

Overview
& Scrutiny



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

DATE: Tuesday 31st October, 2023

TIME: 6.30 pm

VENUE: Birkdale Room, Town Hall, Southport

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
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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 - 12)

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023

4. Update on Progress of Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy

Presentation by the Executive Director - People

5. Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – October Update (Pages 13 - 28)

Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services

6. Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan (Pages 29 - 58)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

7. Cabinet Member Report - August 2023 to October 2023 (Pages 59 - 62)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

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

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**MEETING HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL BOOTLE
ON TUESDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2023**

PRESENT: Councillor Byrom (in the Chair)
Councillors Evans, Grace, Killen, McKee, Murphy
and Sir Ron Watson

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Lappin

9. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkinson and Bradshaw.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

11. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

12. CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE ACTIVITY - PRESENTATION

Further to Minute No. 8 (3) of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 the Committee received a presentation from Diane Turner, Customer Centric Services Manager, on Customer Contact Centre Activity. Ms. Turner highlighted the following matters:

- Customer services customer contact activity from home-based Contact Centre staff and staff based in both Bootle and Southport one stop shops
- The main activities handled by the Contact Centre relating to telephone calls, switchboard service, e-mails, webchat, taking payments for Council services, triaging Corporate Complaints and social media (Twitter, Facebook)
- Contact Centre monthly call volumes 2019/20 (pre-COVID19) v 2022/23 (post-COVID19)
- Average wait time for calls to be answered for prioritised services
- One Stop Shop activities in respect of face-to-face enquiries, the reception service, payments for Council services
- Payment kiosk and online payment analysis 2019/20 v 2022/23
- One Stop Shop customer satisfaction survey

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- Bootle enquiries (2019/20) V Southport enquiries (2019/20)
- Customer Services changes since Covid

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

- How feedback from switchboard services was gathered.
- The One Stop Shop at Southport and lack of a drop-in facility.
- Whether callers were advised as to where they were up to in the queue to be dealt with.
- Not all members of the public used the Internet.
- The current location of the One Stop Shop at Southport at the Atkinson and whether there were any plans to return to Cambridge Arcade.
- The website provided much of the information sought, although there would always be a need to provide a face-to-face service.
- Difficulties associated with individuals who needed to telephone the Contact Centre and credit associated with mobile telephone use.

RESOLVED:

That Diane Turner be thanked for her informative presentation.

13. LEVELS OF DISCIPLINARY, GRIEVANCE, DIGNITY AT WORK AND SICKNESS ABSENCE

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that provided information on the levels of discipline, grievance, dignity at work and sickness absence within the Council (excluding schools).

The report indicated that the management of the workforce was an important activity to ensure outcomes for Sefton's communities were achieved and to ensure that the workforce was appropriately managed and motivated. Specific information was provided on:

- Disciplinary, Grievance and Dignity at Work - the organisation enjoyed a comparatively good level of cases and this reflected on the whole, both the good overall industrial relations environment, the partnership approach that was undertaken and also the work undertaken within departments
- The Strategic Leadership Board continuing to monitor and encourage the reduction of levels of both short and long-term absence; and that the Personnel Team worked closely with departments providing information and advice and appropriate levels of support, advising managers on informal processes and assisting managers with the more formal and complex levels of sickness absence management

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- The Occupational Health Unit providing counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy on a face-to-face basis
- Physiotherapy appointments arranged through the OH Unit as were pension assessments for ill health, ill health pension appeals and deferred pension cases
- The Council's Sickness Absence Policy which operated in a partnership with trade unions

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

- Assurances were sought that sickness absence in areas of the Council where it was highest was being addressed.
- If agency staff were paid for sickness absence.
- If flexible working arrangements and agile working were helping to reduce sickness absence.
- The perception of Occupational Health Unit and the need to portray interventions as being positive.
- Reasons for stress profiles being higher in certain services and support offered.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report providing information in terms of discipline, grievance, dignity at work and sickness levels be noted; and
- (2) the ongoing work and initiatives to monitor and encourage the reduction of levels of both short and long-term absence be noted.

14. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2023/24 TO 2026/27 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2023/24 – SEPTEMBER UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 63 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 September 2023 the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that advised 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 in respect of:
 - the forecast expenditure to year end;
 - variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members; and
 - updates to spending profiles and proposed

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amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects are also presented for approval; and

- (4) the latest performance management information for 2023/24.

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

- Reference was made to the Pay Award provision.
- Amounts to be allocated to Sefton from the Local Transport Capital Block Funding – Pothole Fund and how it would be distributed. A written response would be sought.
- The budget for Children’s Social Care and the demand for services, together with out-of-borough placements of children receiving services.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That in respect of the Revenue Budget:

- (1) the current position relating to the 2023/24 revenue budget be noted;
- (2) the actions being taken to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced position be noted;
- (3) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2023/24 revenue budget be recognised and it be acknowledged 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; and.
- (4) the requests for specific supplementary revenue estimates funded from additional grant funding referred to in the report be noted; and

- (B) That in respect of the Capital Programme:

- (1) Note the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 8.1) be noted;
- (2) the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 July 2023 of £7.195m (paragraph 8.16) and that the latest full year forecast is £63.999m (paragraph 8.17) be noted;
- (3) the requests for specific supplementary capital estimates funded from additional grant funding referred to in the report be noted

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- (4) it be noted that the Council will procure an updated Stock Condition Survey for Crosby Library; and
- (5) It be noted that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director of 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;
- (C) the latest position relating to key performance measures be noted; and
- (6) The Assistant Director of Place (Highways and Public Protection) be requested to provide information on the Local Transport Capital Block Funding – Pothole Fund to the Senior Democratic Services Officer, for circulation to Committee Members.

15. EXECUTIVE/SCRUTINY PROTOCOL

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that sought formal approval of changes to the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol (the Protocol) for submission to Cabinet.

The report advised that the draft protocol was approved by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet at their meetings in late 2020; and that at its first meeting of the 2023/24 municipal year, held on 20 June 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the Protocol and suggested two additions in relation to the submission of Plans and Strategies to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Working Group Reviews/Informal Meetings.

For illustrative purposes, an updated version of the Executive/Scrutiny Protocol was attached to the agenda highlighting the changes if ultimately approved by Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet.

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

- On-line informal meetings had proved to be effective.
- Very few items were “called-in”, in practice.

RESOLVED: 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

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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.

16. 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 the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2023/24; the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by informal meetings; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan; and that updated on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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

- Quoracy issues encountered by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) a report on wider taxi issues in Sefton, including how black hackney cabs could be encouraged within the Sefton area, be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee;
- (3) the request for the Committee to select a topic for review at an informal meeting be noted;
- (4) the Key Decision Forward Plan for the period 1 October 2023 to 31 January 2024, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be noted; and
- (5) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

17. CABINET MEMBER REPORT - JUNE 2023 TO AUGUST 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.

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

- Business rates collection was performing well, with Sefton being the best performing council of the 36 metropolitan authorities. A request was made for congratulations to be extended to the relevant staff.
- Taxi-licensing and the situation regarding encouraging the use of black hackney cabs in Southport. A report could be requested on wider taxi issues in Sefton, including how black hackney cabs could be encouraged within the Sefton area.
- Member development and mandatory training, together with the small number of Members who responded to the last consultation process. The situation regarding compulsory courses undertaken within the Mersey Fire and Rescue Service.
- The nature of the “legal support” offered on the Marine Lake Events Centre project.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update report from the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be noted;
- (2) congratulations be extended to the relevant staff for their contribution towards Sefton being the best performing council of the 36 metropolitan authorities;
- (3) the Principal Officer, Licensing, be requested to submit a report on wider taxi issues in Sefton, including how black hackney cabs could be encouraged within the Sefton area, to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (4) Councillor Lappin be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.

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Agenda Item 5

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 31 October 2023
Subject:	Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – October Update		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	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 August 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.

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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Capital Programme

- 4) Note the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 7.1).
- 5) Note the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 August 2023 of £11.047m (paragraph 7.6); the latest full year forecast is £66.536m (paragraph 7.7).
- 6) 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 7.10-7.12).

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.

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 £5.645m 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 will 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 £66.630m. As at the end of August 2023 expenditure of £11.047m has been incurred and a full year outturn of £66.536m is currently forecast.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):

Currently an overspend position of £5.645m 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.

Legal Implications:

None

Equality Implications:

There are no equality implications.

Impact on Children and Young People: Yes

The report highlights the current financial position relating to services provided for Children and Young People.

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

The allocations of capital funding outlined in section 7 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.

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.

Protect the most vulnerable:

See comment above

Facilitate confident and resilient communities:

See comment above

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<u>Commission, broker and provide core services:</u> See comment above
<u>Place – leadership and influencer:</u> See comment above
<u>Drivers of change and reform:</u> See comment above
<u>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:</u> See comment above
<u>Greater income for social investment:</u> See comment above
<u>Cleaner Greener:</u> See comment above

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 7377/23)

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD 5577/23).

(B) External Consultations

N/A

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

Contact Officer:	
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 4106
Email Address:	paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendix is attached to this report:

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

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

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 third 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 7.1. Paragraphs 7.2 to 7.9 review progress of the capital programme, including additional capital schemes. Finally, paragraphs 7.10 to 7.12 confirm that there are adequate levels of resources available to finance the capital programme.

2. Revenue Budget 2023/24 – Forecast Outturn Position as at the end of August 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 position remains early in the financial 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 August 2023, the forecast outturn shows a net overspend of **£5.645m**, the majority of which relates to potential additional pressure within Children's Social 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.

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2.3 The table below highlights the variations across services that make up the £5.645m forecast overspend:

	Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Variance to July
	£m	£m	£m	£m
<u>Services</u>				
Strategic Management	3.906	4.000	0.094	0.026
Adult Social Care	110.598	110.598	0.000	0.000
Children's Social Care	80.081	84.140	4.059	-0.732
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	15.778	0.473	0.097
Health & Wellbeing	19.620	19.452	-0.168	-0.168
Highways & Public Protection	10.672	10.658	-0.014	-0.014
Operational In-House Services	16.160	16.396	0.236	-0.294
Energy Costs	4.200	4.200	0.000	0.000
Additional Pay Award Provision	4.333	5.833	1.500	0.000
Total Service Net Expenditure	288.807	294.987	6.180	-1.085
Council Wide Budgets	14.203	13.668	-0.535	-0.052
Levies	36.193	36.193	0.000	0.000
General Government Grants	(84.086)	(84.086)	0.000	0.000
Total Net Expenditure	255.117	260.762		
<u>Forecast Year-End Deficit</u>			<u>5.645</u>	<u>-1.137</u>

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 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. Like all councils, the Service is experiencing growth pressure with demand for services and are seeking to meet the cost of this within the resources available. At mid-year review a detailed position will be reported that will also need to take account of the additional funding that is being made available to councils to meet increases in demand and financial pressure including those that maybe

experienced during winter and in respect of discharges. As would be expected with a budget of this size and volatility, this remains a key risk during the current year.

- **Children's Social Care** – The current forecast for the service shows a potential overspend of £4.059m. 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. The impact of some of this initial work has resulted in the forecast reducing by £0.732m since the July position.

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.

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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** – The service is forecasting a balanced position. Based on the latest information, functions within the service are forecasting an underspend of £0.624m. 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 £0.624m, which is offset by the underspends across the Service. As stated, all services are underspent, and cost control will continue to be required between now and the year end to deliver the balanced position.
- **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 £0.673m, 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 £0.473m, which relates to the provision of additional SEND staff. The service is reviewing all forecasts to identify areas that will offset this additional pressure and this position will be updated at mid-year review. Members will recall that in the budget substantial funding was added to the Home to School Transport budget and this remains a key area of risk due to the increase in number of EHCPs being completed and pressure in the Service.
- **Operational In-House Services** The current forecast shows a potential overspend of £0.236m which is a substantial improvement on the previous month. 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 **£5.645m** 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 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. **Council Tax Income – Update**

4.1 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.

4.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of August 2023 is a deficit of £0.084m. 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 (-£0.306m).
- Exemptions and Discounts (including a forecasting adjustment) being higher than estimated (+£0.704m).

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

5. **Business Rates Income – Update**

5.1 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.

5.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of August 2023 is a surplus of -£11.250m on Business Rates income. This is due to:

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- 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 (-£0.157m).
- 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 (-£1.028m).
- Adjustments relating to prior years (-£0.149m)

5.3 When taking into account the lower Section 31 grants due on the additional reliefs, a net surplus of £10.536m is forecast.

5.4 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.

5.5 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.

6. High Needs Budget

6.1 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.

6.2 The latest quarterly report was presented to Cabinet in July, providing detail on the current monitoring position relating to the High Needs budget. The next quarterly report will be presented to Cabinet in November.

7. Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26

Capital Budget

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

2023/24	£66.630m
2024/25	£61.643m
2025/26	£17.659m

7.2 The following updates have been made to the capital programme budget since the initial budget report to Cabinet in September:

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- **Economic Growth & Housing** – £1.300m has been added to the programme for the Local Authority Housing Fund funded by grant from DLUHC following approval by Council in September.
- **Education Excellence:**
 - £2.636m has been added to the school’s programme under delegated authority following approval by Cabinet Member in July. These schemes are funded by the block allocation of Schools Condition grant from the DfE approved for inclusion in the capital programme by Council in March. A full list of the new schemes can be found at paragraph 2.5.
 - Summerhill School Expansion Phase 1 - £0.530m has been rephased to 2024/25 due to delays in planning permission.
- **Highways and Public Protection** – £0.628m has been added to the programme for the Pothole Fund funded by grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority following approval by Cabinet in September.
- **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** – The following amounts have been added to the capital programme following approval by Cabinet in September:

UKSPF Allocations	Capital £
Green, Resilient and Safe Communities	423,819
Local cultural arts and heritage	134,317
Town Centres	58,764
	616,900

7.3 The following block capital grant allocation was approved by Council in March following recommendation by Cabinet for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2023/24:

<u>Capital Grant</u>	2023/24 £
Highways and Public Protection	
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement	8,154,000

7.4 Authority has been delegated to Cabinet Member to assign funding to individual capital schemes up to a value of £1m for the Highways block allocation listed above. The list of schemes for 2023/24 has been fully developed and will be presented to Cabinet Member 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.

7.5 The following schemes were approved under delegated authority by Cabinet Member for Education in July:

Location	Scope of work	Budget
Planned Maintenance	Planned Maintenance	£120,000
Birkdale CP	Phase 2 Pitched roof repairs	£150,000

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Birkdale CP	Re-point brickwork	£25,000
Birkdale CP	Internal plasterwork repairs and re-decoration	£40,000
Christ Church CP	Remaining flat roof Junior/halls	£136,000
Christ Church CP	Windows & Doors	£25,000
Christ Church CP	Playground resurface	£50,000
Crosby HS	Repair brickwork and re-pointing	£15,000
Daleacre	Hall windows	£25,000
Daleacre	Renew floors/ceiling	£30,000
Daleacre	Roof to kitchen and hall	£70,000
Farnborough Road Infants	Windows install actuators	£15,000
Farnborough Road Infants	Repoint Brickwork	£25,000
Farnborough Road Infants	Replace corridor roof	£20,000
Farnborough Road Infants	Install canopy above ramp and decking	£35,000
Hatton Hill	Re-point brickwork	£20,000
Hatton Hill	Corridor Roof	£30,000
Hatton Hill	Replace fencing	£20,000
Hudson CP	Corridor Roof - remaining roof areas	£115,000
Hudson CP	Brickwork re-pointing	£20,000
Hudson CP	Repair damaged plasterwork and redecorate	£30,000
Hudson CP	Replace flooring to corridors	£40,000
Hudson CP	Resurface footpaths & Driveways	£25,000
Larkfield CP	Repointing brickwork	£15,000
Larkfield CP	Upgrade Staff toilets	£25,000
Linaker CP	Re roof pitched roof	£245,000
Marshside CP	Toilet extension	£75,000
Marshside CP	Remaining flat Roof	£105,000
Melling CP	Refurbish toilets	£18,000
Merefield	Re-roof pitched roof flat roof and remove AC units	£105,934
Netherton Moss CP	Re-point brickwork and repair concrete sills	£25,000
Netherton Moss CP	Fire shutter to kitchen servery	£20,000
Norwood	Repairs to drainage system	£15,000
St John Crossens	Repointing	£22,000
Summerhill	Expansion and Improvement Work	£250,000
St Philips	Phase 2 re-roofing to flat roof	£90,000
Waterloo CP	Upgrade nursery areas	£25,000
Waterloo CP	Wet pour surfacing and equipment	£43,000
Hudson CP	Provide mechanical ventilation to nursery	£25,000
St Philips	Upgrade emergency lighting	£48,000
St John Crossens CEP	Upgrade emergency lights	£78,000
Freshfield CP	Replacement Heating & DHW pipework (Phase 1)	£200,000
Freshfield CP	Phase 2 rewire	£125,000
	Total Programme	£2,635,934

Budget Monitoring Position to August 2023

- 7.6 The current position of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of August 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.

	Budget to August	Actual Expenditure to August	Variance to August
	£m	£m	£m
<u>Services</u>			
Adult Social Care	2.046	1.938	-0.108
Children's Social Care	0.141	0.129	-0.012
Communities	0.258	0.253	-0.005
Corporate Resources	0.715	0.768	0.054
Economic Growth & Housing	3.023	2.830	-0.193
Education Excellence	0.805	0.909	0.104
Highways & Public Protection	4.026	4.026	0
Operational In-House Services	0.206	0.193	-0.014
<u>Total Programme</u>	11.222	11.047	-0.175

Capital Programme Forecast Outturn 2023/24

- 7.7 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:

	Budget 2023/24	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<u>Services</u>					
Adult Social Care	8.086	8.076	-0.010	2.095	1.847
Children's Social Care	0.602	0.602	-	0.100	-
Communities	0.812	0.852	0.040	0.182	-
Corporate Resources	2.620	2.620	-	-	-
Economic Growth & Housing	25.572	25.594	0.022	40.673	14.592
Education Excellence	9.208	9.050	-0.158	7.804	-
Highways & Public Protection	16.081	16.081	-	6.343	0.322
Operational In-House Services	3.651	3.661	0.010	4.447	0.898
<u>Total Programme</u>	66.630	66.536	-0.095	61.643	17.659

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

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- 7.8 The current 2023/24 budgeted spend is £66.630m with a budgeted spend to August of £11.222m. The full year budget includes exceptional items such as £20.136m for Growth and Strategic Investment projects, £1.082m for the Brownfield Housing Development fund, £0.760m for Sustainable Warmth Schemes, £2.000m for a Highways project at Millers Bridge, a £3.041m project for Southport Pier Decking, and a scheme to upgrade to LED Street Lighting (£3.606m).
- 7.9 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

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

<u>Source</u>	£m
Grants	51.710
Prudential Borrowing	8.936
Capital Receipts	3.511
Contributions (including Section 106)	2.473
<u>Total Programme Funding</u>	66.630

- 7.11 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.
- 7.12 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.

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

Capital Scheme	Budget		
	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £
Adult Social Care			
Disable Facilities Grants – Core Grants (DFGs)	3,000,000	-	-
Occupational Therapy Support for DFGs	663,774	-	-
ICT Development & Transformation	1,189,007	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	-	-
Children’s Social Care			
Support for Fostering Placements	99,370	100,000	-
Community Equipment Provision	270,000	-	-
ICT Development & Transformation	133,545	-	-
Springbrook Refurbishment	28,923	-	-
Springbrook Vehicle	70,000	-	-
Communities			
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	-	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	58,143	76,174	-
Corporate Resources			
Council Wide Essential Maintenance	1,785,785	-	-
Sustainable Warmth Schemes	760,092	-	-
ICT Transformation	73,812	-	-
Economic Growth & Housing			
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

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	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £
Enterprise Arcade	1,233,208	393,561	-
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	-	-
Local Authority Housing Fund	1,300,000	-	-
Brownfield Fund for Housing Development	1,082,336	-	-
Southport Pier	3,040,588	107,679	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	-	58,764	-
Education Excellence			
General Planned Maintenance	365,605	30,249	-
Schools Programme	3,258,480	7,181,507	-
Sporting Betterment of Schools	1,583,215	-	-
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	4,000,508	592,198	-
Highways and Public Protection			
Highways Programme	6,146,662	1,411,500	322,000
Highway Maintenance	4,328,487	-	-
LED Street Lighting Upgrade	3,605,580	3,662,630	-
Millers Bridge	2,000,000	-	-
Transport Growth Programme	-	1,268,620	-
Operational In-House Services			
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	90,409	807,569	-
Tree Planting Programme	49,769	78,885	-
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	-	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	271,616	152,203	-
<u>Total Programme</u>	66,630,267	61,643,034	17,659,367

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Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	31 October 2023
Subject:	Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 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.

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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:

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

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report. 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.

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

Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 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.

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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, a report was considered at the last meeting of the Committee and a recommendation approved 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.

3.7 The report referred to in paragraph 3.6 above was considered and approved by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees during the September cycle of meetings. A report will be considered by Cabinet on the matter at its meeting to be held on 2 November 2023.

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.

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4.4 Role

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

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

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

4.5 Membership

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

Sefton's appointed Members are Councillors 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 6 September 2023. The Committee considered the following items:

- LCR Investment Zone Update

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

4.10 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 25 October 2023. At the time of writing this report the Committee has not met but it is anticipated that the following items will be considered:

- Verbal Update from Mayor Steve Rotheram
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update
- Developing the LCR Community Wealth Building Strategy

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**

Tuesday, 13 June 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport	
Report/Item	Report Author/Organiser
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

Tuesday, 12 September 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Bootle	
Report/Item	Report Author/Organiser
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

Tuesday, 31 October 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport	
Report/Item	Report Author/Organiser
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

Tuesday, 9 January 2024, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport	
Report/Item	Report Author/Organiser
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

Tuesday, 6 February 2024, 6.30 p.m., Budget Meeting - Town Hall, Bootle	
Report/Item	Report Author/Organiser
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

Tuesday, 27 February 2024, 6.30 p.m. Town Hall, Southport	
Report/Item	Report Author/Organiser
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
Hackney Carriage Licensing Issues in Sefton (added at meeting on 12 September 2023)	Mark Toohey
Cabinet Member Update Reports	Paul Fraser
Work Programme Update	Paul Fraser

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APPENDIX 2

CRITERIA CHECKLIST FOR SELECTING TOPICS FOR REVIEW

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

CRITERIA FOR REJECTION

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

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SCRUTINY CHECKLIST DO'S AND DON'TS

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

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

APPENDIX 2

KEY QUESTIONS

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

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

INVESTIGATIONS:-

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

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 NOVEMBER 2023 - 29 FEBRUARY 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, Oriel Road, Bootle L20 7AE or accessed from the Council's website: www.sefton.gov.uk

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

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

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

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

NOTE:

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

Phil Porter
Chief Executive

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FORWARD PLAN INDEX OF ITEMS

Item Heading	Officer Contact
Land at Lunt, Sefton	Suzanne Rimmer suzanne.rimmer@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
Microsoft Azure and Office 365 licences	David Harris david.harris@sefton.gov.uk
Vine House Disposal	Lee Payne lee.payne@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4842
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
Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Base for 2024/25 and Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long-Term Empty Properties	Diane Turner diane.turner22@sefton.gov.uk
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
Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – February Update	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Land at Lunt, Sefton Disposal of land			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	2 Nov 2023 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 05/10/2023 to 02/11/2023. Reason: negotiations are still continuing in relation to the proposed disposal			
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 suzanne.rimmer@sefton.gov.uk			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – November Update 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			

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Details of Decision to be taken	Treasury Management Position to September 2023 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			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Microsoft Azure and Office 365 licences 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	7 Dec 2023 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 02/11/2023 to 07/12/2023. Reason: to enable the review of newly released frameworks before proposing the use of one to Cabinet for this required tender			
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			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Vine House Disposal Approval of the terms of disposal of the Council owned tower block Vine House, Kelper Street, Seaforth.			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	7 Dec 2023 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 05/10/2023 to 07/12/2023. Reason: Work is continuing on the disposal process			
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			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Annual Health and Safety Report			
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			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – December Update 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			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Base for 2024/25 and Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long-Term Empty Properties</p> <p>The report provides details of a review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the current year, 2023/24, and proposals for the Scheme for 2024/25. It also provides information about the Council Tax Base for 2024/25. Finally it provides information regarding a review of Council Tax Premiums charged for long-term empty properties.</p>			
Decision Maker	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Council</p>			
Decision Expected	<p>4 Jan 2024</p> <p>18 Jan 2024</p>			
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	<p>Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services</p> <p>Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services</p>			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Public consultation, and consultation with precepting authorities.			
Method(s) of Consultation	<p>A report was presented to the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel on 8th September 2023 for approval to run public consultation exercises regarding:- a proposed change to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25, and also a proposed change to the Council Tax Premium for long-term empty properties with effect from 1st April 2024. Online surveys are in place, as well as a range of communication and information about how/where the public may express their views, e.g. via the Council's Contact</p>			

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	Centre, One Stop Shops. Precepting authorities are consulted regarding the Council Tax Base and proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25.
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Base for 2024/25 and Review of Council Tax Premiums for Long-Term Empty Properties
Contact Officer(s) details	Diane Turner diane.turner22@sefton.gov.uk

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – January Update 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			

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SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	Financial Management 2023/24 to 2026/27 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2023/24 – February Update 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	1 Feb 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 – February Update			
Contact Officer(s) details	Paul Reilly paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 4106			

Agenda Item 7

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	31 October 2023
Subject:	Cabinet Member Report – September 2023 to October 2023		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To submit the Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services report for the period September 2023 to October 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

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(B) **Capital Costs** – see above

Implications of the Proposals:

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

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

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

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

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

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

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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

Appendices:

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

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

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

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