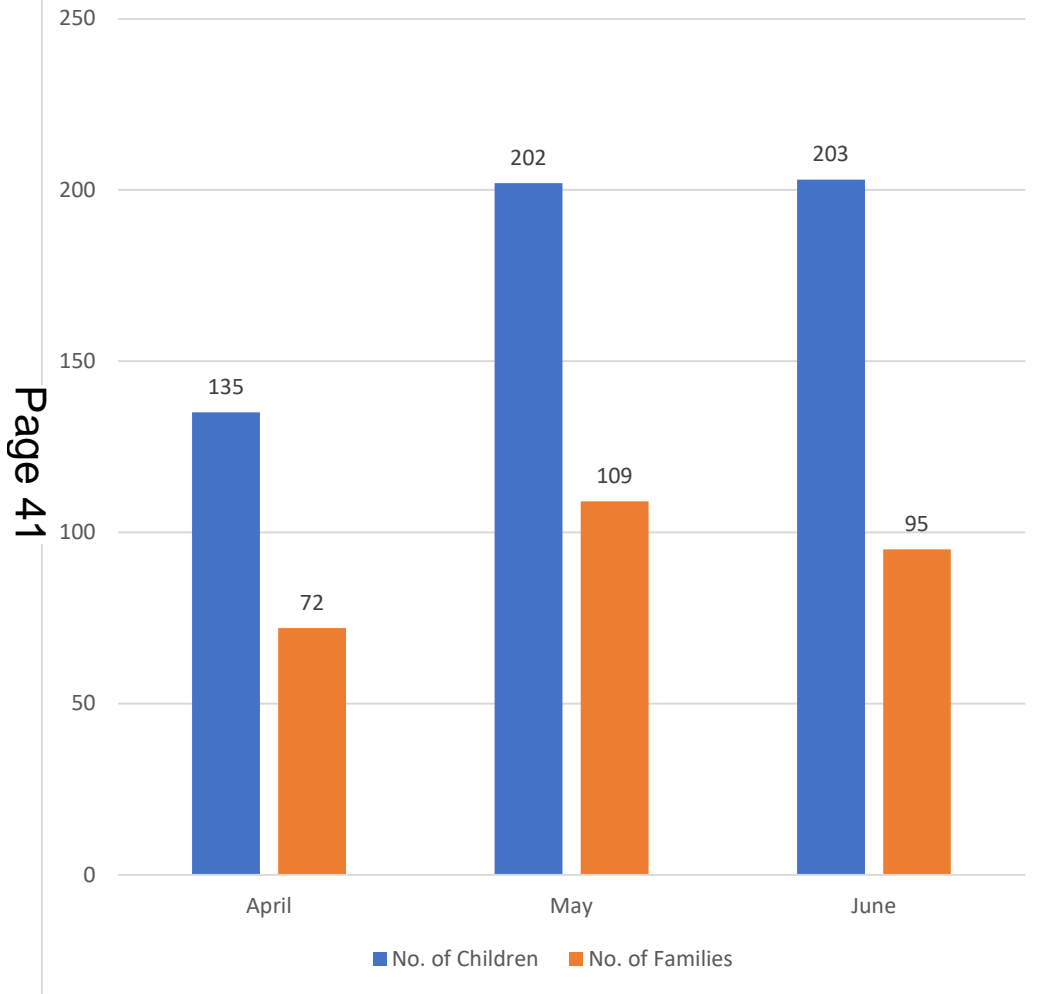
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Q1 April to June 2023

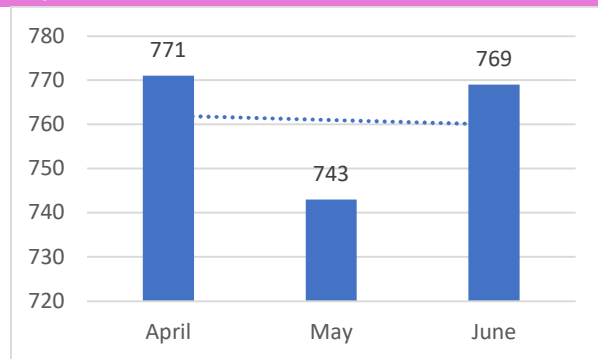
Children & Young People - Improving outcomes for children and their families

Early Help (EH) cases held & EH case closed with positive outcomes achieved



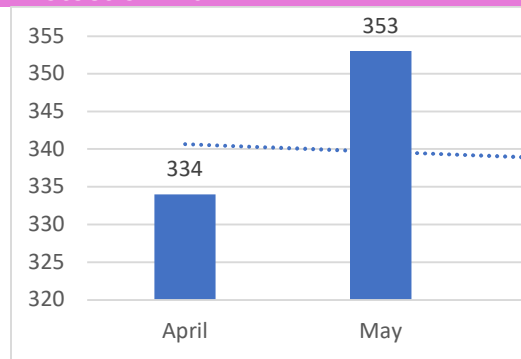
Early Help is a partnership approach to supporting children and families as soon as the need for help is identified. Based upon information gained through an assessment process, the right professionals work with the children and families to improve outcomes. Plans are put in place and reviewed regularly to ensure progress is measured and improvements stay on track. Families also benefit from signposting, advice and guidance through various community and voluntary services that provide a comprehensive offer. The number of referrals and caseloads fluctuate, and new children and families are received daily. Support plans are kept open until the identified needs are met and as such the service will always show as having open cases.

**Number of Children on a Children In Need Plan**



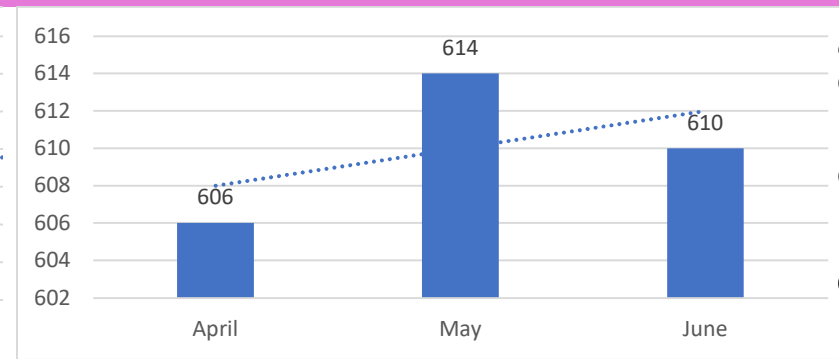
There are no direct performance comparators with other Local Authorities as the number of children in need with a plan is not published nationally or regionally. However, despite the trend showing a slight decline in the number of children in need (0-7yrs) with a child in need plan, the number is significant with consideration to caseloads and resources. A child in need is one who has been assessed by Children's Social Care as being in need of services, including family support, leaving care support, adoption support or disabled children's services. Typically, we would compare the rate of children in need with other LAs at a national and regional level. The rate of children in need per 10,000 children aged 0-17yrs in Sefton is 495. Using the most recent comparative data, the rate in 2022 was 494/10,000, which was above the national rate of 321/10,000 and the statistical neighbour rate of 334/10,000. The rate of children in need aged 0-17 in Sefton has been above the national rate since 2016, but despite a peak of 920 in April 2022, the numbers show a downward trend over the last three months.

**Number of Children on a Child Protection Plan**



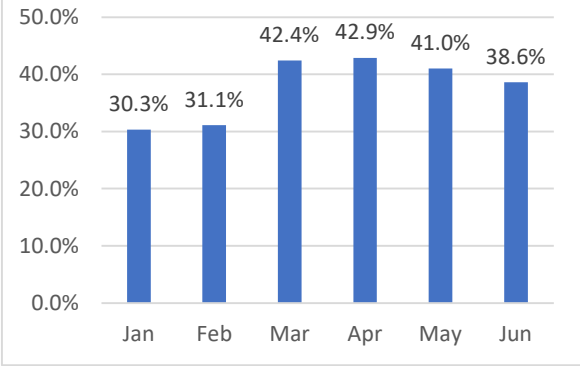
At the end of June 2023 there were 332 children who are the subject to a Child Protection Plan, which represents a rate of 61.4/10,000 children aged 0-17yrs in Sefton. Using the most recent comparative RIG data, the rate of children aged 0-17 on a Child Protection Plan in Sefton at the end Q4 (March 2023) was 63/10,000, compared with the Northwest rate of 48.2/10,000. Since 2013 the rate of children who are the subject of a child protection plan in Sefton has been marginally above the national comparable rate, but below the rates seen across statistical neighbours and LA's in the Northwest, and despite a slight increase in Jan 2023, the numbers continue to show a downward trend over the last three months.

**Open Episodes of Cared for Children**

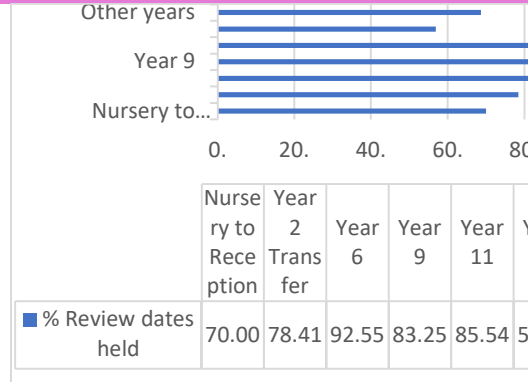


There are currently 624 cared for children (CLA) with an open episode of care, which represents a rate of 115.4/10,000. Using the most recent comparative RIG data, the rate of children looked after in Sefton at the end Q4 (March 2023) was 116/10,000 aged under 18yrs, compared with the Northwest rate of 97.8/10,000. Between 2013 and 2023 the rate of children cared for in Sefton has been broadly consistent with the rates seen across the Northwest and statistical neighbours, but above the national rate. However, since 2020, the rate of children cared for in Sefton has been above the Northwest and statistical neighbours and significantly above the national rate. At the end of financial year 2022/3 Sefton's rate of cared for children was 115/10,000 children under 18yrs, compared with 97/10,000 in the Northwest, 91/10,000 across statistical neighbours and 70/10,000 across England. Whilst actual numbers have fluctuated slightly over recent months, the trend is still showing a slight increase over the last three-month period, which represents a sustained demand on Council services and resources.

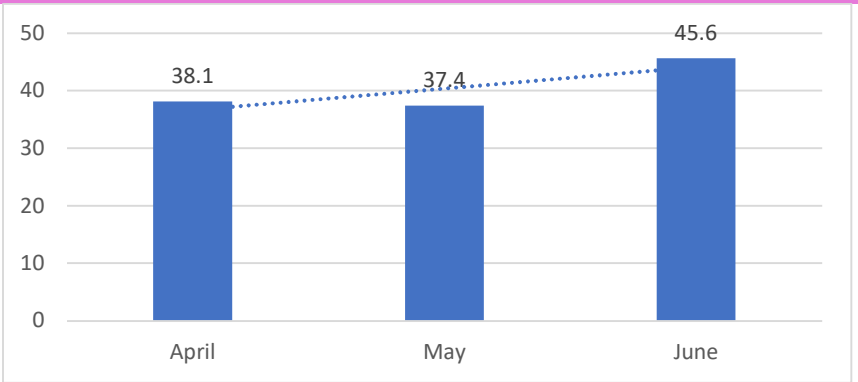
**SEND Education, Health & Care Plan % Plans completed in 20 weeks**



**SEND Education, Health & Care Plan % Reviews Held**



**% of Care Experienced Young People In Education**



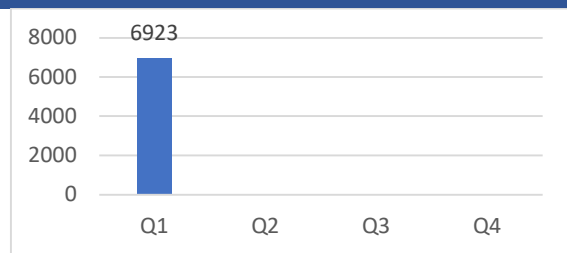
An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need additional support from education, health and/or social care. Local authorities have 20 weeks from the date they receive the request for the assessment to give a family the final EHC plan. Performance on this is reported to government for a calendar year period. A review of a child’s or young person’s EHC plan checks their progress. A plan is in place to improve performance in this area, with additional programme management capacity in place. Immediate actions include –

- Improve Social Care advice into EHCP – all outstanding assessments to be completed in next 6 weeks.
- Improving the Local Offer – a review has commenced.
- Implementation of system changes by the end of September which will improve case management and progress tracking.
- Barnardo’s have been commissioned to deliver the SENDIASS service from November 2023.

The percentage of care leavers (cared experienced) aged 19-21yrs who are in Education, Employment, or Training is 46.8%. This performance is slightly below the 2022 performance average of 48%, and behind the Northwest and National averages of 52% and 55% respectively. However, the increasing performance trend is positive.

Health & Wellbeing - Improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in Sefton and reduce inequality

Access to adult based targeted Active Sefton Services



Representative of access to:

**Active Lifestyles (GP Referral and Weight Management)** - a 12 week supported programme of physical activity and 6-week Weight Management Programme (Weigh Forward), which aims to provide residents who are above a healthy weight and/or suffer with/are at risk of developing Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) the opportunity to live a more active and healthy lifestyle.

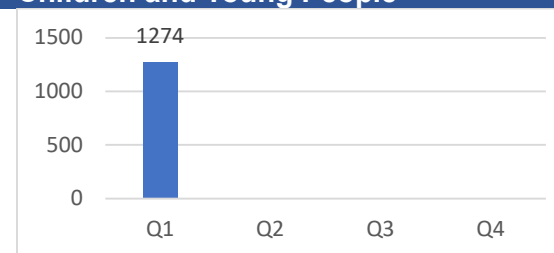
**IHS Health Checks** - a statutory programme delivered by the Active Lifestyles team to eligible adults aged 40-74, which is designed to detect early signs of stroke, heart and kidney disease, type II diabetes and dementia.

**Active Ageing Falls Service** – a 12-week strength and balance programme for residents over the age of 60 who are at risk of falling or have fallen. The service also incorporates support for social isolation and loneliness.

**Active Workforce** - a workplace wellbeing programme, aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of employees by breaking down all barriers leading to improved physical and mental wellbeing.

There was a reduction in access during Q1 of 172 people compared to the previous quarter, which was the result of less Active Workforce events over the winter months.

Number of children and young people supported through Children and Young People



Representative of access to:

**MOVE IT (Weight Management)** - a community-based weight management service for children aged 5-18 and their families, who are above their ideal weight or need help with weight maintenance.

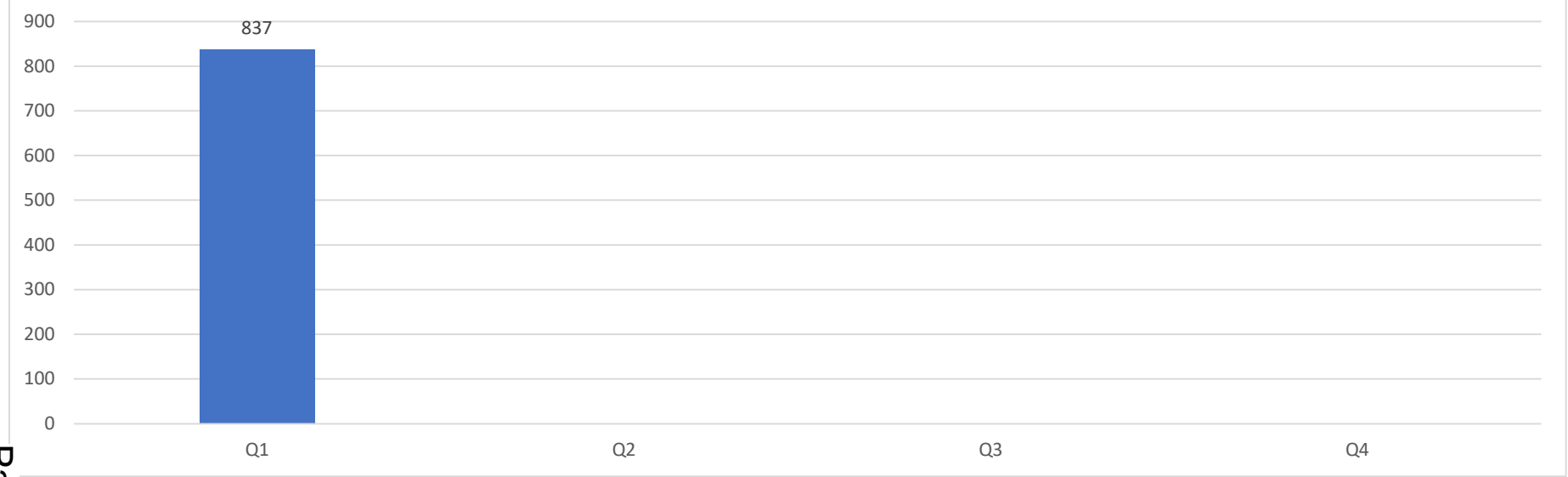
**1-2-1 Programme (mental wellbeing)** - a physical activity programme designed to build positive mental and physical health and wellbeing of Sefton’s young people (aged 11-19) who may need support. The project offers weekly physical activity or sport sessions using Development Officers as mentors.

**Active Schools** - a universal programme of support for all primary schools to be health promoting, equipping pupils and their families with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to be physically active and follow healthier eating choices.

There was a further **715** attendances through the Community delivery of Easter half-term and May half-term Be Active sessions.

There was a reduction of 1, 056 children and young people who accessed targeted and community programmes during Q1 as a result of a reduction in the Active Schools Programme due to i) 3 weeks of school holidays and ii) a staff vacancy within the Active Schools Team, which has since been filled.

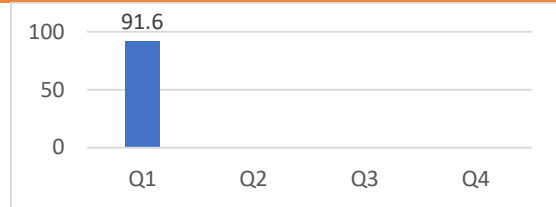
## Public Protection Inspect Public Protection Inspections Undertaken



The Public Protection service undertakes a range of Food Safety, Health and Safety, Pollution Control, Trading Standards and Licensing inspections. These inspections enable us to monitor businesses, provide them with advice and guidance on legal requirements, and to take enforcement action when necessary. The Inspection programmes are an important activity for maintaining standards and ensuring that people are protected from harm and protect good businesses from unfair competition by those who try to cut corners with compliance.

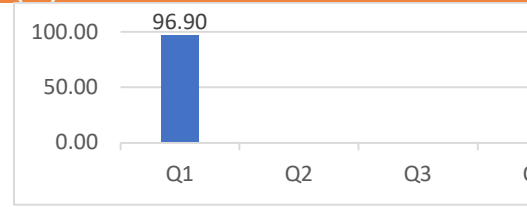
Adult Social Care - Empowering people to live an independent life, exercise choice and control, and be fully informed

Proportion of older people 65 and over who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services effectiveness of the service (2B1) (%)



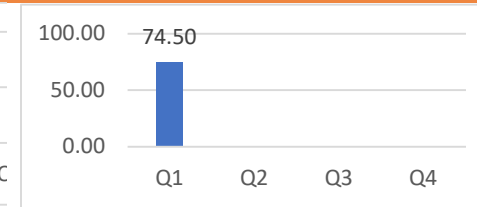
The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures nationally how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to most people. The three metrics included for Adult Social Care are part of the ASCOF. Supporting people to return home and regain their independence after a period in hospital is a key area of work for Adult Social Care. Upon leaving hospital individuals are supported at home receiving reablement and rehabilitation services who help people get back to their optimum so they can regain their confidence and independence. Sefton continues to perform well in in this area. The proportion of clients aged over 65 who are still at home 91 days after hospital discharge into reablement stood at nearly 92% at the end of Q1, is 12 percentage points higher than the rate at the end of Q4 22/23. The Council has now moved to the top quartiles both nationally and in the North West for this measure. Capacity within this area does however remain challenging.

Proportion of Adult Social Care Safeguarding Enquiries concluded where people's preferred stated outcomes were fully or partially met (%)



Adult Social Care has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable people who have care and support needs. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a national initiative' aiming to encourage an outcome focused and a person-centred approach in safeguarding work. We ask those involved in a safeguarding episode what their preferred outcome would be, MSP indicates the percentage of people who had their preferred outcome fully or partially met. Whilst specific circumstances may mean that it is not always possible for an individuals desired outcomes to be achieved this is a key aspect of our safeguarding work. In Q1, the proportion of safeguarding enquiries where the preferred outcome has been fully or partially met, stood at nearly 97%. A thematic audit of safeguarding cases is planned for Q2 as part of ongoing quality monitoring.

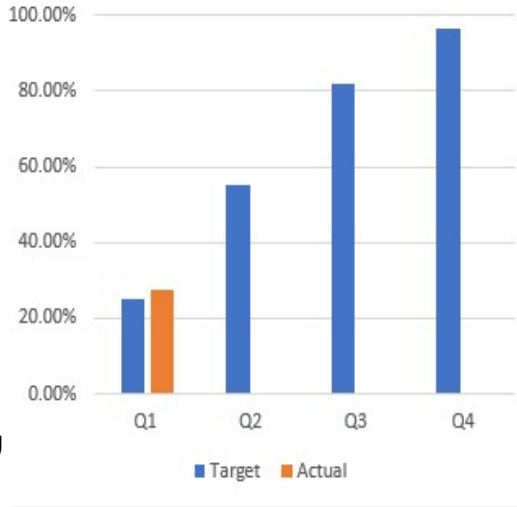
Proportion of people whose initial service was short term who did not go on to long term services (%)



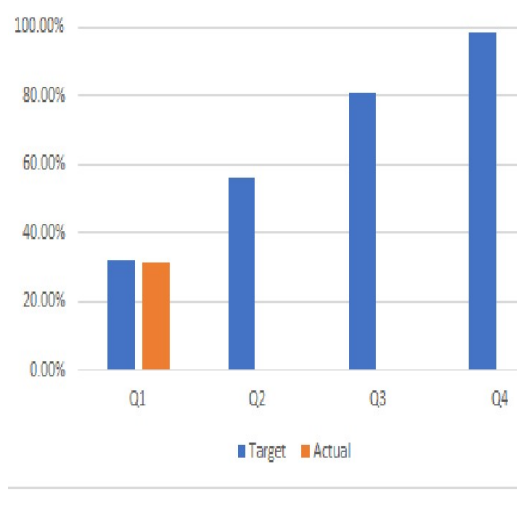
Where ever possible Adult Social Care aim to support people to be as independent as possible, living at home and having strong links with their communities. Whilst it is recognised that some people may well need long term services, this measure specifically shows the proportion of people whose short-term service resulted in a reduced, or no ongoing, need for support. A key responsibility of Adult Social care is to ensure early help and intervention helping people to delay the need for long term services.

**Working for Our Communities Every Day - Working together to deliver affordable services which achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities**

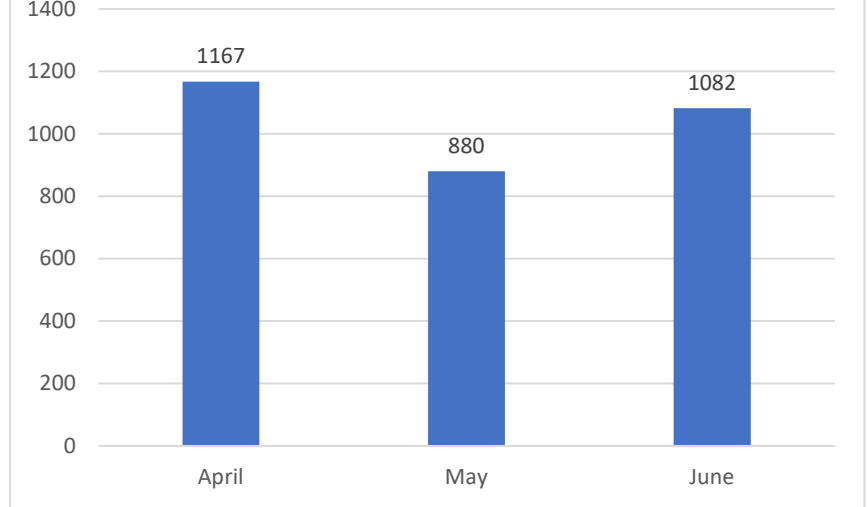
**Council Tax Collection Rates %**



**Business Rates Collection Rates %**



**Number of Emergency Limited Assistance Claims**

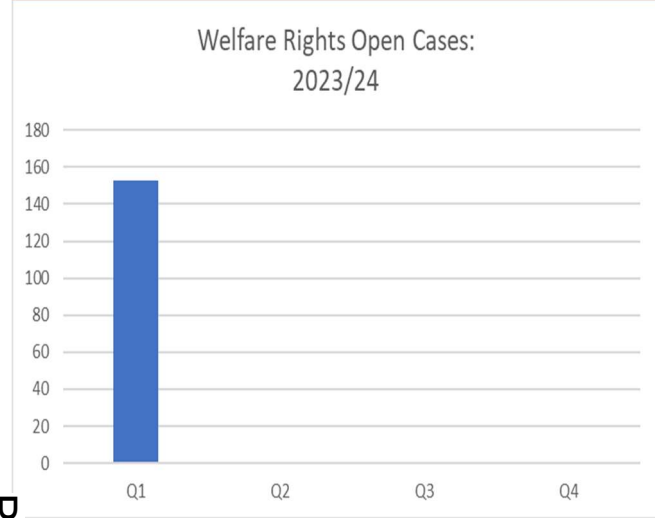


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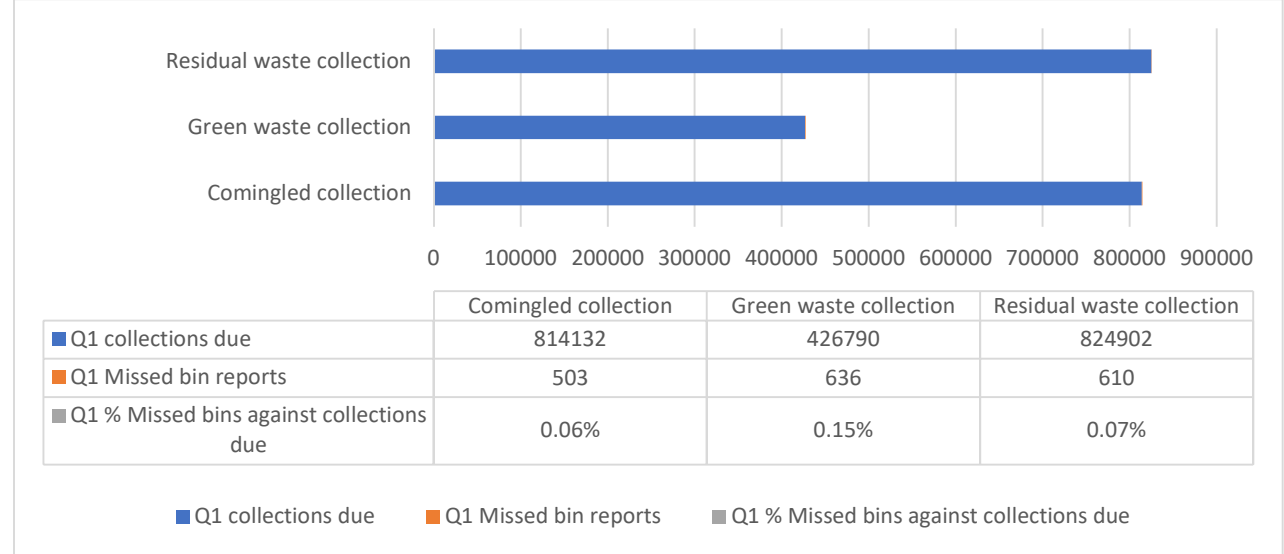
Council Tax and Business Rates collection, which is so critical to the Council, has started well in the first 3 months of the financial year. This builds on the position that was experienced in 2022/23 when despite the cost of living crisis, collection rates were maintained at budgeted for levels.

Sefton's Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme (ELAS) is available to support local people. This is for those experiencing severe hardship, a disaster or emergency. The number of ELAS claims continues to be high and this is prioritised across the service-monthly reports are provided to members and in the current economic climate the number of enquiries and rate of expenditure is forecast to continue through the year.

**Welfare Rights Open Cases**



**Bins Collected**



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To ensure that people claim their full entitlement Sefton Council provide a Welfare Rights Team consisting of a number of expert advisers. The team can provide advice and guidance for people who live or work in Sefton across the entire range of Welfare Benefits. Welfare Rights also provide advice sessions and offer appointments to help with the following:

- Advice on claiming appropriate benefits.
- Help to complete benefit claim forms.
- Assistance to challenge Benefit decisions, including tribunal representation where appropriate.

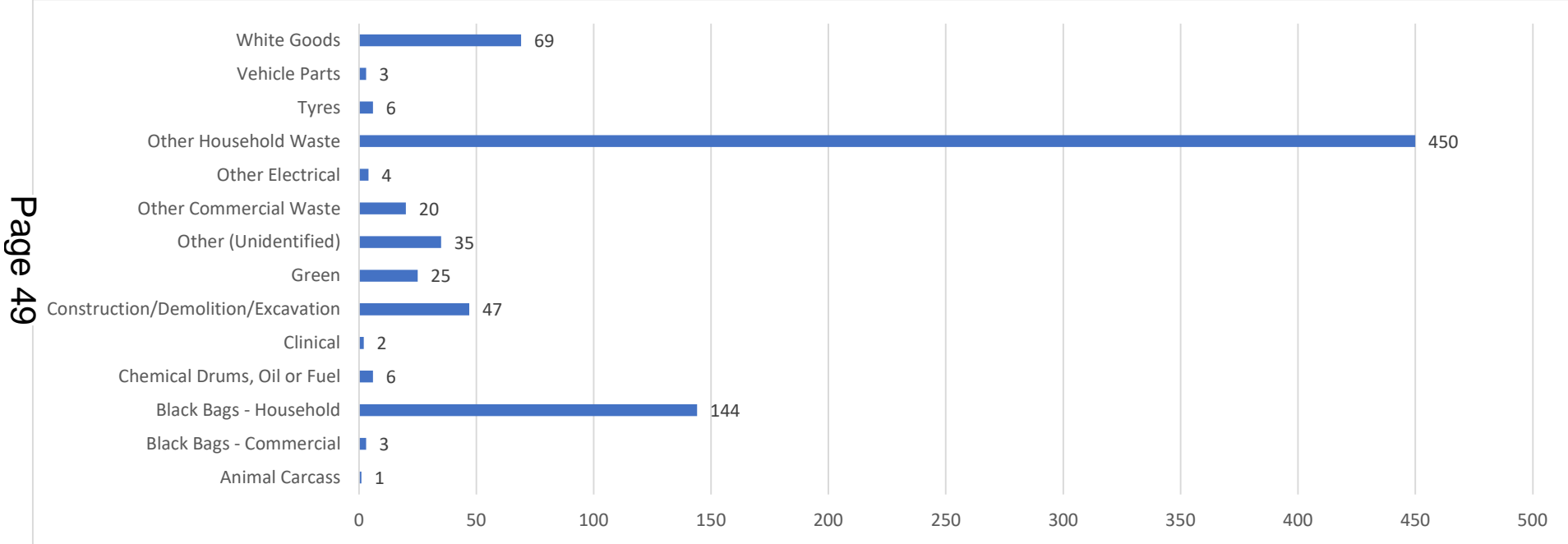
The Waste Management Service continue to deliver a high-quality service provision for the collection of all waste streams from residential properties. Whilst the number of missed bins is very low, there is always room for improvement from both staff in their vigilance of collections and residents in ensuring waste is presented correctly. Additionally, it is essential that comingled bins contain the correct recyclable items to prevent contamination once the load reaches the transfer station for onward sorting.



- Advice regarding back to work benefits and better off calculations.

Welfare Rights received 723 contacts through the advice line in Q1 which is a 1 % decrease from Q4 and have worked on 153 open cases.

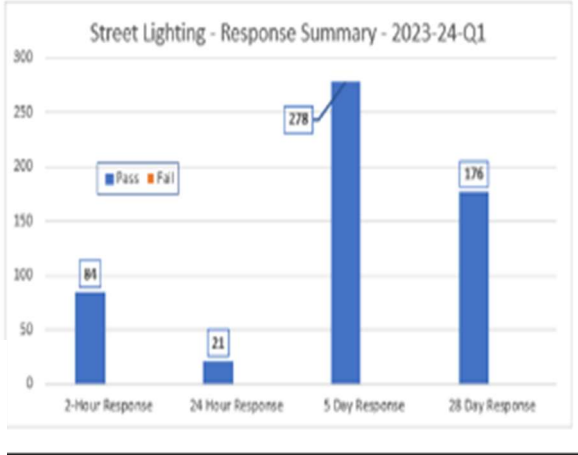
### Flytipping



Fly tipping is defined as "the illegal deposit of any waste onto land that does not have a licence to accept it" as defined by the Keep Britain Tidy Group. Within Sefton, fly tipping continues to be an on-going issue and a blight on the Borough. The Council offer a Bulky Household Waste Collection Service at a competitive rate for residents to utilise for the correct disposal of household waste. Members of the public can report incidents of fly tipping via the Council's website at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/bins-and-recycling/litter-and-fly-tipping/fly-tipping/> Further education is required to assist members of the public to act correctly when disposing of waste. Fly tipping is a national problem and the government publish data regarding the volume of fly tipping incidents. Latest figures are available at [Fly-tipping statistics for England, 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fly-tipping-statistics-for-england-2021-to-2022)

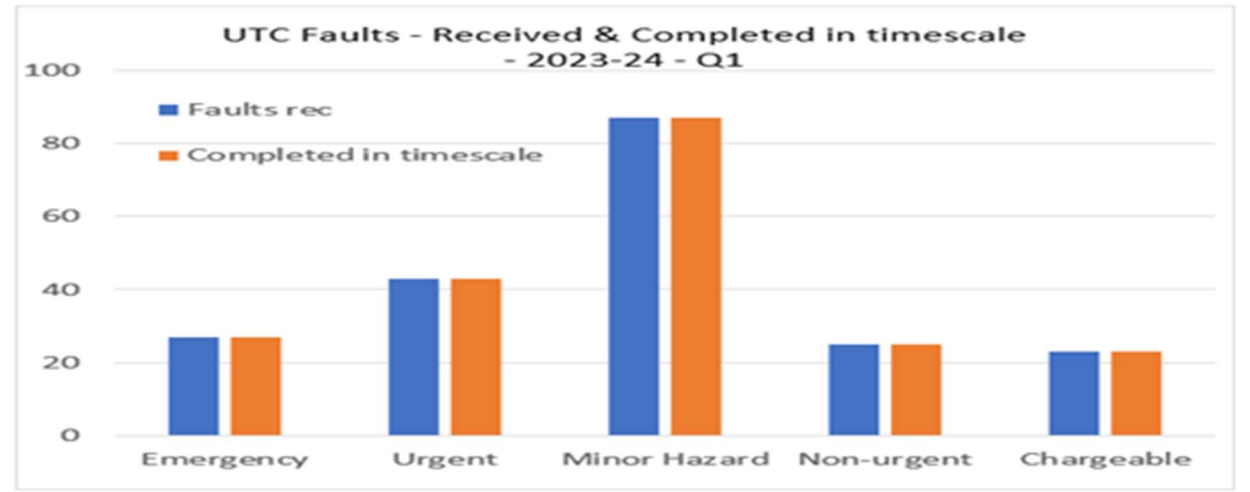
**Street Lighting – response to notified faults**

	Q1 Pass	Q1 Fail
2-Hour Response	84	0
24 Hour Response	21	0
5 Day Response	278	0
28 Day Response	176	0



**Urban Traffic Control – response to notified faults**

	Q1 Faults	Q1 Comp in Time
Emergency	27	27
Urgent	43	43
Minor Hazard	87	87
Non-urgent	25	25
Chargeable	23	23

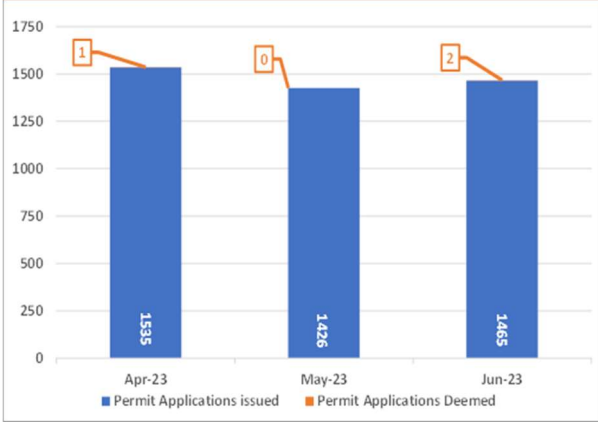


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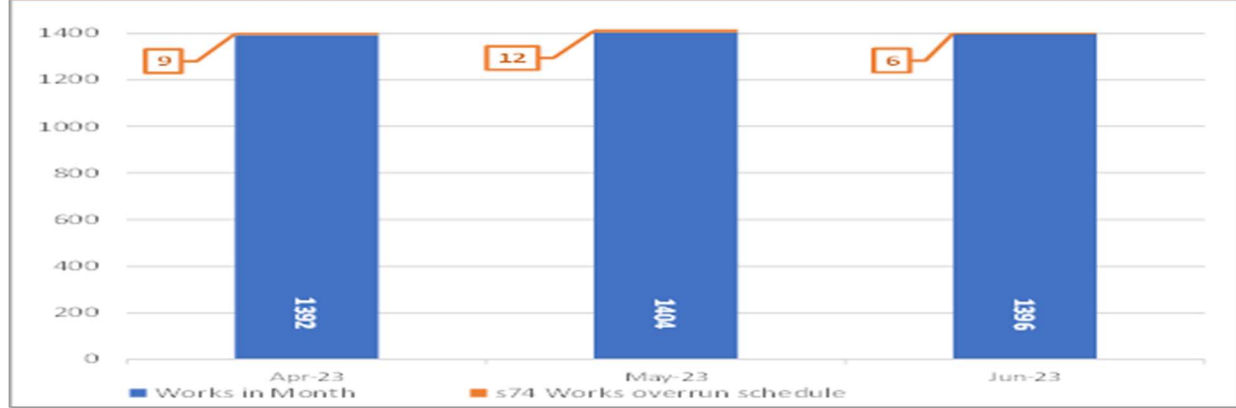
The Council has approximately 37,000 streetlights on its highways and recognises the importance of keeping them working well. When we are notified of faults, we assess the urgency of repair (e.g., 2-hours; 24 hours, 5 days etc.) allocate a target time for repair and pass it on to our appointed Contractor. We then monitor their performance against the targets. The contract includes financial penalties that can be applied if they fail to meet the required level of performance.

Urban Traffic Control (UTC) refers to our connected network of Traffic Lights and signal-controlled pedestrian crossings. Keeping these working well is essential for keeping people safe and the highway network flowing. When we are notified of faults, we assess the urgency of repair (e.g., emergency; urgent; minor hazard etc.) allocate a target time for repair and pass it on to our appointed Contractor. We then monitor their performance against the targets. The contract includes financial penalties that can be applied if they fail to meet the required level of performance.

## Network Management Permit Approvals



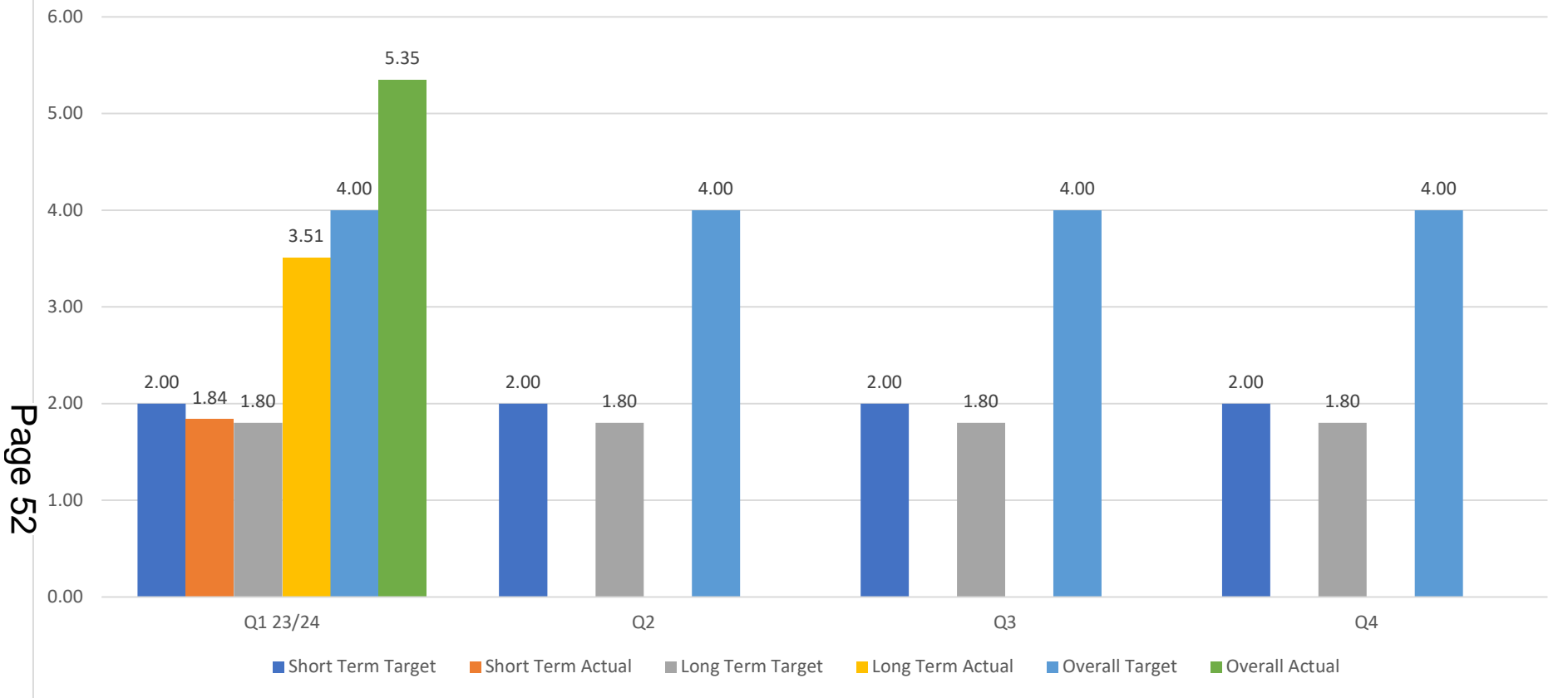
## Network Management Permit Overruns



Minimising disruption caused by works on the highway is important for managing the network and keeping traffic moving. For this reason, anyone wishing to excavate part of the highway requires permission and a permit for the work. We have a set time to deal with requests (the time period differs depending upon the length of time the works will take) and either accept, challenge or amend the permit requested. If we do not deal with these requests in time, the permission is automatically granted (a Deemed Permit). This data shows how effectively we manage this important function. The Deemed Permits will also include requests we receive for roads that are not our responsibility.

Anyone wishing to excavate part of the highway requires permission and a permit for the work. When we issue a permit, it allows a set time to complete the works and remove the obstruction. We monitor compliance with the permits and charge companies if they overrun the time allowed. This helps to minimise disruption and ensure that the works are dealt with efficiently.

% Sickness Absence



The Council continues to monitor sickness absence and work with employees to ensure a healthy return to work.

## Inclusive Growth - Creating more and better jobs for local people

### Planning

Performance indicator	National and Local Targets	Q1	
P1	63% of major applications to be determined within 13 weeks (National target 60%)	85%	Performance well exceeds national targets and also our own more demanding local targets
P6	Maximum of 10% of Council's decision making on major applications by appeal over a 2-year period + 9 months (National target)	5.56%	Performance is within tolerance of national target

### Business Growth & Investment (InvestSefton)

Indicator	Government Target	Local Target description	Target	Actual 2022/23	Forecast 2023-24	Comments
B2	No Government Target	No of businesses contacting Invest Sefton for Information, Advice & Guidance-Triage system (Phone/email/website)	250	335	340	InvestSefton exceeded targets with increased businesses looking for support to trade out of recession
B3	UKSPF	No of businesses receiving 1:1 support (face to face/diagnostic /action plan)	90	137	140	InvestSefton Advisers exceeded targets set under EU programmes-an increase of businesses ere looking for intensive face to face support

Employment & Learning					
Indicator	Local Target	Target 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	Forecast 2023/24	
E4 Adult Learning	% retention across all Adult Community Learning Courses	90.0%	97.7%	91.0%	Retention in learning is a key indicator of teaching quality and the satisfaction experienced by learners who have choice as adults about where and what they learn. The achievement of a high retention rate within the Adult Community Learning service indicates that the curriculum is attuned to the needs of the local labour market and the requirements of learners in the community who may be low skilled and wishing to acquire marketable skills for employment progression. Retention is also a key feature monitored and evaluated by Ofsted.
E6 Sefton@work	% of vulnerable people referred into the service from a third party receive targeted support, including subsidised placements	70.0%	80.1%	72.0%	This measure represents the high degree of integration/collaboration between Sefton@work with other partners/stakeholders close to the most vulnerable groups within our community. It also indicates a high conversion rate of moving people who may have multiple, complex barriers into appropriate support interventions that improve their employability. Subsidised placements with employers are tried and tested methods for workless people to gain real experience in a workplace setting.
E10 Not In Education Employment or Training	Remain in the best performing quartile for 16-18 Not Known when compared to Liverpool City Region and National Statistical Neighbours.	Yes	Yes	Yes	This measure indicates our intention to maintain recent performance on 16-18 NEET levels in line with other LAs with similar features to Sefton. The data on NEETs is uploaded monthly into a national government portal, meeting rigorous data quality standards.

Tourism					
Indicator	Government Target	Local Target	Target 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	
T2	A swift recovery back to 2019 levels of tourism volume and visitor expenditure	Increase Visitor Economy economic impact by 2.5% year on year,	£440m		Actual Annual figures will be for next report.
T3	A swift recovery back to 2019 levels of tourism volume and visitor expenditure	Increase Visitor Economy total employment by 2% year on year,	4795		

Housing				
Indicator Reference		Target per Quarter	Actual Q1	Comments
H1	Number of Landlord Licences Issued	160	227	Landlord licencing shows good performance in the first quarter of the new 5 year scheme. Monitoring of licencing and outcomes continues through a range of Key Performance Indicators.
H4	Number of actions taken against owners of vacant homes	15	25	Ongoing action is key to address empty homes in the borough. Q1 performance shows a good level of engagement in line with the empty homes strategy.

Regeneration				
Indicator Reference		Target per Quarter	Actual Q1	Comments
R1	100% of expenditure verified for projects which are externally funded.	100%	100%	SIF & UKSPF expenditure verified through Agresso.
R3	Funding Claims submitted completed and submitted on time to Audit	90%	90%	SIF & UKSPF funding claims for quarter completed and submitted.

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# Agenda Item 7

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 September 2023
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)		12 September 2023
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)		19 September 2023
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)		26 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Executive/Scrutiny Protocol		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Adult Social Care Children's Social Care Communities and Housing Education Health and Wellbeing Locality Services Planning and Building Control Regeneration and Skills Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To seek formal approval of changes to the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol for submission to Cabinet.

# Agenda Item 7

## Recommendation

That Cabinet be requested to approve changes to the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol in relation to:

- (1) Executive Directors and Assistant Directors, whose responsibilities fall within the remit of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, being requested to seek the views of the Committees on all strategies and plans prior to submission to Cabinet and Council; and that if it is not possible, due to time constraints, to submit the final strategy or plan for consideration, then an outline or synopsis be submitted to the Committees to allow an oversight of the proposals to be considered and commented upon; and Section 6 of the Protocol relating to pre-scrutiny be amended accordingly; and
- (2) reference being made to informal meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review topics in Section 8 of the Protocol.

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To comply with a decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

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

No alternative options have been considered. The purpose of the report is to comply with a decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### (A) Revenue Costs

See above.

### (B) Capital Costs

See above.

## Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> Yes. There is a potential that topics

considered by informal meetings; and plans and strategies submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding) will have an impact on children and young people. Such impacts will be described in more detail at the informal meetings or when plans and strategies are considered.

**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 associated with this report. However, matters considered at informal meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committees; or when plans and strategies are discussed may have positive or negative impacts. Such impacts will be described in more detail at the informal meetings or when plans and strategies are considered.

**Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:**

Protect the most vulnerable: The development of an Executive / Scrutiny Protocol should improve the quality of relationships between Cabinet and Scrutiny Members; clarify respective roles; and contribute towards more effective scrutiny in Sefton.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above. It is also considered that an Executive/Scrutiny Protocol could be utilised as a training tool in Sefton, particularly for newly elected Members.
Place – leadership and influencer: As above
Drivers of change and reform: As above
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above
Greater income for social investment: As above
Cleaner Greener As above

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

**(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD7302/23) has been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report. The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5502/23) is the author of the report.

**(B) External Consultations**

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Consultation has taken place with other local authorities that have previously adopted an Executive/Scrutiny Protocol. Findings indicate that the existence of a Protocol improves the quality of relationships between Cabinet and Scrutiny Members; clarifies respective roles; and contributes towards more effective scrutiny.

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meetings.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Paul Fraser
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 2068
Email Address:	paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

The following appendix is attached to the report:

Appendix A - amended Executive/Scrutiny Protocol if recommendations are approved by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

### 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Following consideration of guidance published by the Centre for Public Scrutiny during February 2020 entitled "Taking Scrutiny Seriously" the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 30 July 2020, resolved (Minute No. 27) that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be requested to develop an Executive/Scrutiny protocol for use in Sefton.
- 1.2 The meeting of the Management Board held on 8 September 2020 agreed a draft Executive/Scrutiny Protocol for consideration by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.3 The draft Protocol was considered and approved by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees during October and November 2020.
- 1.4 The draft protocol was subsequently approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 December 2020.

### 2. Suggested Additions to the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol

- 2.1 At its first meeting of the 2023/24 municipal year, held on 20 June 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol.
- 2.2 The Management Board suggested two additions to the Protocol and these are set out in Paragraphs 3 and 4 below.

## **3. Pre-Scrutiny - Submission of Plans and Strategies to Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

- 3.1 The Management Board noted that often strategies and plans were included on the Forward Plan but that rarely were they submitted to Overview and Scrutiny for comment prior to their submission to Cabinet/Council; and suggested that officers should plan more time into the process for formulating plans and strategies to enable Overview and Scrutiny to have an input and provide comments to Cabinet/Council.
- 3.2 The Management Board resolved that Executive Directors and Assistant Directors, whose responsibilities fell within the remit of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, should seek the views of the Committees on all strategies and plans prior to submission to Cabinet and Council; and that if it was not possible, due to time constraints, to submit the final strategy or plan for consideration, then an outline or synopsis be submitted to the Committees to allow an oversight of the proposals to be considered and commented upon.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) at its meeting held on 27 June 2023 also agreed a similar resolution to that detailed in paragraph 3.2 above.

## **4. Working Group Reviews/Informal Meetings**

- 4.1 Section 8 of the Protocol refers to the arrangements to be adopted by Overview and Scrutiny Committees when establishing topics for review by Working Groups.
- 4.2 The Management Board noted that a number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2022/23 established informal meetings, rather than Working Groups, to undertake reviews of services.
- 4.3 Accordingly, the Management Board agreed that the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol should be updated to reflect the operation of informal meetings.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Members views are sought on the proposals detailed above for submission to Cabinet.
- 5.1 For illustrative purposes, an updated version of the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol is attached highlighting the changes if ultimately approved by Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet.

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## EXECUTIVE / SCRUTINY PROTOCOL



**ONECOUNCIL** Working Together

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### PROTOCOL ON EXECUTIVE & OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RELATIONS IN SEFTON

#### Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims of the Protocol
3. Functions of Overview and Scrutiny
4. The Conduct of Meetings
5. The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme
6. Pre-Scrutiny
7. “Call-In” of Decisions
8. Working Group Reviews
9. Public Participation in the Overview and Scrutiny Process
10. Specific Duty of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) – Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements



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### 1. Introduction

- 1.2 This Protocol applies to all Members of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees, co-opted members who sit on O&S Committees, all Members of the Cabinet and senior officers.
- 1.3 The Protocol is not intended to replace *Chapter 6 – Overview and Scrutiny* of the Council's [Constitution](#), nor is intended to replace *Chapter 2 – Members – Code of Conduct*, rather it is intended to enhance and supplement the requirements of the Constitution and set out guidance for good practice.
- 1.4 Scrutiny should be a strategic function of the authority. It should be central to the organisation's corporate governance; a crucial cog in the decision-making machine.

### 2. Aims of the Protocol:

- 2.1 Clarify Relationships
- 2.2 The aim of the Protocol is to clarify relationships between O&S Members and Cabinet Members, to ensure an efficient O&S function, including holding the Cabinet to account on behalf of the electorate, and to encourage good communication between O&S and the Cabinet.
- 2.3 Positive Interaction
- 2.4 The Protocol refers to the respective powers, roles and responsibilities for both O&S Members and Cabinet Members. Guidance is set out on the way in which both O&S Members and Cabinet Members should interact, in order that Members maximise their roles and for the Authority to have an effective O&S function for the benefit of the Council as a whole. It also offers guidance to senior officers who support this process.
- 2.5 Promote a Culture of Mutual Respect
- 2.6 The Protocol aims to promote a culture of mutual respect, trust and courtesy in the relationships between O&S Members, Cabinet Members and senior officers, and to foster a climate of openness leading to constructive debate and communication, with a view to ensuring service improvements for the benefit of Sefton citizens.
- 2.7 Parity of Esteem
- 2.8 "Parity of esteem" means that the scrutiny function of the Council deserves the same respect, and has the same importance in the governance system, as

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executive decision-making activities. Requests from scrutiny to engage with, and recommended changes to, policies, plans and activities should be treated with the same respect and consideration as if they came from a Cabinet Member.

### **3. Functions of Overview and Scrutiny**

3.1 The general role and specific functions of the O&S Committees can be found within Chapter 6 of the Council's Constitution. The key responsibilities of O&S are to:

- (a) Hold the Cabinet, Cabinet Members and senior officers to account for their decisions, on behalf of the electorate;
- (b) Review Council policy, the way policies are implemented and their impact on local citizens;
- (c) Scrutinise Executive decisions before they are made and before they are implemented; and
- (d) Contribute to the development of policy by investigating issues of local concern and making recommendations to the Cabinet, to the Council and to partner organisations.

### **4. The Conduct of Meetings**

4.1 Cabinet Members are actively encouraged to attend meetings of O&S Committees relevant to their Portfolio, in order to present their Cabinet Member Update Reports and to respond to questions/comments from O&S Members.

4.2 Cabinet Members may be required to attend meetings of O&S Committees in particular circumstances, e.g. the consideration of "called-in" items.

4.3 The principle of the "critical friend" should always be adhered to between Scrutiny Members and Cabinet Members, senior officers and any external partners.

4.4 All Members should promote an atmosphere of openness at the O&S Committee meetings and should strive to ensure that questioning and debate takes place within a climate of mutual respect and trust.

4.5 O&S Committee Members should be prepared to ask searching questions and where necessary, provide constructive challenge to Cabinet Members on issues that fall under their Portfolio.

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- 4.6 Cabinet Members should be willing to respond to any question put. However, it should be noted that that Cabinet Members may not necessarily be in a position to answer every question immediately or in detail. In such circumstances the matter may be referred to a senior officer in attendance or a written answer may be sought.
- 4.7 Cabinet Members should value the contribution of O&S Committee Members who raise issues and respond in an appropriate and manner, in order to make a positive contribution to Scrutiny meetings.
- 4.8 Cabinet Members should, with the permission of the Chair, be permitted by the O&S Committee to speak upon any item on the agenda under discussion and may at any time offer to assist the Committee by the provision of factual information or advice in relation to the matters under discussion.
- 4.9 The Chair, supported by senior officers, shall provide leadership and guidance to the Committee on all scrutiny matters and shall promote the Committee's role in improving services and monitoring the effectiveness of Council policies, through effective scrutiny.
- 4.10 Party politics and the use of the Party Whip shall be avoided during O&S Committees.
- 4.11 Senior officers shall liaise and agree their attendance at meetings of O&S Committees during the Municipal Year.

### **5. The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

- 5.1 The Council's Strategic Leadership Board, comprised of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Heads of Service, shall be invited to identify any appropriate items for inclusion in the Work Programme of O&S Committees.
- 5.2 The Work Programme of items submitted to O&S Committees at the beginning of each Municipal Year shall be drafted in liaison with the appropriate Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.
- 5.3 A manageable number of items should be identified in order to demonstrate that the scrutiny function "adds value" to the Council.
- 5.4 The O&S Committees will be responsible for setting their own work programme.
- 5.5 O&S Members are reminded at each meeting that they are able to request other items for inclusion within the Work Programme, provided such items fall within the terms of reference of the Committee.

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- 5.6 A Member of an O&S Committee is entitled to give notice to the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that they wish an item relevant to the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee.
- 5.7 The Cabinet and/or the Council may refer a matter to one or more O&S Committees.
- 5.8 The Chair of the O&S Committee may consider alternative methods of dealing with items in order to avoid over-loading Committee agendas. These may include informal presentations, visits to front-line services, site visits / informal discussions with external partners, etc.
- 6. Pre-Scrutiny**
- 6.1 The Key Decision Forward Plan sets out the list of items to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration during the following four-month period. The Forward Plan is updated and published each month. The Forward Plan appears on the Council's website and an email alert is sent to all Members of the Council when a new Forward Plan is published.
- 6.2 A summary of the latest Forward Plan, setting out the Key Decisions that fall under the remit of each O&S Committee, is submitted to each meeting of the O&S Committees and appears under the Work Programme item, a standing item on each O&S agenda.
- 6.3 O&S Members should peruse Decisions to be taken and may request to pre-scrutinise items from the Key Decision Forward Plan that fall under the remit (terms of reference) of the O&S Committee.
- 6.4 The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made. Pre-scrutiny can be used to resolve potential disagreements.
- 6.5 Any items agreed for pre-scrutiny will be included within the O&S Committee's work programme.
- 6.6 Where O&S Committees request to pre-scrutinise a Key Decision, the relevant Cabinet Member should endeavour to attend the meeting concerned, in order to respond to questions, and consider the views put by O&S Members.
- 6.7 Relevant senior officers shall attend an O&S Committee meeting where a Key Decision is pre-scrutinised by O&S Members, in order to respond to questions, and consider the views put by those Members.

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- 6.8 Cabinet Members may wish to seek views from Scrutiny Members on a Key Decision, particularly on policy development and review, before it is taken. The relevant senior officer will be responsible for forwarding the details through to the Scrutiny Manager for inclusion on the agenda.
- 6.9 The O&S Committee may express views or make recommendations in relation to Decisions to be taken.
- 6.10 The Cabinet will consider any recommendations or views expressed by the O&S Committees and to take such action it sees fit.
- 6.11 Utilising the option for pre-scrutiny does not exclude the Decision from being subject to “call-in”. However, it will allow the Cabinet Member(s) the ability to consider different views and perspectives of a Decision, before it is taken and avoid potential conflict and a requirement for “call-in”.
- 6.12 Heads of Service shall be requested to identify any policy/strategy items for pre-scrutiny by the relevant O&S Committee.
- 6.13 Executive Directors and Assistant Directors, whose responsibilities fall within the remit of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, should seek the views of the Committees on all strategies and plans prior to submission to Cabinet and Council; and that if it is not possible, due to time constraints, to submit the final strategy or plan for consideration, then an outline or synopsis be submitted to the Committees to allow an oversight of the proposals to be considered and commented upon.

### **7. “Call-In” of Decisions**

- 7.1 Decisions taken by the Cabinet appear within the Minutes of Cabinet Meetings. The Minutes indicate the “call-in” period for the Decisions made.
- 7.2 Decisions taken by individual Cabinet Members are subject to “call-in”, are published on the Council’s website, and an email alert is sent to all Members of the Council.
- 7.3 “Call-in” can occur when three non-Executive Members have reasons/evidence to challenge the Decision, based on the guidance set out within Chapter 6 of the Council’s Constitution.
- 7.4 A decision shall only be the subject of one “call-in” by non-Executive Members.
- 7.5 Non-Executive Members shall refer to a specific Decision and in instigating the “call-in”, are required to provide as much information, detail, explanation, evidence and/or facts as possible, within the requisition. This will enable appropriate officers to determine whether the “call-in” is valid or not.

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- 7.6 Non-Executive Members shall trigger the “call-in” electronically, using the Council’s Modgov system. This will alert the relevant officers and prevent the Decision from being actioned.
- 7.7 During 2017/18, the O&S Management Board developed a [Call-In Procedure](#) to be used at O&S Committees when dealing with “called-in” items. This was agreed by the four O&S Committees and shall be adhered to at all meetings held to consider “call-in items”.
- 7.8 The following are required to attend the O&S Committee meeting to consider the “called-in” item, in order to address O&S Members on the item and respond to questions / comments raised by O&S Members:
- (a) the lead “call-in” Member;
  - (b) the Leader of the Council and/or relevant Cabinet Member; and
  - (c) relevant senior officer representative(s).
- 7.9 Only the lead call-in Member shall be permitted to:
- Address the O&S Committee, explaining the reason for “call-in”;
  - Respond to questions put by Committee Members; and
  - Sum up the case for “call-in”.
- 7.10 Subject to the agreement of the O&S Committee, a representative of the public may make representations in relation to the “called-in” item, in accordance with the Call-In Procedure previously agreed by O&S Committees.
- 7.11 The “call-in” procedure should not be abused. It should not be used as a substitute for early involvement in the decision-making process. Its use as a party-political tool should be avoided.

### **8. Working Group Reviews/Informal Meetings of Committees**

- 8.1 Heads of Service will be requested to consider potential topics for review via the Strategic Leadership Board and these will be submitted to O&S Committees for consideration, along with any other suggestions from O&S Members. The Committee shall approve any topics to be reviewed.
- 8.2 The [Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review](#) shall be considered in approving topics to be reviewed.
- 8.3 If a topic for review is to be considered by a Working Group at least 3 Members of the Committee shall be required to sit on a Working Group and one Member will be appointed as the Lead Member. Co-opted Members may sit on a Working

## APPENDIX A

Group. If a topic for review is to be considered at an informal meeting of the Committee then all Members of the Committee will be invited to attend; and the Lead Member shall be the Chair of the Committee unless decided otherwise by the Committee. Informal meetings do not have decision making powers and are best suited to situations where members wish to be briefed on a subject by officers.

- 8.4 Heads of Service have a valuable role to play in the review process in terms of suggesting appropriate topics for review, possibly contributing to the scope for the review, the provision of factual evidence, and identifying suitable witnesses. Officers involved in the review shall be open and honest in their discussions with Working Group Members.
- 8.5 The role of the Lead Officer for the review will be to assist in drafting the scope for the review, to provide professional advice and to ensure access to relevant information and personnel for Working Group Members.
- 8.6 Further to a report on Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities being agreed by O&S Committees during October/November 2019, Working Groups shall consider if it is appropriate to seek the views of the general public on the matter under their consideration and, if so, how this should be carried out.
- 8.7 Working Group meetings shall be conducted in the manner outlined within paragraph 4 above. Working Group Members shall adhere to the principle of the “critical friend” during the course of a review. Constructive challenge may be adopted during discussions with Council officers, external partners, key stakeholders, etc. However, a culture of mutual respect shall be maintained at all times.
- 8.8 A final report, including any recommendations from the Working Group, will be drafted by the relevant officer from Democratic Services to reflect the views and wishes of the Working Group concerned, subject to any legal and/or financial implications provided by Legal and Finance officers.
- 8.9 Recommendations may be produced that impact on the Council or external partners.
- 8.10 The final report will be presented to the parent O&S Committee, the Cabinet, and finally to full Council.
- 8.11 The Lead Member of the Working Group concerned will normally present the final report to the Cabinet and to the Council. Where this is not possible, an alternative Member of the Working Group will be asked to present.

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8.12 The relevant senior officer shall ensure that an update on the implementation of recommendations is presented to the parent Committee approximately six months following approval of the final report by the Council. Actions taken since approval of the recommendations should be outlined within the update, together with progress on any implementation required. Where actions have not been carried out, reasons should be given, together with an anticipated timeline for implementation.

### **9. Public Participation in the Overview and Scrutiny Process**

9.1 O&S Members should represent the voice of the public.

9.2 As outlined in paragraph 3.1 above, key responsibilities of O&S are to:

- (a) Hold the Cabinet, Cabinet Members and senior officers to account for their decisions, on behalf of the electorate; and
- (b) Review Council policy, the way policies are implemented and their impact on local citizens;

9.3 The Constitution indicates that O&S Committees allow citizens to have a greater say in Council matters by holding public inquiries into matters of local concern.

9.4 Citizens may contribute to Council considerations by participating in question time at Council meetings, making representations to the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member or a Committee and may be asked to contribute to O&S Working Group reviews.

9.5 The Council's petitions scheme, detailed within the Constitution, allows citizens to address O&S Committees.

9.6 As outlined in paragraph 7.11 above, subject to the agreement of the O&S Committee, a representative of the public may make representations in relation to the "called-in" item, in accordance with the Call-In Procedure previously agreed by O&S Committees.

9.7 As outlined in paragraph 9.5 above, O&S Working Groups shall consider if it is appropriate to seek the views of the general public on the matter under their consideration and, if so, how this should be carried out.

9.8 Senior officers may advise O&S Committees of particular matters of public concern, with a view to the possible establishment of a Working Group review to address such matters.



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### **10. Specific Duty of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) – Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements**

- 10.1 Local authorities may review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in its area.
- 10.2 The NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) places a statutory duty on commissioners and providers of NHS / health services to consult local authority health overview and scrutiny committees on any proposals for significant development or substantial variation/reconfiguration in health services.
- 10.3 Section 30 of The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provides that where more than one local authority is consulted on proposals for significant development or substantial variation in health services, a joint overview and scrutiny committee may be established to comment on the proposals for change.
- 10.4 The Council has delegated its duties relating to health services to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health).
- 10.5 At its meeting on 3 June 2014, the Council approved the [Protocol for the Establishment of Joint Health Scrutiny Arrangements for Cheshire and Merseyside](#).
- 10.6 The Council and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) shall adhere to the Protocol in relation to substantial variations and joint health scrutiny arrangements.

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# Agenda Item 8

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To seek the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2023/24; identify potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by informal meetings; 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 2023/24, 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 as to whether the Committee would like to select a topic for review at an informal meeting of the Committee;
- (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.

# Agenda Item 8

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2023/24 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:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> There are no direct implications for impacting on children and young people arising from this report. Any impact on children and young people 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.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
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. However, any 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.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above.
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above.
Place – leadership and influencer: As above.
Drivers of change and reform: As above.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above.
Greater income for social investment: As above.
Cleaner Greener: As above.

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

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.

### (B) External Consultations

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

### Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Paul Fraser
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2068
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk">paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk</a>

### Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2023/24 – Appendix 1
- Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review – Appendix 2
- Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Appendix 3

### Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

# Agenda Item 8

## **Introduction/Background**

### **1. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

- 1.1 The Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2023/24 was approved by the Committee on 13 June 2023 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Assistant Directors, 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 2023/23 and updated, as appropriate.

### **2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2023/24**

- 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 At its meeting held on 13 June 2023 the Committee agreed that any future reviews during the year be dealt with by informal meetings of the Committee rather than via Working Groups.
- 2.3 The Committee's views are sought on the selection of a topic(s) for consideration by an informal meeting(s) of the Committee.
- 2.4 A criteria checklist for selecting and rejecting potential topics to review is attached at Appendix 2.

### **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.
- 3.6 In respect of pre-scrutiny the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting held on 20 June 2023 noted that often strategies and plans were included on the Forward Plan but that rarely were they submitted to Overview and Scrutiny for comment prior to their submission to Cabinet/Council; and suggested that officers should plan more time into the process for formulating plans and strategies to enable Overview and Scrutiny to have an input and provide comments to Cabinet/Council.

As Members will be aware, there is a report elsewhere on the agenda containing a recommendation that Cabinet be requested to approve changes to the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol and that Executive Directors and Assistant Directors, whose responsibilities fall within the remit of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, be requested to seek the views of the Committees on all strategies and plans prior to submission to Cabinet and Council; and that if it is not possible, due to time constraints, to submit the final strategy or plan for consideration, then an outline or synopsis be submitted to the Committees to allow an oversight of the proposals to be considered and commented upon; and Section 6 of the Protocol relating to pre-scrutiny be amended accordingly.

#### **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.
- 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 an update on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (LCRCAO&S) be included in the Work Programme report considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- 4.3 In accordance with the above decision, information on the LCRCAO&S is set out below.

#### **4.4 Role**

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

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Scrutinise the decision and actions taken by the Combined Authority or the Metro Mayor;

# Agenda Item 8

- 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 Desmond, Hart and Howard. Councillor Howard is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

## 4.6 Chair and Vice-Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be Members of the majority group. Councillor Steve Radford, a Liberal Party Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Chair for the 2023/24 Municipal Year; and Councillor Pat Moloney, a Liberal Democrat Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Vice-Chair.

## 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.

## 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 5 July 2023. The Committee considered the following items:

- Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair
- Work Programme 2023-24
- Appointments of Scrutiny Members to the Audit and Governance Committee 2023/24
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Corporate Plan 2021-24: Quarter 4 2022-23 Performance Update
- Update on the Liverpool City Region Bus Franchising Consultation

4.10 A meeting of the Committee will be held on 6 September 2023. At the time of writing this report the Committee has not met but it is anticipated that the



# Agenda Item 8

following items will be considered:

- LCR Investment Zone Update
- Development of the Next LCR Place-Based Pipeline
- Work Programme 2023-24

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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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) WORK  
PROGRAMME 2023/24**

<b>Tuesday, 13 June 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport</b>	
<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group – Update	Margaret Jones
Debt Management	Stephan Van Arendsen/Diane Turner
Cabinet Member Update Reports	Paul Fraser
Work Programme Update	Paul Fraser

<b>Tuesday, 12 September 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Bootle</b>	
<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
Financial Performance Monitoring	Stephan Van Arendsen/Paul Reilly
Customer Contact Centre Activity - Presentation	Stephan Van Arendsen/Diane Turner
Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and Sickness Absence Monitoring	Paul Cunningham/Marie Lambert
Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group – Update	Margaret Jones
Cabinet Member Update Reports	Paul Fraser
Work Programme Update	Paul Fraser

<b>Tuesday, 31 October 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport</b>	
<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
Financial Performance Monitoring	Stephan Van Arendsen/Paul Reilly
Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land/Asset -Management Strategy	Stephan Van Arendsen/Dom Ellis
Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group – Update	Margaret Jones
Update on Progress of LCR Digital Inclusion Strategy	Andrea Watts
Cabinet Member Update Reports	Paul Fraser
Work Programme Update	Paul Fraser

<b>Tuesday, 9 January 2024, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport</b>	
<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
Financial Performance Monitoring	Stephan Van Arendsen/Paul Reilly
Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Stephan Van Arendsen/Diane Turner
Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group – Update	Margaret Jones
Air Quality Monitoring	Peter Moore/Greg Martin
Armed Forces Covenant	David McCullough
Corporate Communications Update	Martin Driver
Cabinet Member Update Reports	Paul Fraser
Work Programme Update	Paul Fraser

<b>Tuesday, 6 February 2024, 6.30 p.m., Budget Meeting - Town Hall, Bootle</b>	
<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
Budget Report 2024/25 to 2027/28	Stephan Van Arendsen/Paul Reilly
Financial Performance Monitoring	Stephan Van Arendsen/Paul Reilly
Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities – Prudential Indicators	Stephan Van Arendsen/Graham Hussey
Treasury Management Policy and Strategy	Stephan Van Arendsen/Graham Hussey
Capital Strategy 2024/25 and Future Years	Stephan Van Arendsen/Andrew Bridson
Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy – Update Position	Stephan Van Arendsen
Robustness of the 2024/25 Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of Reserves – Local Government Act 2003 – Section 25	Stephan Van Arendsen

<b>Tuesday, 27 February 2024, 6.30 p.m. Town Hall, Southport</b>	
<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
Annual ICT Update Report (Performance of Agilisys)	Helen Spreadbury
Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and Sickness Absence Monitoring	Paul Cunningham/Marie Lambert
Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group – Update	Margaret Jones
Cabinet Member Update Reports	Paul Fraser
Work Programme Update	Paul Fraser

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## APPENDIX 2

### CRITERIA CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING TOPICS FOR REVIEW

<b>Criteria for Selecting Items</b>
▪ 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

<b>Potential Criteria for Rejecting Items</b>
▪ 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.

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## APPENDIX 2

### SCRUTINY CHECKLIST DO'S AND DON'TS

<b>DO</b>
◆ Remember that Scrutiny <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Is about learning and being a "critical friend"; it should be a positive process</li><li>◆ Is not opposition</li></ul>
◆ 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

<b>◆ DON'T</b>
◆ 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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## APPENDIX 3

## SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

**FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2023 - 31 JANUARY 2024**

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](http://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

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX 3

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:-

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](http://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.*

**Phil Porter**  
**Chief Executive**

## APPENDIX 3

### FORWARD PLAN INDEX OF ITEMS

Item Heading	Officer Contact
Schools Internet Connectivity - Re-contracting	David Harris david.harris@sefton.gov.uk, Helen Spreadbury helen.spreadbury@sefton.gov.uk
Land at Lunt, Sefton	Suzanne Rimmer suzanne.rimmer@sefton.gov.uk
Vine House Disposal	Lee Payne lee.payne@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4842
Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – October Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106
Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy	David Eden david.eden@sefton.gov.uk
Microsoft Azure and Office 365 licences	David Harris david.harris@sefton.gov.uk
Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – November Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106
Treasury Management Position to September 2023	Graham Hussey graham.hussey@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4100
Annual Health and Safety Report	David Eden david.eden@sefton.gov.uk
Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – December Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106
Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – January Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106

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## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Schools Internet Connectivity - Re-contracting</b> Seeking permission to recontract via a direct award with the incumbent provider of this service through a Public Contract Regulation compliant framework			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	5 Oct 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	None			
Method(s) of Consultation	N/a			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Schools Internet Connectivity - recontracting			
Contact Officer(s) details	David Harris david.harris@sefton.gov.uk, Helen Spreadbury helen.spreadbury@sefton.gov.uk			

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Land at Lunt, Sefton</b> Disposal of land			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	5 Oct 2023 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 07/09/2023 to 05/10/2023. Reason: Negotiations are still ongoing			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	No
Exempt Report	Part exempt (Paragraph 3)			
Wards Affected	Manor; Park			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Officers and Members via Cabinet Member Reference Group			
Method(s) of Consultation	Cabinet Member Reference Group			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Land at Lunt, Sefton			
Contact Officer(s) details	Suzanne Rimmer <a href="mailto:suzanne.rimmer@sefton.gov.uk">suzanne.rimmer@sefton.gov.uk</a>			

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Vine House Disposal</b> Approval of the terms of disposal of the Council owned tower block Vine House, Kelper Street, Seaforth.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	5 Oct 2023 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 07/09/2023 to 05/10/2023. Reason: officers are still engaged in due diligence on the disposal			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	No
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	Linacre			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Not applicable			
Method(s) of Consultation	Not applicable			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Vine House Disposal			
Contact Officer(s) details	Lee Payne lee.payne@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4842			



## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – October Update</b> Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	5 Oct 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer 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 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – October Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy</b> To seek approval of the Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	5 Oct 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Cabinet Member for Regulatory Compliance and Corporate Services; Strategic Leadership Board; Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Method(s) of Consultation	Shared by email, included on agendas and consulted with Cabinet Member for Regulatory Compliance and Corporate Services and Strategic Leadership Board. Approved by Exec Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy			
Contact Officer(s) details	David Eden david.eden@sefton.gov.uk			

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Microsoft Azure and Office 365 licences</b> Procurement for the continued use of Microsoft Azure and Office 365. Microsoft Azure is the cloud environment the Council uses for many of its applications and data storage. Office 365 is product used by many Council Officers to fulfill their duties which also includes email.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	2 Nov 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	No
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Not applicable			
Method(s) of Consultation	Not applicable			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Microsoft Azure and Office 365 licences			
Contact Officer(s) details	David Harris david.harris@sefton.gov.uk			

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – November Update</b> Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	2 Nov 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer 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 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – November Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Treasury Management Position to September 2023</b> This report provides Members with a review of the Treasury Management activities undertaken to 30th September 2023.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet  Council			
Decision Expected	2 Nov 2023  16 Nov 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	No
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services  Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	N/A			
Method(s) of Consultation	None			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Treasury Management Position to September 2023			
Contact Officer(s) details	Graham Hussey graham.hussey@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4100			

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Annual Health and Safety Report</b>			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	7 Dec 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer 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			

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – December Update</b> Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	7 Dec 2023			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer 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 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – December Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

# Agenda Item 8

## APPENDIX 3

### SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – January Update</b> Financial updates and Policy decisions relating to the Council's Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan, including the monthly Revenue and Capital budget monitoring reports			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	4 Jan 2024			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services			
Lead Director	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer 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 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – January Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			



# Agenda Item 9

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Cabinet Member Report – June 2023 to August 2023		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To submit the Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services report for the period June 2023 to August 2023 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 9

(B) **Capital Costs** – see above

## Implications of the Proposals:

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

## Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

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

Place – leadership and influencer: As above
Drivers of change and reform: As above
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above
Greater income for social investment: As above
Cleaner Greener: As above

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

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

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

### Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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

### 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 Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services is attached.

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<b>CABINET MEMBER REPORT Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) -</b>		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Period of Report</b>
Paulette Lappin	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services	July - August 2023

## **Financial Management**

Within the Financial Management service, there has been significant activity on a number of key issues:

Following the approval of the 2023/24 budget, budget adjustments have been incorporated into each service's budget to form the initial budget for the year. This has been loaded into the Council's Financial Management System.

The Council's revenue outturn position has been finalised and was reported to Cabinet in July - the overall position was balanced with no call on the Council's General Balances. The position was reported alongside the Capital outturn position and performance information for 2022/2023.

The first budget monitoring position, as at the end of June, was also reported to Cabinet in July. This showed a forecast overspend of about £7m, mainly due to a forecast overspend on Children's Social Care (£5m) and the potential impact of the as yet unagreed pay award (an additional £1.5m). There are other budgets under pressure, but the expectation is that services will mitigate these pressures from elsewhere within their budgets. Further work is being undertaken to refine forecasts and updated positions will be reflected in future reports.

A report on the Medium-Term Financial Plan will be presented to Cabinet in September. This will outline the updated position (as reported to Informal Policy Cabinet) as well as provide some narrative on some other financial issues facing the Council.

As reported to Audit and Governance in July, the draft Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 and 2021/22 are still be audited by EY. These audits are close to completion with the hope that the final audit results reports for both years will be presented to Audit and Governance before the end of September 2023. It should be noted that no major issues appear to have been found.

Due to the delays in finalising the audit of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 Statement of Accounts the production of the Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 has been delayed. Officers are in the process of producing the accounts and hope to publish them as soon as possible. The audit of the accounts for 2022/2023 is expected to commence later in the year.

## **Customer Centric Services**

All areas of the service are dealing with high workloads, it remains positive that there continues to be progress in reducing volumes outstanding. It is however acknowledged that work must continue over coming months to further reduce customer waiting times, with clearing work backlogs in Council Tax being the highest priority. However, as at the end of July, the overall outstanding workload has reduced by 32.0% since 1 May 2023.

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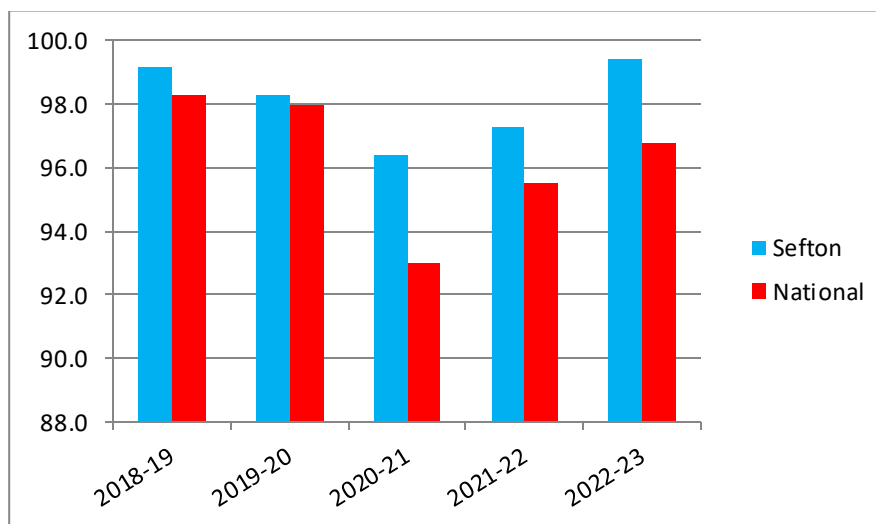
## *National Collection Performance 2022/23*

The Government released the data on all English councils' Council Tax and Business Rates collection performance for 2022/23 on 21 June 2023. The data analysis shows that Sefton is performing well in relation to other metropolitan councils, and the councils in the Liverpool City Region.

### *Business Rates*

Sefton was the best performing council of the 36 metropolitan authorities with a published collection rate of 99.4%. Collection improved by 2.1% on the published performance for 2021-22 compared to an average increase of 0.8% amongst metropolitan councils and 1.3% nationally.

Sefton has consistently outperformed against national average collection over the last five years as illustrated in the chart below:

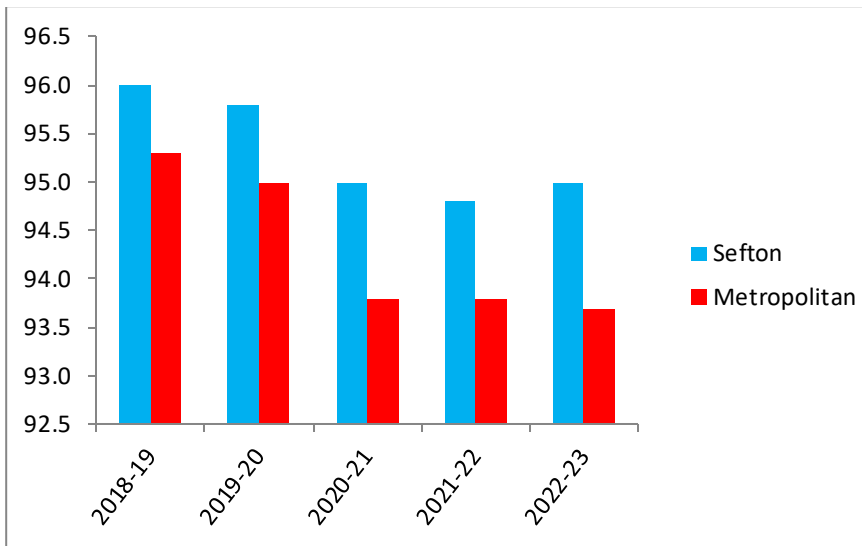


### *Council Tax*

Sefton's published collection rate was 95.0%. This places Sefton 12<sup>th</sup> amongst metropolitan councils, the same position as 2021/22, maintaining its position as the best performing council in the Liverpool City Region.

Collection improved by 0.2% on the published performance for 2021/22 compared to an average increase of 0.1% amongst metropolitan councils and an average decrease of 0.1% nationally.

Sefton has consistently outperformed against the average collection amongst metropolitan Councils over the last five years as illustrated in the chart below: -

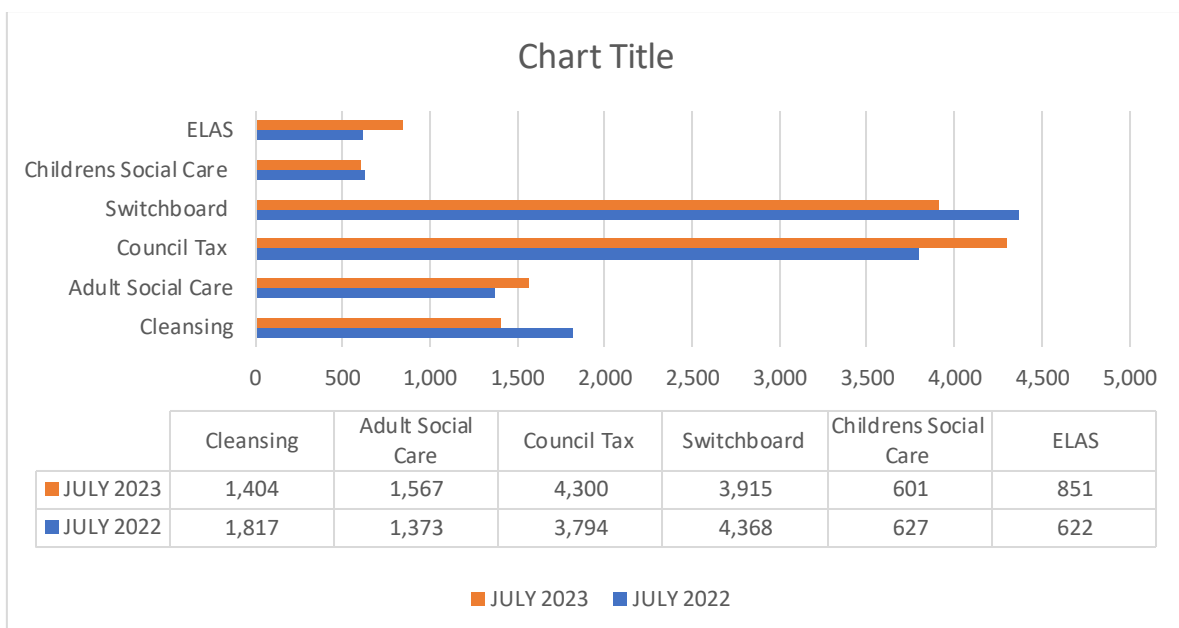


## Customer Services

The Council's Customer Services Contact Centre is currently answering approximately 18,000 calls each month, which is about 82% of all calls received, with 18% being abandoned.

It should be noted that the salutation message that is relayed at the start of each incoming call continues to encourage customers to use the online Council services if they can, allowing for staff to handle calls for prioritised services, i.e., Children's Social Care and ELAS, so many customers opt to abandon the call and go online instead.

The table below compares the number of telephone calls that were answered for the high call volume services and prioritised services in July 2022 and July 2023. For the high call volume services, customers calls will always be answered if they are prepared to wait on the line, unless in the very rare circumstances that the emergency message is being relayed.



# Agenda Item 9

Council Tax continues to be the busiest service for telephone calls handled by the Contact Centre. Customers seeking financial support is the primary reason for the constant high volumes, however the regular cycle of reminder and summons runs also contributes to high call volumes.

Customer demand at the One Stop Shops continues to be high; in July 2,971 customers attended Bootle One Stop Shop, this included 916 taxi drivers, 277 of which had an appointment and a further 639 “drop-ins”. There were 955 customers who attended with a Council Tax or benefits enquiry and 36 customers were assisted in completing an ELAS application. The remaining 1,064 customers were seeking general council-related advice at reception.

At Southport, 600 customers attended the Atkinson, with 186 customers booking an appointment to discuss their Council Tax or benefit and the remainder seeking general council – related advice at reception.

While overall customer contact remains high, enquiries for Social Care and ELAS remain prioritised above all other services that are offered by Customer Services.

## **Taxi-Licensing**

The processing of all Taxi Licensing general enquiry e-mails and new/renewal vehicle plates continues to be very good, with most of the workloads currently being processed within 5 days of receipt.

Progress with New Driver e-mail applications is currently excellent, although this is not reflected with the number of new licences that are being issued each month. Drivers who submit their application are contacted by telephone call in the first instance and are offered an appointment at Bootle One Stop Shop to submit their qualifying evidence. Once the evidence is submitted and checked, they are then offered an appointment for a knowledge test.

Unfortunately, drivers are failing to attend their appointment and there are also drivers failing to attend their knowledge test. This is obviously a significant waste of Council resources; therefore, those drivers are now being asked to resubmit a new application and once received, they go to the back of the waiting list. At the end of the month, a meeting was held with Delta, Sefton’s main taxi operator, they have committed to assisting with preparing their drivers for the appointment and knowledge test.

## **Citizen Access - Revenues**

A project is well underway to introduce a web-based citizen access portal for Council Tax and Business Rates customers to manage their accounts on-line, allowing greater self-serve options. The first phase is expected to go-live in September 2023.

## **Migration of Revenues and Benefits document management system**

The transition to the new Revenues and Benefits NEC document management system continues to go well. In July, 4.8million historical Revenues and Benefits documents were successfully migrated from the Civica electronic document management Revenues and Benefits system. A small number of general documents still need to migrate and then the service will work with the ICT Client team to de-commission the Civica system.



## **Risk and Audit**

The **Internal Audit** team are continuing to work on delivering the 2023/24 internal audit plan with a current focus on reviews of:

- ASC Finance Budget Management
- Sefton New Direction Governance review
- Review of number of Schools.
- Highways Maintenance Procurement
- SHOL Governance review
- Sandway Homes finance review
- Assurance Mapping
- Petty cash

We have continued the recruitment of a permanent staff member in February 2023 however we have not found any suitable candidates so far to interview.

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

- The procurement exercise for the re-valuation for insurance purposes of the remaining Council properties which have not been subject to a re-valuation in the past two years has concluded and the results fed into the Council's insurance tender and September 2023 renewal.
- We have concluded the Council's insurance tender and have selected the successful insurers for each of the lots.
- We have used some of the "free days" as part of the insurance programme risk bursary to provide training for duty holders and manage contractors on site at schools and corporately.
- We are working with insurers and the Council's liability insurers to robustly defend claims and in limited circumstances will pursue through the Courts claimants to recover Council costs where the claims are proven to be exaggerated.
- Team 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.

## **Risk and Resilience Team.**

We are continuing to develop a Corporate Business Continuity Plan using the existing Service Area Business Continuity (BC) Plans. Following the exercise of the Council's BC arrangements in January 2023 which we have subsequently received feedback on we are currently implementing the recommendations from the review. We have revised the Council's BC Strategy and Policy. The Policy is due to be presented to Cabinet during October 2023.

The **Risk and Resilience Team** are currently rolling out training on the Council's Risk Appetite which was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in March 2023 as well as facilitating the updates of the Council's Corporate Risk Register for Audit and Governance Committee in September 2023. Other work includes:

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- Working with the Merseyside Resilience Forum
- Development of a Shoreline Pollution Plan
- Review of the Council's emergency facilities
- Working on Sefton events

For the **Health and Safety Team** there will be a continued focus during the next quarter of delivering the Health and Safety Improvement Plan.

- 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.
- Completing 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. Key projects currently in flight relate to support for the Children's Improvement Programme, Customer Services (CXP), Data Centre relocation, Sefton Arc and Leisure ICT Improvements as well as Cyber Security.
- There have been challenges obtaining the larger volumes of ICT KIT required to finish the backfilling of all desks at Magdalen House, however the team are pleased to report that this work is now completed. In addition, devices have been deployed across Southport Town Hall to support the Adult Social Care teams located in this space.
- Data centre rationalisation and right sizing is now completed within the existing Data Centre at St Peters ready for a move to Bootle Town Hall during financial year 23/24. Conversations are ongoing around options for the location of the new data centre, given the complexity of the design, an options paper is in development and due to be finalised within the next couple of weeks.
- The Cloud telephony project is now closed, the final work to be completed during the next few months is to remove the remaining infrastructure supporting a legacy telephony range which is not linked to the historical Mitel telephony system (which 8x8 replaced). Most of these direct dial numbers are thought to be historical but unfortunately it is not possible to report on the usage of these lines, work is to be planned with Virgin to soft cease these numbers to assess impact prior to removal.

# Agenda Item 9

Communications will be issued in advance across the Council. This has been slightly delayed due to the need to move one Library which is currently on a direct dial number, this is now completed. The soft cease will be planned in during September to avoid the busy summer weeks and ensure we capture any lines still required.

- The new CXP solution went live across all services in January this year, with the final elements of phase one (migration of legacy processes) nearing completion. There is only one remaining legacy service, Pest Control, to be completed, which is well underway once complete, the legacy CRM system can be formally decommissioned. In terms of phase two, work is now underway to transfer Council eforms to CXP from the legacy eforms system, and work is also starting on the configuration and set up of FOI processes in CXP. Initial scoping of future process builds is being prepared, most notably for Registrars and for internal Establishment Control.
- The website improvement programme work is now completed. Work has commenced on the upgrade of the Umbraco content management system and governance is now in place to manage any web developments moving forwards.
- The ICT Procurement team continue to be busy; the team have successfully closed out several contract awards recently including the Contact Centre Telephony Solution and Capita One. Consultation on the new forward plan has taken place with corporate procurement colleagues and work allocations completed the draft report is now awaiting approval prior to its release.
- As per the last update the procurement for Corporate Connectivity did not complete with a successful outcome, with no bidders meeting the requirements of the authority. The Client team is now exploring alternative routes to market, with a potential for joint procurement across the Liverpool City Region, in the interim Cabinet have now approved a direct award with Virgin to ensure continuity of the existing service whilst options are reviewed, this contract award will complete in August.
- The threat level in relation to Cyber Security remains high and the team are working hard to implement new technologies and tools to stay one step ahead of the risk. Work is underway on a full security review linked to Zero Trust networking, with proposals to follow in relation to potential security improvements. During July the team re-visited the Microsoft CSAT assessment and we have seen a marked improvement on our maturity, with the authorities overall score rising from 2.5 from a possible 4 in 2022 to 3.6 this year.
- The drafting of the new Digital Strategy for Sefton has started, with engagement across the Council to develop a proposal document which, following internal approvals, will go out to consultation in Autumn this year.

## **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.

# Agenda Item 9

## Asset Management / FM

- Ongoing work to deliver approved Asset Disposals with further phases being developed for approval.
- Assisting with the SEND programme.
- Ongoing work supporting Growth Board projects.
- Ongoing work in connection to lease agreements.

## Maintenance Management & Building Services

- Delivering a range of schemes in support of Corporate Buildings.
- Delivering a range of schemes in support of Education Capital & SEND programme.
- Delivery of reactive maintenance and statutory compliance services to Corporate and Educational buildings.
- Professional advice and support on a broad range of regeneration programmes.
- Phase 1 essential maintenance delivery plan for corporate buildings progressing with works ongoing/complete. Looking to source funding for further phases.
- Formulating asset survey delivery plan alongside the essential maintenance.
- Delivering services in support of major adaptation to vulnerable and disabled residents.

## Project Management

- Provide professional support to Growth Board on several projects.
- Project delivery for various Education capital & SEND schemes.
- Provide support to other teams on Asset Disposal, Building Maintenance, Asset Management, Energy and Statutory Compliance colleagues.

## Energy Management

- Sefton Council Retrofit programme (LAD3, HUG) – Providing insulation to privately owned properties (worst/not insulated & for poorest residents 407). This has been extended and the completion date is now September 2023.
- A programme of work to support schools (after large energy price rises) is ongoing.
- Feasibility Study for a Wind turbine is ongoing.
- Sefton have transferred electricity provider. Post 1 April, all Council buildings and streetlights are 100% renewable energy powered.
- Energy prices (gas and electricity) continue to be high, due to the government support having been removed.
- Work on the next phase of the Climate Emergency programme is progressing.

## **Legal Services**

### Democratic Services Team – Overview

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

At the time of drafting this report, the next meeting of the Committee will be held on 5 September 2023 and the following items will be considered at the meeting:

- Liverpool Clinical Services Review
- Domestic Abuse Update
- Report for Information on Vaping Amongst Young People

# Agenda Item 9

- GP Patient Survey (2023) - Sefton Place
- NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, Sefton - Update Report
- NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, Sefton - Health Provider Performance Dashboard
- Executive/Scrutiny Protocol
- Cabinet Member Update Reports
- Work Programme Update

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

At the time of drafting this report, the next meeting of the Committee will be held on 26 September 2023 and it is anticipated that the following items will be considered at the meeting:

- Cabinet Member Reports
- Domestic Abuse
- Report for Information on Vaping Amongst Young People
- Children's Services Improvement Programme
- Children's Social Care Overview of Practice and CHAT
- Executive/Scrutiny Protocol
- Work Programme Key Decision Forward Plan

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

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 19 September 2023. At the time of writing this report the agenda for the meeting has not been published but it is anticipated that the Committee will consider the following items:

- Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2023/24
- Domestic Abuse update
- Riverside Dispersed Accommodation Update
- Winter Maintenance Policy and Operational Plan
- Executive/Scrutiny Protocol
- Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan
- Cabinet Member reports

Arrangements are being put in place to arrange an informal meeting of the Committee to review the topic of refuse and waste recycling and in respect of this matter a visit will also be arranged to the Gillmoss Recycling Discovery Centre.

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

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 12 September 2023. At the time of writing this report the agenda for the meeting has not been published but it is anticipated that the Committee will consider the following items:

- Customer Contact Centre Activity – Presentation
- Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity at Work and Sickness Absence
- Executive/Scrutiny Protocol
- Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan

# Agenda Item 9

- Cabinet Member report

- **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

The next meeting of the Management Board will be held on 12 September 2023. At the time of writing this report the agenda for the meeting has not been published but it is anticipated that the Committee will consider the following items:

- Overview and Scrutiny Contribution Towards Improvements in Children's Services
- Liverpool City Region Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Scrutiny Link - Councillor Howard
- Strategic Scrutiny in Practice Network and Basecamp
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – Newsletters and Annual Survey
- Update on Informal Meetings/Working Groups
- Update on Actions Taken Arising from the Last Meeting

- **Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The next meeting of the of the LCRO&S will be held on 6 September 2023. At the time of writing this report the agenda for the meeting has not been published. An update will be provided as part of the next Cabinet Member report.

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 Desmond, Hart and Howard. Councillor Howard is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

## **School Appeals**

The Section has continued to organise and clerk school admission appeal hearings and school exclusion reviews.

The busiest time of year in the school appeals calendar for the Clerk to the Education Appeal Panel continued with Primary school hearings commencing on 26 June 2023, and following with final 'wash up' dates dealing with late appeals and in-year transfers hearings which took us through to 18 July 2023 which was the last day of the school term. Between 26 June and 18 July 2023, 94 LEA appeals were listed/heard and 34 Archdiocese (Catholic voluntary aided schools) appeals were listed/heard. This involved 12 days of hearings over the 17-day period and included appeals for 39 different schools.

## **Civic and Mayoral Services**

- The Mayor will be holding Three Charity Nights during her term of office, a Divas Night on 14 October 2023, a 1970s Night on 18 November and the Gala Charity Ball on 6 April 2024. Tickets are now on sale for both the Divas & 70's Nights.
- Work has now commenced on the 2023 Remembrance Sunday Events and operational meetings will be taking place during week commencing 28 August 2023.

## Member Development

### Member Development Programme 2023-2024

The Member Development Programme is now well underway with training being provided to relevant Committee Members.

1. The mandatory Planning Committee Training session took place on 24 May and was well received by Members and Substitute Members of Planning Committee. The session was attended by all of 15 of the Planning Committee Members and 11 of the 15 Substitute members. A special “mop-up” training session took place on 3 July 2023.
2. Mandatory Licensing and Regulatory Committee training took place on 12 June 2023.
3. Overview and Scrutiny Committee training - Democratic Services have been working closely with the LGA for the provision of the following training for Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members:
  - On 30 May 2023 the first of three sessions for Members and Substitutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Children’s Services and Safeguarding took place. The second training session took place on 25 July 2023 and the third session will take place on 2 October 2023.
  - Two training sessions for all Overview and Scrutiny Members and Substitutes were held at Bootle Town Hall on 15 June 2023.
  - Arrangements have been made for the provision of training for all the O&S Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and for mentoring support for the Chair of the O&S Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding).
  - Negotiations are currently underway with the LGA for the provision of dedicated training for O&S Adult Social Care and Health Committee members and substitutes.

Mandatory Corporate Parenting training– Following the return of the Council’s Corporate Parenting Officer, the mandatory Corporate Parenting Course will continue to be provided in-house, supported by the Cabinet Member - Children’s Social Care. During 2023-24 the training will be provided on 4 separate occasions to maximise take-up.

Accessible information training took place on 14 June 2023 and Values and Behaviours – Understanding your Role as a Councillor was held on 18 July 2023.

### Member Development Steering Group

The Member Development Steering Group was established in November 2022. For 2023/24 the Group is comprised of 6 Members met on 23 August 2023.

The Members of the Steering Group act as Member Development Champions for their respective political groups and are responsible for providing feedback on the Member Development Programme.

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## **Contract and Commercial**

- Legal support on the Marine Lake Events Centre project: Sefton's internal legal team continue to support Council officers and the Council's appointed external legal advisor on the progression of this project
- Domiciliary Care PDPS: Sefton's internal legal team have assisted on the procurement of a Sefton run Pseudo Dynamic Purchasing System for Domiciliary Care which is aiming to go live in September 2023
- Legal Support on the Bootle Strand Regeneration Project Sefton's internal legal team continue to support Council officers and the Council's appointed external legal advisor on the progression of this project
- Children's Residential Care PDPS: Sefton's internal legal team assisted on the procurement and establishment of a Sefton run Pseudo Dynamic Purchasing System for Children's Residential Care which went live in July 2023
- Legal Support on the Crosby Library Regeneration Project Sefton's internal legal team continue to support Council officers on the progression of this project
- JCT Build Contract support: Sefton's internal legal team have supported on a number of JCT build contracts covering a range of work from minor works to JCT intermediate with contractor's design. For the financial year 2023/24 to date, this has involved the advising on and completion of 16 separate build contracts. Some of these contracts included more complex arrangements such as the agreement of listed items, performance bonds and a letter of intent to allow a contractor to commence work in advance of contract completion

## **Property**

- The Property team continue to handle a wide and varied caseload of instructions from the Council's estates team for disposals, acquisitions and other property related matters; including
  - the sale of Pavilion Buildings to JD Wetherspoons,
  - lease of Viking Golf Lease to Pleasureland,
  - and the ongoing Meadows / Sandbrook disposal
- Planning matters will continue following the summer with planning committees back on in September, and continuing support to the Highways team in relation to numerous developments in the Borough.

## **Prosecutions**

- The team provided support Council officers and the Council's appointed external legal advisor on the major Uber v Sefton Council litigation
- The team successfully prosecuted a landlord who failed to licence his property from March 2018 – December 2022 (when the property was prohibited due to a fire), he was sentenced to a fine of £35,000, the Council was awarded its full costs



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- The team continues to prosecute unlicensed private hire operators and where appropriate revoke private hire driver's licence with some notable recent successes
- The team have advised the licensing sub-committee at four hearings required to be held under the Licensing Act 2003 during July and August. In particular, much time was spent on the review of the Oath Lounge Southport which attracted a lot of media attention
- The debt recovery sub-team continues to recover significant debts owed to the Council

## **Employment**

- The Employment team continue to support Council Officers on a wide range of contentious and non-contentious employment law matters

## **Childrens**

- The Children Adults and Education team remains exceptionally busy given the pressures on the CSC and ASC teams locally and nationally. Children's Social Care are supported by 10 Lawyers, 8 Senior Legal Assistants and 2 legal Assistants. The staffing has increased in the last 2 years to meet the demands and the pressures currently being experienced by Sefton Children Social Services. One of the Lawyers is currently dedicated to advising on discharging care orders to significantly decrease the number of looked after children who have been identified as no longer requiring a public Law order to ensure their safety. The number of children being subject to pre-proceedings has increased with care applications consistently high with court compliance timetables being 26 weeks from application to final order where this is practicable to ensure that the needs of Sefton Children are met in a timely manner.
- The Education SEN Lawyer has seen an increase in the amount of appeals to the SEN tribunal this year, currently 23 appeals compared to 21 for the year 2022 and the Adults team comprising of 2 Lawyers and 1 Senior Legal Assistant are similarly extremely busy with Court of Protection work.

## **Support to Schools**

Legal Services provide advice to Sefton Schools under service level agreements across a range of matters, including employment matters, education related queries, contracts and a variety of other legal matters

## **Registration Service**

- From 1 April to 25 August, 80 less deaths have been registered in Sefton than in the equivalent period in 2022.
- Number of civil ceremonies which have taken place in Sefton's Town Halls and Approved Premises between 1.4.23 and 29.8.23 increased by 53 in comparison to the same period in 2022.

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## **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT**

### **Operational Issues**

Advice and support are provided to all service areas regarding employment/staffing matters.

Predominantly, work issues and support is focused on Children's Social Care. There is a small, dedicated HR team in Children's Social Care providing advice and guidance on all staffing matters. The challenge continues to be the recruitment and retention of Social Work staff combined with developing improvements in the service area overall. Arrangements are in place to establish a central recruitment team to support the transformation improvements in CSC.

The majority of the HR team are agile working, combining working from home and at office sites as required. HR teams are meeting in Magdalen once a week to maintain contact and social interaction.

Matters relating to disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work continue to be lesser than pre-covid period. Formal meetings continue to be held via Microsoft Teams, although in person meetings are taking place as necessary. Advice and support in the management of sickness absence continues and formal action under the sickness absence policy is being taken, again via Microsoft Teams or in person as necessary.

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

### **Pay & Grading, Job evaluation, policy and projects.**

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

Officers in this team review safeguarding checks held against posts e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service, Health Care Professional Council (HCPC) etc and the team manages and controls the temporary end dates relative to all fixed term contracts.

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 relative to social worker and associated positions especially within Children's Services

The team manage sickness absence data, including production of management reports, sickness absence analysis and quarterly absence figures for SLT.

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Officers are involved with Employment Tribunal claims (approx. 580) relative to employees seeking backdating of amendments to Term Time Only salary calculations. Consultations are ongoing in relation to the potential settlement of these claims following a Court of Appeal case. On 15<sup>th</sup> March GMB accepted the Council settlement proposal (which covers a very small proportion of the 580 claims). Officers will make settlement offers in relation to GMB legitimate claims, if the claimants withdraw their ET claims.

The team includes a Policy Officer responsible for undertaking reviews of policy, procedures and guidance and introduce new policies as required in line with current legislation. The officer is also involved in Corporate Equalities initiatives, staff support groups, responding to Freedom of Information and subject access requests, and assistance with mandatory training for managers.

Team members are responsible for the production of Agenda and minutes in relation to the Joint Trade Union meetings held on a 2 week cycle.

## **Health Unit**

1. During the period 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023, a total of 125 referrals for SMBC employees were made to the Health Unit (HU). This is an increase when compared to the same period in the previous 12 months in which there were 117 referrals.
2. Referrals during this latest period included Education Excellence (43.2%), Children's Services (3.2%), Operational-In-House Services (4.8%), and ASC (6.4%). As usual the main reasons were stress and mental health related (42.4%), chronic medical illness (20%) and musculoskeletal (10.4%).
3. Delivery of all the OH services continue to be offered via a mixture of telephone and video calls, and face-to-face appointments. This arrangement is working extremely successfully, as it enables flexibility for both managers and employees, but consideration is being given to increasing the number of face-to-face appointments following feedback from service providers and managers. However, the HU will continue to triage referrals based on the condition rather than any other factors.

## **Transactional HR Payroll & Pension (THRP) Services**

There are still some issues with Monthly Data Collection (MDC) for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) which we are working with Midland HR (MHR) to resolve. Sefton are now up to date with submission of files and have submitted the June 2023 file to Merseyside Pension Fund (MPF).

Teachers Pensions Monthly data collection (MDC) moves to Monthly Contribution Reconciliation (MCR) has been postponed until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 as the iTrent software has several known issues.

The staff are still learning parts of the new system and there are issues with how long the system is taking to process some records and this has been raised and is being investigated by MHR.

There are backlogs in the teams due to process, reporting and resource issues and all work is being prioritised.

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Some THRP staff are continuing to work from home and more staff are coming into the office. Some processes have had to be changed and the staff have embraced these changes. The number of staff going into the office is still being closely monitored.

There are now outstanding pay awards from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 for Soulbury staff and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 for NJC staff, Councillors and Chief Executive pay.

The Teachers Pay award for 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 is currently being agreed and is expected to be received around October/November 2023

MHR rolled out MFA (multi factor authentication) and THRP have held drop-in sessions in Bootle, Southport and Hawthorne Road Depot to help staff access ESS.

## **Workforce Learning and Development (CLC)**

### **Apprenticeships**

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

We have procured a training provider called Solace who specialises in Public Sector Leadership and Management qualifications to deliver the **Level 5 Operational/Departmental Manager Apprenticeship standard**. The course will be aimed at aspiring Middle Managers/Managers and upon successful completion of the qualification candidates will gain two accredited awards: ILM Level 5 Leadership and Management and Operational/Departmental Manager Standard Apprenticeship. 10 managers from across the organisation applied for the programme all they all gained a place to commence from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

We are working with an apprenticeship training provider called Multiverse, who specialise in the delivery of data apprenticeships at levels 2,3 and 6. Following a recent data skills analysis of which 545 staff responded, we will be rolling out the **Level 3 Data Technician Apprenticeship standard** from the beginning of September 2023. The course will benefit staff who work with data spreadsheets and forecast business outcomes.

We have launched another higher level apprenticeship called **the Level 6 Environmental Health Practitioner Degree**, and a member of staff from the public health team will join the course the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September 2023.

### **Training delivery**

The Workforce Learning and Development Team continues to deliver a number of training programmes and initiatives. These include:

- **Corporate Mandatory Training** – this includes Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, Safeguarding Adults Awareness, Safeguarding Children & Young People Awareness and Climate Change. Monthly reports have recently been updated to include the mandatory courses for managers. Additional courses include Sickness Absence and Equality and Diversity for Managers eLearning, Recruitment and Selection, Managing Capability and Managing Disciplinary, Grievance and Dignity at Work virtual classroom sessions. The reports are shared with ELT/SLB to encourage staff to complete these courses.

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- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** training delivery is going well. To date, we have trained 216 Sefton Council and schools' staff. That is an increase of 6 staff since the previous report.
- **LCRCA Race Equality Training** – working with the LCRCA and neighbouring LAs to develop a training programme to complement existing E&D awareness training. This will include the 'lived experience' to enable us to address the structural and systemic racial biases that exist in some organisations and to challenges micro aggressions and unconscious biases in the workplace. To date we have delivered 7 managers sessions and 8 non-manager sessions, total trained is 212 staff. Further sessions for September and October 2023 are currently being planned.
- The development of a **Personalisation Training Programme** for students, ASYEs and for new starters working across Adult Social Care, who have not undertaken this training previously. The target date for completion is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.

## **Workforce/Organisational Development**

Other workforce actions include the following:

- We submitted a nomination to Inclusive Companies with the support of the CEG to demonstrate how our E&D training offer has developed and expanded over the previous 3 years.
- Developed a CPD training offer for Children's Services which includes essential training for Social Workers and Managers. This will be reviewed quarterly, and any updates included. This was officially launched on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July and will be reviewed quarterly.
- Work has commenced work on a CPD offer for Adult Social Care, which includes essential training for all staff who work in this area. Target date for completion is January 2024.
- We worked with the Leaving Care Team to develop a training programme for Care Leavers. Following consultation with the Making a Difference Group, the programme is now and is being made available to all current and former care experienced young people.
- We are worked with HR and Legal to develop a 3 hour Managing Performance Training session. This was an action identified in the Children's Services improvement plan. The aim of the course is to provide managers with the tools to consistently apply performance management across Children's Services, and to recognise their role and contribution to effectively manage performance. To date, we have trained 60 Service/Team Managers, that's an increase of 20 managers since the last report.

## **Strategic Support**

### **Performance & 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. The team have developed a new performance framework for Children's Social Care and Adults Social Care services, using the recently implemented Data Warehouse and Power BI. Progress continues with the development of the Council's new enterprise data warehouse platform, which will enable

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cross-Council big data analysis. The team is also supporting the information requirements for the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan, with a focus on improving the 'drill-through' functionality in new Power BI reports to access client level information.

## **Consultation & Engagement, Complaints and Information Governance.**

The teams continue 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. There is a challenge with capacity in the Complaints team, but the team is actively recruiting to vacant posts to address the issue.

Working with the Learning & Development team the team has developed Accessible Information eLearning to help all staff to support people in Sefton who have different communication needs. This short and positive course provides learners with the understanding why we must adapt how we communicate and the skills and resources to do it.

Learning outcomes include:

1. Explain what Accessible information is.
2. Understand why we need to provide accessible information.
3. Explain how we can provide different methods of accessible information.
4. Identify what support is available to help employees to make information more accessible.

The project to digitise the Council's historic paper records continues at pace. All legacy records stored at disparate 3<sup>rd</sup> part locations have now been moved to the Council's preferred secured storage provider, taking opportunity to destroy legacy records and digitise those that are not required to be kept in original paper format. The team has now completed processing legacy records stored at the former Thomas Gray School site and has begun to review records at Southport Coroner's Office, the former Bootle Play Centre and Beford Road Community Centre.

## **Strategic Support**

The team is now focused to providing support across the various services with policy & strategy development, service reviews and transformation activity, including supporting the Children's Improvement Plan, ([Sefton Children's Improvement Plan Phase 3](#) ). The team recently provided logistical support for the Ofsted Monitoring Visit. Work has begun on the refresh of the Children & Young People Plan, which will require a significant amount of consultation and engagement with children, young people and partner organisations to influence the priorities to be included in the plan for the next three years.

Work has also commenced on the preparation for the Local Government Association Peer Challenge which is scheduled to take place in November 2023.

## **Procurement**

Formal Procurement team engagement meetings continue with Service areas to update the Contract Register; review current workplans and timelines; identify future or prospective projects; and update the Procurement pipeline.

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The team is also using these reviews as opportunities to encourage support for our early payment programme and to identify opportunities to incorporate Social Value initiatives.

## **Communications**

The team has seen some personnel changes, most notably the departure of Corporate Communications Manager. Her replacement will join the team in September. Until that time, Communications Team Leader Martin Driver is Interim Corporate Communications Manager while Ollie Cowan is acting up temporarily into Martin's role.

Also, two new additions joined Communications in July. a new Social Media Officer focusing on raising the Council's profile across social media channels and increasing engagement. Plus a Videographer who will be increasing filmed output, in line with the fact that more people, particularly young people, are accessing their news and information through video these days.

The Digital Communications Officer has continued to develop the website and create more microsites to make service easy to find from easy-to-use landing pages. MySefton news is now firmly established and integrated into the Council website giving the team greater control and creativity over how stories are displayed.

The team has continued provide support to colleagues across the Council including on communications in a wide range of areas including developments in Children's Services and Adult Social Care, recent events at Salt and Tar and the Council's participation in Liverpool Pride. We have also been working with Chief Executive Phil Porter as he introduces himself to the organisation.

And Graphic Designers have produced materials for a wide range of projects. They will also be preparing material for the LGA Peer Challenge in November.

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