



MEETING: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)

DATE: Tuesday 12th March, 2024

TIME: 6.30 pm

VENUE: Committee Room - Bootle Town Hall, Trinity Road, Bootle, L20 7AE

**Member**

**Substitute**

Councillor	Councillor
Councillor Hardman (Chair)	Councillor Tweed
Councillor Carlin (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Myers
Councillor Danny Burns	Councillor Corcoran
Councillor Carragher	Councillor Lloyd-Johnson
Councillor Evans	Councillor Hart
Councillor Harvey	Councillor John Joseph Kelly
Councillor Christopher Page	Councillor Brough
Councillor Prendergast	Councillor McGinnity
Councillor Richards	Councillor John Kelly
Councillor Spring	Councillor Grace
Maurice Byrne, Healthwatch	
Mrs Sandra Cain, Independent	
Advisory Member	
Karen Christie, Healthwatch	
Stuart Harrison, Diocese	
Michelle Ravey, Arch Diocese	
Gemme Armer, PGR	
Cheryl Swainbank, PGR	

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Laura Bootland  
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 - 14)

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2024.

## 4. Attendance of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

A verbal item to receive information on the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Partnership Working.

## 5. Cabinet Member Reports

(Pages 15 - 34)

Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

## 6. Children's Services Improvement Programme

To receive a verbal update from the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education.

## 7. Summary of Recent Audit Activity

(Pages 35 - 44)

Report of the Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance.

- |            |   |                    |
|------------|---|--------------------|
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Ofsted Inspection Reports</b>  | (Pages 45 -<br>50) |
|            | Report of the Director of Children's Social Care and Education  |                    |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Education Scorecard</b>  | (To Follow)        |
|            | Report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education.   |                    |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Review of the Operation and Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)</b> | (Pages 51 -<br>66) |
|            | Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services.  |                    |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Work Programme Key Decision Forward Plan</b>   | (Pages 67 -<br>90) |
|            | Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer  |                    |

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

## Overview & Scrutiny

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)



MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM - SOUTHPORT TOWN HALL, LORD STREET, SOUTHPORT, PR8 1DA  
ON TUESDAY 30TH JANUARY, 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor Hardman (in the Chair)  
Councillor Carlin (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors Burns, Evans, Page, Prendergast,  
Richards, Spring, Hart

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mrs S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member  
Ms. M Ravey, Arch Diocese Representative  
Cllr. Mhairi Doyle, Cabinet Member Childrens  
Services  
Cllr. Diane Roscoe, Cabinet Member Education

#### **41. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carragher, Gemma Armer, Cheryl Swainbank and Maurice Byrne.

#### **42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with Paragraph 9 of the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations of personal interest were made and the Members concerned remained in the room during the consideration of the item:

Member	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Councillor Evans	Minute No. Ofsted Inspections	Personal due to his role as a School Governor at Marshside Primary School

#### **43. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

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

#### **44. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer submitting the most recent update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care, and the Cabinet Member – Education, whose portfolios fell within the remit of the Committee.

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The Cabinet Member update report – Children's Social Care, attached to the report at Appendix A, outlined information on the following:

### Childrens Social Care

- Early Help
- Monitoring Visit
- Integrated Front Door
- Court Revocation Team
- Help and Protection Team
- Youth Justice Service

### Cared For Children and Care Experienced

- Sufficiency
- Quality Assurance of Commissioned Placements

### Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance

- Practice
- Quality Assurance

The Cabinet Member update report – Education, attached to the report at Appendix B, outlined information on the following:

- Delivering Better Value
- SEND
- Inclusion
- School Improvement
- 14-19 Participation
- Early Years
- Virtual School
- School Attendance
- School Admissions
- School Appeals
- Governor Services
- Exclusions
- Pupil

Members of the Committee raised the following queries:

- The Ofsted Letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> January following the recent Monitoring Visit
- The post ofsted action plan
- The multi-agency approach and if this had improved in the past 12 months
- The pace of change in relation to children services improvement programme
- The current numbers of agency social workers
- School attendance numbers
- School Exclusion numbers
- Team Around the School

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member – Education be noted;
- (2) That a report on 'Team Around the School' be brought to a future meeting.

## **45. CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Executive Director of Children's Services on progress made on the Improvement Programme.

Information was provided on the following:

- Family Hubs
- Front Door – contact and referrals
- Dates for the next Ofsted Monitoring visit

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the update be noted.
- (2) A list of Family Hubs to be circulated to Committee Members and Members be encouraged to visit the Hubs in their Wards.

## **46. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Quality Assurance and Safeguarding) that set out the quality assurance and performance headlines for the period October-December 2023.

The performance Scorecard was circulated on a supplementary agenda and provided data and analysis of the Key Performance Indicators identified as illustrative of 'system health'.

Members of the Committee raised the following questions/issues:

- The number of children in care and how this figure compared to other authorities.
- The training given to social workers to ensure Child Protection plans are working as they should.
- Repeat Child Protection Plans

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RESOLVED:

That the update was noted

## **47. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

The Committee considered the annual report 2022-2023 of the Sefton Corporate Parenting Board. The report related to all board activities completed between January 2023 and December 2023.

Councillor Mhairi Doyle, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, was in attendance to present the report.

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

- The work being done towards the Corporate Parenting Board priority 'Transition and preparation to Adulthood'.
- Whether any work is carried out with the Universities in Merseyside

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

## **48. SEFTON STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023**

The Committee considered the annual report of the Sefton Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2022-2023.

Ian Ross, Transpennine Learning, and Councillor Diane Roscoe, Cabinet Member for Education, were in attendance to present the report.

Members of the Committee raised the following questions/issues:

- The work being done to recruitment more Teacher Representatives
- How many schools in the Borough had applied for the RE Quality Mark

The Committee noted the advice provided by SACRE to the Local Authority as follows:

1.To review the funding of SACRE to ensure it is in line with national recommendations and good practice;

2.To review the membership of SACRE to ensure it reflects the breadth and diversity of the borough in terms of faiths and beliefs and schools structures.

3.To investigate the provision of quality teaching of RE at Key Stage Four for the non-examined students.



4.To provide opportunities for SACRE to work with other key areas of the Local Authority including the Communities team in order to support community cohesion.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee noted the report
- (2) That the Committee accepted the advice provided by SACRE to the Local Authority

## **49. SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of People (Communities) updating on the serious violence duty which came into force in January 2023 and required specified authorities to publish a strategy by January 2024, to prevent and reduce serious violence; and which indicated that work in preparing the strategy on Merseyside had been coordinated by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The report indicated that following public consultation in July 2019, the Government announced that it would introduce legislation relating to a serious violence duty; that this aimed to ensure that relevant services worked together to share information to target interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures, to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities; that the Government also announced that it would amend the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that serious violence was an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships and by making sure they had a strategy in place to explicitly tackle serious violence; and that whilst the guidance did not specify a particular partnership to lead, given the categories classed as "Serious Violence" were contained within the Community Safety Strategy, it made sense that the Safer Sefton Together (SST) was the partnership lead body for Sefton.

Appendix 1 to the report provided a timeline of the work undertaken within the last year relating to the readiness assessment, which identified a need to support the relevant authorities across Merseyside to facilitate stronger co-production across existing governance structures; and the consultation exercise undertaken to understand the perception of the problem, causes and consequences.

The draft Serious Violence Strategy document was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

The report also provided information on the local delivery plan that was more specific for Sefton's communities; and advised that the first draft of the delivery plan was currently being developed and would be mapped against the high level strategic aims of the strategy but also cross-

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referenced to the priorities contained within the Safer Sefton Together Strategy 2023-26 and would be reviewed through 2024; but however, there was no additional funding for LA's to deliver the duty and therefore the delivery plan would reflect the work already underway in preventing and reducing serious violence in our communities.

The report concluded by seeking the views of the Committee on the draft strategy and the local delivery plan.

The report would also be considered by other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

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

- The reason for not including domestic violence in the serious violence definition.
- The Safeguarding Children Partnership was omitted from the diagram on page 89 of the agenda
- The impact of local interventions should be included in the document such as the work on the Park Lane estate.

### RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report updating on the serious violence duty be noted
- (2) The suggested amendments to include the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership in the diagram on page 89 and the inclusion of local interventions be fed back to the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- (3) That a further report be brought back to the Committee in six months to provide an update on the strategy and the work to tackle serious violence.

## **50. OFSTED INSPECTIONS**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) updating on recent Ofsted Inspection Reports and the work of the School Improvement Team.

The following schools had been inspected and reports received during the Summer and Autumn terms of 2023:

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### Inspections Summer Term 2023:

- St Jeromes Catholic Primary
- Summerhill Primary
- Shoreside
- Jigsaw
- Valewood
- Christ the King
- Peterhouse School Page 132
- IMPACT
- Linacre Primary
- David Bishop Shepherd School
- Rimrose Hope C & E Primary School
- Churchtown Primary School
- Larkfield Primary School
- Lander Road Primary School
- Litherland High School
- Crossens Nursery
- Christ Church CE Primary School
- The Grange Primary School
- St Benedict's Catholic Primary School
- St Edmund & St Thomas Catholic Primary School
- Hudson Primary

### Inspections - Autumn Term 2023:

- Northway Primary
- Aintree Davenhill Primary
- Hillside High School
- Forefield Community infant & Nursery School
- Presfield
- Marshside Primary
- Kings Leadership Hawthornes
- Linaker Primary
- St Michael's CE High School
- Christ the King Catholic High School
- Page

A Summary of Ofsted Outcomes and Support during Spring 2023 was attached to the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

### **51. EDUCATION SCORECARD**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education presenting the Education Scorecard. The report provided an overview of the data.

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The Education Scorecard was attached to the report and set out statistics on:

- Pupil absence rate
- Persistent absence rate
- Pupil exclusions
- Education, Health and Care Plans
- Not in Employment, Education or Training
- National and Sefton Language Data
- Ofsted breakdown by schools
- Early Years Foundations Profile
- Phonics
- Key Stage 1
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 4

RESOLVED:

That the data contained in the Education Scorecard be noted

## **52. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking to:

- review the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/23;
- identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan;
- note the informal meetings and site visits to be undertaken in 2023-24
- note and agree the recommendations from the informal meeting on home education held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024.
- receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and

Members of the committee raised the following questions/issues:

- The issue of school meal provision and the budget implications and whether the committee could receive a report on the subject to a future meeting. Councillor Diane Roscoe confirmed she was aware

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of the issue and would include an update in her next Cabinet Member Update to the committee in March.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be noted, along with the additional items agreed during this meeting as follows:
  - (a) A report on Team Around the School
  - (b) A further report in six months time on the Serious Crime Duty
  - (c) Councillor Roscoe to include an update on school meal provision in her next Cabinet Member Update.
- (2) there were no items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee on this occasion
- (3) note the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023
- (4) the following recommendations arising from the informal meeting on home education were approved as follows:
  - I. Officers be recommended to record and report data on the whole process of elective home education, to include data on the number of enquiries made, how many parents are encouraged to keep their child in a school setting, how many children return to school after a period of time being home schooled and how many children are successfully home schooled long term, in order for the full picture to be known.
  - II. The Committee recommends that all Members who have contact with parents who are considering home schooling, encourage those parents to seek further support and guidance on the issues their child is experiencing before a formal request to home school is made in writing to the Local Authority/School, and Members be encouraged to inform the Attendance and Welfare Team Manager about any such contact with parents.
  - III. The Committee fully supports the North West regional response to the to the open consultation from the Department for Education on revisions to the non-statutory Elective Home Education (EHE) guidance for local authorities and parents.

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- (5) the topic of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) be approved for in-depth scrutiny by Members of the Committee during 2023/24 and relevant activities be included in the schedule of the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023/24, as set out at Appendix B; and
- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and

# Agenda Item 5

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee  (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Cabinet Member Reports – January - February 2024		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Children's Social Care Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To submit the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member - Education reports relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member - Education reports 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 reports which are referred to in this update are contained within the respective reports.

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(A) **Revenue Costs** – see above

(B) **Capital Costs** – see above

## Implications of the Proposals:

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

## Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report. The Cabinet Member updates provides information on activity within Councillor Doyle's and Councillor Roscoe's portfolios during the previous three-month period. Any reports relevant to their portfolios 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 Reports are not subject to FD/LD consultation. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the attached Cabinet Member update reports will be included in those reports as appropriate.

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Laura Bootland
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2078
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:Laura.bootland@sefton.gov.uk">Laura.bootland@sefton.gov.uk</a>

## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A - Cabinet Member – Children’s Social Care - update report
- Appendix B - Cabinet Member – Education – update report

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

### 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.2 Attached to this report, for information, are the most recent Cabinet Member reports for the Children’s Social Care and Education portfolios.

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<b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE</b>		
<b>Overview and Scrutiny ( Children’s Services and Safeguarding )</b>		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Date</b>
Mhairi Doyle	Cabinet Member Children’s Services	February 2024

### **Children’s Social Care**

#### **Early Help**

Work on Family Hubs is continuing with ongoing discussions with partners and Council based Services to co-locate. Exploration around the potential of developing a SEND specialist hub (Litherland) is continuing this would incorporate an offer from Early Help, education, and health. There is also potential to link with special schools. Having an accessible and engaging digital offer is crucial if we want to encourage Families to get the help they need when they need it. We have developed a robust specification including an offer of information, advice, and guidance via community directories, with a focus on different levels of support. Greater opportunities to interact with services through online chat functionality and the ability to book activities.

A strategic review of progress to date within Team Around the school has taken place. This considered the many successes and remaining challenges. The 5 clusters have already worked with more than 200 families. Professionals, families, and parents have all commented on the difference it is making. A model for an extended phase 2 is to be discussed in March.

#### **Monitoring Visit**

We have received the draft letter which will be published on 19th March 2024. The letter summarised states that senior Leaders have made steady progress from a low baseline and that more recently there has been a positive step change at a strategic level and a new CEO brings a clear understanding of the councils' corporate responsibilities as well as a new resolute and child focussed leader of the council. There is more focus and a drive towards a whole council approach to improve outcomes for care leaver but there is still a lot to do to improve practice. Multi agency partnerships are not utilised to provide additional support and there are delays in accessing timely lower-level emotional support. There is insufficient choice of accommodation for young people.

#### **Integrated Front Door**

The conversation model is planned to go live on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024. The proposed name is Children’s Help and Assessment Team (CHAT). Fast progressed in being made in all areas of this redesign. Staffing funding has been agreed for 5 additional social worker post and the recruitment process is underway. Changes and being made Liquid Logic and LCS systems to ensure how we record the conversations reflect the restorative nature of these and capture the right information. Telephone systems have been agreed and finance has been requested to fund the system. Communication and Briefings have begun with all partners with a clear communication and launch plan set out over the next months and joint training with the Safeguarding Board now available for partners to book on to.

#### **Court Revocation Team**

We have discharged 10 children’s care orders. There are 13 children who’s paperwork has been submitted to legal. There are a further 17 children who’s paperwork has been QA’d but we are waiting on the foster carers to seek legal advice and the allocated workers to complete some care planning tasks etc. before these can be submitted to legal. There are currently a further 51 children being actively worked by the discharge team and the majority of these have had an example support plan and financial Page 19 the checks have been sent and the paperwork is at various stages of completion. We will continue to work with the statutory

teams to identify more children. We are feeding back the children who are not ready for discharge due to outstanding care planning tasks and reviewing these through PPM with Julie Bucknall with the view to these children being ready before our departure.

### **Help & Protection**

Recruitment continues to permanent positions. Equinox agency teams sitting within Help and Protection will shortly be disbanded and replaced with permanent staff, subject to successful external recruitment.

Some resources will imminently be redirected and additional recruitment undertaken in order to create a specialist, integrated pre- and post-birth assessment and intervention team developed with BABS with the aim of safely keeping babies in the care of their parents or wider family.

### **Youth Justice Service**

#### **Performance** (Quarter 3 23/24)

In this quarter there has been an increase in court disposals (from 8 statutory starts to 13), with a decrease in out of court work (from 20 non statutory starts to 14). During this quarter 18 children have reoffended and for 2023 overall, 31 children have reoffended. This quarter seems particularly high which requires some exploration. There were no children sentenced to custody.

It has been noted across Merseyside Youth Justice Services that there has been an increase in Referral Orders and Pre-Sentence Report requests from Court. One reason for this is that there are currently less available Magistrates, therefore more District Judges sitting at Youth Court.

Violence remains the top offence, followed by drug and robbery offences. Education offers remain a priority for YJS and each case where a child offered less than 25 hours per week is scrutinised. In addition, any exclusions are scrutinised. 5 children were permanently excluded from school, 3 children were excluded whilst open to YJS and 2 prior to YJS involvement.

#### **Out of Court Disposals – New YJB Guidance**

The Youth Justice Board has issued new guidance for out of court work including an assessment and planning tool. Sefton welcomes this as it creates a clear expectation for out of court work and consistency across youth justice services. There is an increase in data relating to this work area to be reported to the board. There are no specific risks associated with the new guidance for Sefton YJS. The new way of working commences 1<sup>st</sup> April and Sefton's YJS is preparing staff through training and testing the new assessment and planning tool.

### **Prevention**

Sefton YJS is developing the Prevention offer building on learning from the Turnaround and Community Youth Connectors project. With a welcomed additional Police Officer, we have developed a further offer through schools called 'Roots'. Schools can identify a small group of children to work through a one hour session per week over four weeks covering various topics including anti-social behaviour, child criminal exploitation, knife crime, and healthy relationships.

We will evaluate the project through child, parent and school feedback. Roots extends to boys and any school, although we are initially trialling this in two schools in the north of the borough. Our resource is limited but the learning from this will feed into the further development of the youth offer (10+yrs) with community help.

### **Youth Justice Board Oversight Framework**

The Youth Justice Board have rated Sefton's performance against the Key Performance as 'satisfactory' and therefore in Quadrant 2. The ratings are undertaken quarterly and cover a wider range of indicators relevant to youth justice services. Quadrant 1 is the top rating that captures outstanding performance. YJS performance is scrutinised by the YJS Management Team and the Youth Justice Partnership Board.

### **Cared for Children and Care Experienced**

Springbrook Children's Home had its annual 2-day Ofsted inspection on 25/26 January 2024. The home was judged to be Good in all areas (Overall experiences & progress of children, how well children are helped/protected and the effectiveness of Leaders/Managers). There were no breaches of the Children's Homes Regulations and therefore no Requirements were made. This is the second year in a row that the home has achieved this judgement.

The contract for the refurbishment of Cherry Road Children's Home was been put out to tender by the Property Services Team. An evaluation of the tenders has taken place and a contractor selected. It is anticipated that the refurbishment work will commence 18 March 2024. The post of Registered Manager is currently being advertised.

The Commissioning team have recently reopened the Sefton Framework, this work is extend and cement the successful establishment of a local framework to help stimulate the market into providing local homes for local children. The framework allows us to reopen on a 12 monthly basis and establish a relationship-based commissioning communication with high quality providers who provide care and support to our cared for children that aligns with our vision and ambitions. We had 13 applications and continue to conclude the evaluation based on quality and experience. It also allows us to block book with good/outstanding Sefton Providers, to support enabling sufficient homes for our Cared for Children, and we will secure 16 new beds for cared for Sefton children by April 2024 enabling reunification to Sefton for children placed out of borough.

We now have no illegal placements, and this is currently a sustained position.

We are supporting our 16 plus providers to progress the registration process, Ofsted have been unable to meet the deadline of October 2023 to register all providers once registration is completed, we will only work with registered providers going forward

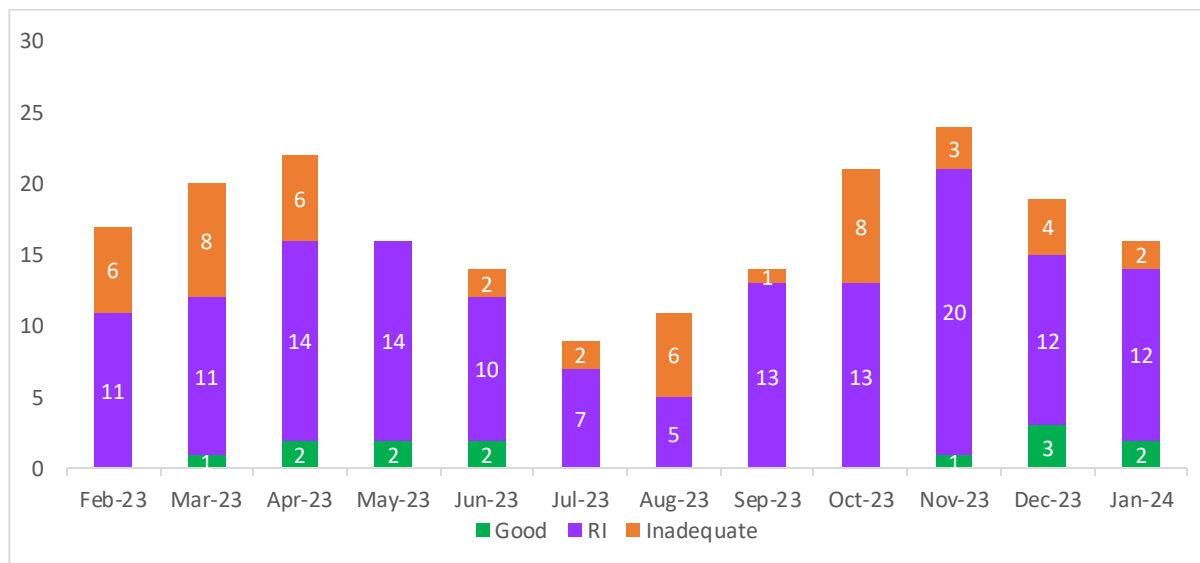
The commissioning team continue to monitor the delivery of the sufficiency strategy and an important part of this work is ensure we can negotiate fee uplifts to support quality delivery and sustainable offers from the market. This year the work across commissioning and finance has allowed the fee uplifts to be contained in the allocated budget provision for the second consecutive year.

### **Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance**

Quality assurance continues to evidence an improvement in practice, with a decrease in the number of cases graded as inadequate as well as an increase in the work being judged to be good. Increased levels of moderation of these audits is providing further assurance that there is an accurate line of sight on practice. The direction of travel is illustrated in the tables below.

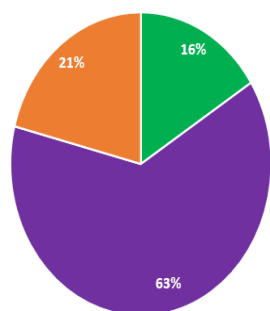
### **Audit judgements - last 12 Months**

The chart below summarises activity over the last 12 months; it provides a wider context and shows gradual improvement over time. There is clear evidence that the amount of work graded Inadequate has reduced significantly over the last year; (February 2023 35% versus January 2024 13%). Although good work has been identified each month in the last 3 months, most work audited is considered Requires improvement to Be Good.



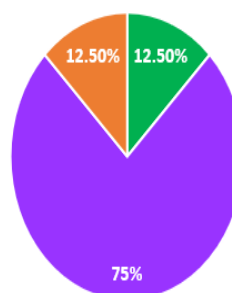
### Recent Audit Activity – December 2023 and January 2024

Audit judgements December 2023  
Post moderation



■ Good ■ Requires Improvement to be good ■ Inadequate

Audit Judgements January 2024  
Post moderation



■ Good ■ RI ■ Inadequate

Quality assurance has provided clear evidence that a focus on improving plans for children at all levels of intervention is a clear improvement priority and the next three months will see a focused programme of improvement delivered to managers, IROs, Social Workers as well as professionals across the partnership.

<b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE</b>		
<b>Overview and Scrutiny ( Children’s Services and Safeguarding )</b>		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Date</b>
Diane Roscoe	Cabinet Member Education	February 2024

### **DBV (Delivering Better Value)**

- Grant application was submitted in July 2023 and grant application was agreed in September 2023.
- Grant funding timescales of spend have been extended until September 25.
- All workstream activities are underway with project leads identified for each area.
- As part of the increase of Inclusion Service/Team capacity, plans to second two local school SENCOs are underway. They will support the development of the Graduated Approach Toolkit.
- The Early Years team has successfully recruited two Inclusion Support Workers and Inclusion Consultants. Some new staff have commenced in post and others are expected to start by Easter 2024.
- Planning for the mapping exercises on the graduated approach for ND and SEMH has begun. This is being facilitated through regular meetings involving colleagues from Education, Health and Care.
- Initial mapping exercises including all stakeholders have taken place in ND and SEMH with a gap analysis being completed.
- The workstream strategic management plan has been formulated and groups are meeting fortnightly to update action logs.
- Using feedback from a scoping exercise carried out by the Educational Psychology team a comprehensive CPD package has been developed. This is being presented to SAPH in April.

### **SEND Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

Compliance with the 20-week timeframe for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA) currently sits at 41% for the year (Dec 2023). December’s monthly figure was 47%, which is slightly lower than November’s due to the Christmas shut down and to many transition year reviews taking place. These were a priority due to the deadlines for school place applications. There are also several legacy assessments and annual reviews taking place which have also been picked up, which have affected timescales.

The current number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which are out of time, i.e. have exceeded the 20-week statutory timescale is 104.

January's monthly figure was 20%, which is 10% lower than this time last year. This has been impacted by annual leave and the imminent statutory deadline for Nursery to Reception and secondary transfers. 20 plans were finalised in January, however only 4 were within the statutory 20-week timeframe.

In terms of secondary transfers and transfers from Nursery to Reception, 243 Final Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) were issued. Of those children moving from Nursery to Reception 99% were completed on time and 64% were named to parental preference. Of the children moving from Year 6 to Year 7, 97% were completed on time and 77% named to parental preference. There are 350 statutory amendments for years 11 and 14 which need to be finalised by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

A weekly EHCP dashboard has been developed in conjunction with Business Intelligence to enable real time monitoring of performance and blockages. A weekly SEND performance subgroup of SENDCIB is meeting as well as weekly finance meetings.

### **Graduated Approach**

A core group of leaders across partners (health, social care and education) has been established and meets fortnightly in order to maintain momentum and the delivery of the Delivering Better Values (DBV) graduated approach workstream outcomes.

A mapping exercise for social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and the neurodevelopment pathway offer (universal, targeted and specialist) has been completed with partners across schools, the LA, health and social care. Information has been formulated to identify gaps in services and commissioning opportunities. This needs to be scrutinised by the core group and further workstreams identified.

The Occupational Therapy (OT) sensory work group meets fortnightly to develop the OT sensory offer and is currently gathering data to develop stage 2 of the OT sensory offer targeted support. Mapping exercises are planned for cognition and learning and sensory V/HL and Physical in the next term.

The two secondment SENCO position interviews are to be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March. It is hoped that staff recruited to the posts will be able to start immediately. A clearly defined part of this role is to support and develop the graduated approach online toolkit and to support further inclusion capacity.

### **Staffing Update**

At the end of December, Lynda Poole was initially appointed as the Interim Strategic Lead for SEND. She has recently been appointed as interim AD for Education Excellence. Lynda has also recently been part of an authority inspected as part of the new OFSTED LAP (Local Area Partnership) SEND arrangements, so brings with her up to date knowledge / experience and challenge to aid inspection preparation.

Lesley Cheshire has been appointed as the Interim Head of Service for SEND since February. Lesley is also very knowledgeable about SEND and Ofsted inspections. This change in structure has given strategic leadership, stability and consistency to the team, allowing other members of the service to re-focus on key operational areas such as the DBV programme.



The Leadership structure across the whole of SEND has undergone a transition process to create stability and leadership going forward, including current members of the service stepping up into interim management roles.

As of January 2024 the SEN Team comprised of 19.5 Casework Officers, but further capacity is required within the SEND service to prepare for the Area SEND Inspection and to deliver the workplans. This includes both administrative and project support. A business case will be submitted for Business Support within the SEN team to alleviate the pressure within the team and to support improved compliance with statutory timescales.

### Partnership Working

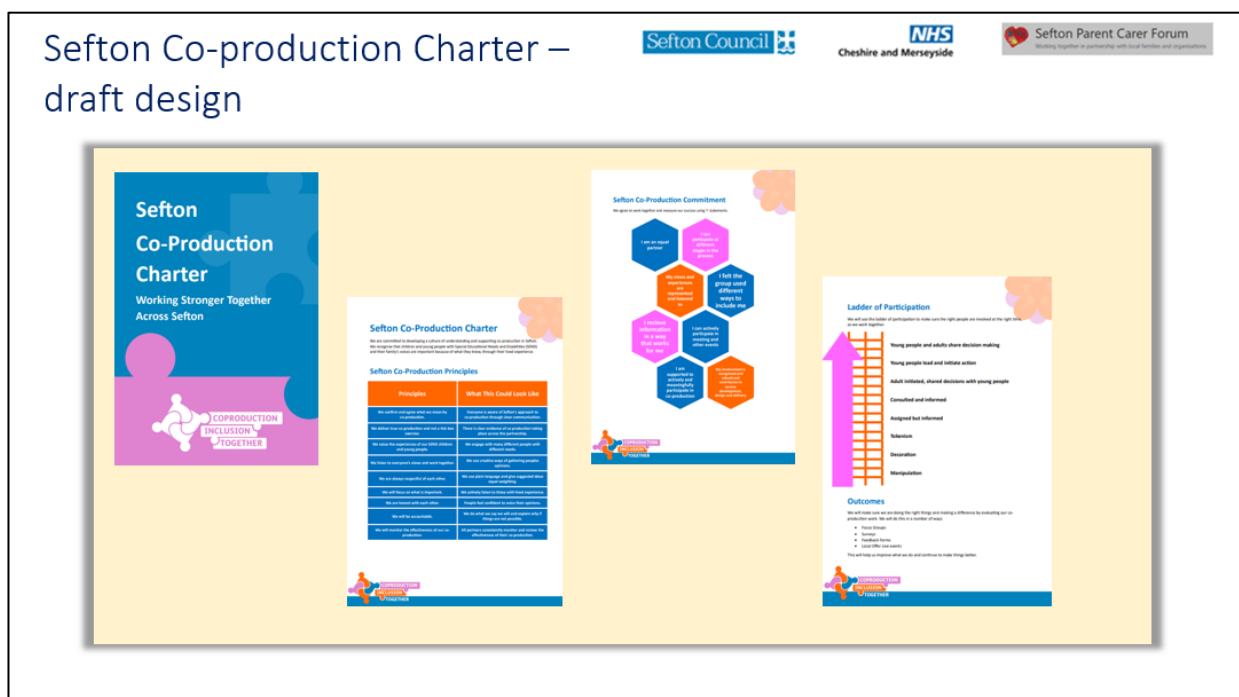
A more joined up approach to SEND is required. To facilitate this workplans are being combined into one comprehensive document. This will provide an overview of all the programmes currently underway across all partners, as well as demonstrating the interconnectivity between each strand of work.

There has been drift and delay with several streams of work due to staff absence.

Links and relationships with schools and settings are positive, but there is some frustration with stalled areas of work.

### Co-production

The Co-production subgroup ran a logo design competition for the Co-production Charter and the winners of the competition have been selected. The Subgroup with support from Corporate Communications has created a draft Co-production Charter. The draft has been shared across the area partnership for sign off. The Charter will be launched, with a tool kit. Train the trainer training will also be available. A copy of the Charter is included below along with the winning logo design. The Charter will feature at a SPCF conference event in March.



### **SEND Strategy**

There has been a slight delay with the production of an Area SEND Strategy. However, now that the interim AD is in place, this is being addressed as a matter of urgency. The strategy must be an area wide strategy across Education, Health and Care and must be co-produced with parents, carers, children and young people.

### **Sufficiency Planning**

Several meetings have been held with Headteachers to collate views on sufficiency of SEND places across the borough, to establish expectations and to map the landscape.

Data analysis is currently taking place.

Recommendations and actions are being discussed for the development of the SEND place sufficiency strategy and plan. Working groups with headteachers have been set up and are meeting regularly to strategically plan the short/medium/long term needs for further developing more SEND places within Sefton. Joint weekly meetings have also been set up within the Council bringing together finance, property, admissions, and SEND to drive the growth of places forwards.

### **Feedback from OFSTED**

The Childrens Services Ofsted Annual Conversation received positive feedback about the improved stability and recent leadership changes as well as several areas of good practice.

### **Alternative Provision**

An Alternative Provision (AP) Task and Finish group has been established. An analysis of AP placements has been completed. This includes a mapping of the reasons for the commissioning of individual placements within AP providers and the primary need of those children and young people placed within alternative provision. A QA framework has been developed. The compilation of an AP register is underway.

### **Exclusions and Attendance**

The Improvement notice has been lifted, but for the first time since 2003, pupils with an EHCP have been excluded. This includes very young children.

### **Elective Home Education**

314 children are electively home educated in Sefton with Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) being the most commonly cited reason for parents choosing home education.

2 full time members of staff have been recruited to the service. This means that monitoring of the arrangements made for children EHE can now take place on a regular basis, currently fortnightly. The aim of regular monitoring is to encourage and support the re-integration of children back into school placements, wherever possible.

### **Workplan**

The work plan for the next 2 months includes:-

- The mapping of all SEND projects and workstreams to identify duplication / shared resources / actions / outcomes and interdependencies.
- The Place Planning SEND Sufficiency strategy – Map and Co-produce strategy and plan with Head Teachers. Identify building works needed for September 2024 onwards and capital funding to create more pupil places in Sefton for September 2024 and September 2025 onwards.

- Alternative Provision - QA all AP provision on a scheduled plan of work, (the intention is to share effort across the CM footprint)
- DBV – Recruit DBV SENCos
- Graduated Approach - Map universal, specialist and targeted services, identify barriers and gaps
- Area SEND Inspection Annex A – develop action plan to move all “Orange” RAG rated outstanding areas to green. Refresh evidence held to ensure that it is up to date and available for inspection announcement. Preparation for Area SEND inspection continues.

### **Inclusion**

Send Inclusion Consultants are supporting the roll out of Relational Restorative Practice model with pilot schools. The team have been to Leeds to visit Carr Manor Community School for an immersion day as part of the offer. The follow up session delivered by Leeds has been booked for the 13<sup>th</sup> of March.

The ASD team has supported the Reception Group Model, offering a comprehensive support and training offer.

Ten schools which have been involved with the joint work with Tor View Behaviour Hub have received their half day visits. DBV funding will support the other 2 days required to support the other schools involved. Good feedback was received about the schools with action points which will inform the development of additionality of training offers from within the teams.

All the teams within the Inclusion Service continue to support the Team around the School project and the development of the Inclusion and SEND offer.

The Inclusion Service teams have continued to deliver the training offer.

Quality Assurance visits to Alternative Provisions (AP) are underway. Inclusion Service teams are supporting these visits.

The Hearing Need and Visual Impairment team facilitated a Merseyside and Cheshire training event on Ushers Syndrome.

Group funding reviews have started to look at the how funding has been allocated to schools and the effectiveness of the model.

### **School Improvement**

**Ofsted:** As of 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 95% of maintained primary schools are rated good or better, with 12% outstanding. 100% of the maintained nurseries are good or better. All maintained secondary schools are now good, with Christ the King Catholic High improving from RI in their November 2023 inspection.

The SI team continues to support Headteachers' well-being with an offer of support to all schools in the Ofsted window – this includes a website compliance check, a conversation with governors, support for subject leaders and health checks in SEN,

inclusion and curriculum. This support is provided by the SI team, professional partners and the appropriate EE service, and there has been a good uptake.

All schools are being encouraged to attend the termly briefings provided by our regional senior HMI, the next being on 1<sup>st</sup> March.

**Support for schools:** Keeping in Touch (KIT) meetings between schools and their professional partner continue; all reports are quality assured by the SI team and common themes or concerns identified.

The Schools Causing Concern protocols have been reviewed and amended in light of new DfE guidance, and to ensure our criteria and processes are robust; these have been approved by the School Improvement Board.

There are 7 schools currently on the 'Schools Causing Concern' protocol: 5 primaries, 1 nursery and 1 PRU. This is a reduction of 3 schools since the last report.

**Academisation:** There has been a rise in the number of schools converting to academy status - currently 16 either confirmed or awaiting confirmation. This is placing relevant EE teams and other LA services under pressure to meet the timelines set by the DfE.

### **14-19 Participation:**

With regards to the statutory duty to participate in learning post 16, Sefton is still ranked first in the LCR and Northwest with 91.2% of young people moving into full time education.

Sefton also has the lowest NEET and the best tracking performance for young people in the City Region and lower than our statistical neighbour which is Wirral. However there has been an increase in NEET and specifically for our vulnerable groups.

The application for "Gaps in Provision" funding submitted to the D for E and ESFA on the 30/10/2023 in response to our concerns regarding progression routes for this cohort has been successful. The funding is for 100 places under the Study Programme and there has also been a commitment to fund 100 places for 2024/2025. The places have now been commissioned with a view to immediate referrals and starts.

Schools are still making steady progress in achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks in relation to standards for Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG). All secondary schools apart from 1 who have been inspected in 2023/2024 have been judged to be meeting their statutory requirements for CEIAG. An Action Plan has been agreed to address the concerns raised in relation to the school that needs to make improvements. We have also been rolling out pilot programmes in relation to Careers Education in Primary settings with a focus on raising aspirations.

### **Early Years**

The Early Years Conference held on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February at Crosby Lakeside was a great success. We had guest speakers: Julie Fisher, Jenny Holder and Alice Sharp. We had 82 attendees from across the sector (schools, PVIs and professionals) and 96% of attendees rated the conference as 'Excellent' 4% rated the conference as 'Very Good'.

The Early Years service has been collaborating with MVRP (Merseyside Violence, Reduction Partnership) on a number of projects. The ambition of the projects are to target WARDS to implement a place-based approach, targeted at Early Years children

and families. The pilot will implement a range of 'preventative' interventions and programmes aimed at raising outcomes for children and families to reduce the risk of future criminality and violent offending.

MVRP Evidence Hub identified the following wards: **Church, Derby, Ford, Linacre, Litherland, Netherton and Orrell, St Oswald**. Following a meeting Sefton, MVRP added **Cambridge** Ward into the initiative.

We have offered through MVRP:

- Read to bump/Read to Baby
- Monkey Bob
- Lifelong Learners Project
- Accredited (L3) programme
- Professor Ferre Laevers Conference
- Jan 2024
- Home Learning Environments (PEEP pilot)
- Conference and launch of an 'Early Years Champion' model across children's services. **(Proposed)**

We have launched our Early Years Strategy and all attendees to our conference have received a copy. This sets out our aim and vision for the Early Years service over the next 5 years. Alongside this we have an annual improvement plan that we update and review on a termly basis.

We have successfully supported a number of our private nurseries and childminders to move from inadequate or requires improvement to 'Good'. The LA staff working with them have been very supportive and challenging in ensuring they were all fit for inspection and that the children are receiving good support. 98% of our private providers are either rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

Our Early Years SEND requests for involvement from the service continues to increase, and we have roughly 900 children currently supported across the Early Years SEND service with 172 Early Years Children accessing high needs funding (HNF).

In order to further support settings and schools we launched our Early Years Graduated Approach toolkit back in September, we have held training sessions on the use and purpose of the GA for schools, settings and professionals. Due to the success of this roll out we are continuing to hold additional sessions for those who have missed the sessions in the Autumn term.

We have alongside the GA tool kit, launched our Early Years Small Steps Tracker. This supports PVI and schools to track the small steps of progress that our children with special educational needs and disability make.

The Early Years team work closely with the inclusion service on delivering better values. This has included multi-agency work on the Inclusion services' Graduated Approach document and Inclusion strategy.

As part of the DBV work we have recruited two Early Intervention Officers who will support PVI and childminders on Early Years inclusion on a holistic level and will not carry a caseload. We have also recruited, two further Inclusion consultants to support with school inclusion in Reception on a holistic level and will also not carry a caseload.

The Early Years Service have been chosen by the DFE to be part of a pilot for 'Early Years workforce incentives. We have had our delivery plan agreed and comms and marketing regarding this will begin in the next few weeks. We have chosen 20 settings to be part of the pilot based on several categories.

As part of the roll out of the expansion of childcare, the Early Years service have been working closely with the sector, parents and other professionals on mapping supply and demand in regard to the new entitlements. Kim Evans is Project manager for both expansion of childcare and Wraparound agenda. We have action plans that are reviewed on a weekly basis.

### **The Virtual School**

Early Years Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are now being populated, with the first deadline being 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2024. The Early Years team and Virtual School are collaborating to ensure that all Cared For children from the age of 2 have a PEP that will be reviewed each term. Already, this has had an impact on applications for schools, which will be completed in a timely manner and following discussions about choosing a school that best meets the needs of the child.

Following the launch of the FE College and Virtual School Partnership Agreement, we are seeing improved stability in terms of young people remaining on courses or changing to a more appropriate course if they are unhappy. The ESOL course that was developed following the successful summer school is popular and provides a much-needed education and social network offer to our UASC students.

Wellbeing continues to be a significant area of need. In addition to our commissioned Well Young Person provision, Pupil Premium Plus funding has been used to pilot an ACEs course for care experienced young adults. We are about to collect the impact reports from the school projects funded in the last academic year and we are already aware of the positive impact of modest investment in projects that target wellbeing and attendance in schools. Further funding for projects that promote wellbeing, inclusion or attendance will be offered to schools at the Education Excellence day in April.

The Foster Carer Conference (sponsored by Sefton Virtual School) will be held in October 2024 and the theme is Education. The Virtual School is assisting with planning the activities.

Our Sefton Superstars event (22<sup>nd</sup> March) will be a red-carpet, glittering celebration of the achievement and effort of our children. There will be performances from school choirs and our drama group, and the event will be compered by one of our alumni.

The quality of PEPs continues to improve, and the return rate has been 92% for the last two terms.

Attendance is, overall, above national average. However, there is still a concern about Years 9-11. A strategy is in place to address this: those with the lowest attendance are being visited by their Education Coordinator this term to ensure that we capture the voice of the child and offer challenge and support to the child, carers and schools.

Finding appropriate schools for children with EHCPs continues to be a challenge. The Virtual School is working closely with the Sefton SEN team and is also in regular contact with other LAs to minimise delays. The Sefton VHT also works with the AD for Children in Care to ensure that education is prioritised when planning where a child will live and to promote colleagues' understanding of the protective factor of school attendance and stability.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

The tables below detail Statutory School Age Children (Year Groups Reception – Year 11). These children attend Sefton Schools including those living in neighbouring LAs travel into Sefton. Sefton council have a statutory responsibility for school attendance in Sefton schools irrespective of where the child lives.

The information also include characteristics of children who have an EHCP and children who receive SEN Support and those in receipt of free school meals.

Persistently Absent relates to children with between 50 and 90% attendance.

Severely Absent relates to children with 50% less attendance.

FSM = Free School Meals.

CLA only refers to children attending a Sefton school despite which LA they live in and who are statutory school age i.e. children who are Nursery age and Post 16 are not included in this report.

#### **All Schools.**

##### **Overall.**

- 38 134 children on roll.
- Overall Attendance is 92.2%.
- Overall Absence is 7.8%.
- 7 985 children (20.9%) identified as Persistently Absent.
- 794 children (2.1%) identified as Severely Absent.

##### **EHCP.**

- 1 938 children have an EHCP.
- Overall, 5.1% of children have an EHCP.
- Overall Attendance is 87.1%.
- Overall Absence is 12.9%.
- 564 children (29.1%) identified as Persistently Absent.
- 115 children (5.9%) identified as Severely Absent.

##### **SEN Support.**

- 6 254 children have been identified as receiving SEN Support.
- Overall, 16.4% of children receive SEN Support.
- Overall Attendance is 88.5%.
- Overall Absence is 11.5%.
- 1 859 children (29.7%) identified as Persistently Absent.
- 301 children (4.8%) identified as Severely Absent.

##### **FSM.**

- 10 562 children are in receipt of FSM.
- Overall, 27.7% of children receive FSM.
- Overall Attendance is 87.8%.

- Overall Absence is 12.2%.
- 3 653 children (34.6%) identified as Persistently Absent.
- 479 children (4.5%) identified as Severely Absent.

### **CLA.**

- 467 children are a CLA.
- Overall, 1.2% of children are a CLA.
- Overall Attendance is 92.1%.
- Overall Absence is 7.9%.
- 79 children (16.9%) identified as Persistently Absent.
- 15 children (3.2%) identified as Severely Absent.

The Service Manager for school's support services will be undertaking the targeted meetings at the secondary schools to ensure there is an attendance plan in place for these children with 50% attendance and below.

### **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS UPDATE**

The national offer day for secondary schools preferences will take place on 1 March 2024.

Two schools in the South of the borough have been inspected and having a good judgement should increase confidence.

### **APPEALS**

There have been 219 appeals prepared since September 2023. All shortages of places are now admitted through the in-year fair access panel.

### **GOVERNOR SERVICES**

The Governor training programme for the spring and summer term has been distributed.

### **EXCLUSIONS**

Up to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – 6,358 sessions lost to fixed term exclusion across 840 pupils.

Up to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – 4,065 sessions lost to fixed term exclusion across 637 pupils.

There is an increase both in the pupils and the number of sessions. An inclusion strategy is being procedures with parents and partners.

Exclusions continue to rise both across the northwest and the count in exclusions.

### **PUPIL PLACE PLANNING**

#### **Reception (Primary) entry 2024**

We do not currently envisage any issues in sufficiency for this cohort. Preferences have been received from other LA's and including those application there does currently appear to be sufficient places in all areas to allocate places in reception to those who have applied. At this point there appears to also be sufficiency for



alternative offers for the oversubscribed schools in each area of the borough. Maghull would have been of a slight concern however preferences for Lydiate Primary are low this year so those who cannot be allocated their preferences for other Maghull schools may be offered Lydiate Primary even though it might be a little further away from their home address. There is a significant amount of housebuilding in this planning area so numbers will increase in the future.

### **Secondary (Year 7) entry 2024**

10 of the 18 secondary schools within the borough have agreed intake numbers in excess of their PAN for 2024. Mainly this applies to oversubscribed schools, although some have first preferences below PAN overall they will be filled using the equal preference scheme. Without these increases we may have struggled in some areas particularly within the Southport area. There has been a lot of new housing built in close proximity to two Southport secondary schools (Christ the King Catholic High & Meols Cop High). Much of this housing is situated in the Lancashire LA area however the housing sits right on the border with the Sefton and the Sefton schools are much nearer than any Lancashire schools are. As you can imagine may cause some issues for our residents.

**Bootle/Litherland area** remains an overall concern for secondary admissions. The number of children in Year 6 at primary schools in this area (826 from October census) is much higher than the number of year 7 places available (590). This has been the case for a number of years due to school closures and the remaining schools in the area reducing their PAN's. The figure of **590 for 2024** is only possible as two academy schools have agreed an intake number above their PAN (Hillside High & Kings Leadership Academy Hawthornes). Historically we manage the allocations in this area as many children prefer schools in the Crosby or Maghull areas and some also opt for Liverpool LA schools, as it is very close to the Liverpool border. We also use the option of filling an undersubscribed school in Crosby for children in this area who cannot be offered their school(s) of choice, as generally that school is within 3 miles distance of the home addresses. We will do the same in 2024 to meet demand.

The PAN for **Litherland High School** in particular remains a concern & we have raised this previously with the DfE.

The school was rebuilt in 2011 to accommodate 240 per year group this considered the closure of Bootle High in 2009. Litherland High took over the feeder primary schools previously aligned to Bootle High (some of which have since closed) plus the existing feeder schools for Litherland High. More recently in the Bootle & Litherland areas, 3 High schools closed or have been merged (St Wilfrid's, St George of England & St Ambrose Barlow). Litherland High now has 7 feeder primary schools within their admission arrangements.

Litherland High's funding agreement from when they became an Academy states the school's capacity as **1,200** which gives an indicated admission number of 240 across the 5 year groups. The PAN was reduced in 2019 at the request of the school - presumably due to surplus places. Since 2019 demand for places at Litherland High has increased substantially. The LA understands that a Deed of Variation was made, in line with the arrival of Litherland Moss Primary School onto the same site in September 2022, which reduced the schools capacity to 750

# Agenda Item 5

## Appendix B

The school now has a PAN of **150**.

In 2024 for the third year running the LA will not be able to allocate places to all of the children who attend Litherland High's 7 feeder primary schools. The result obviously is complaints & many admission appeals. For this reason the LA and the general public do not feel that this school is no longer serving the needs of local children. If possible we would like to request that this school is prioritised within the programme of revised net capacity assessments for academy schools as we are getting both parents and our appeals panels questioning as to why the PAN has reduced so much as they feel even with the primary school being on site the PAN should not be as low as 150

### **Education safeguarding**

All schools inspected since September have had effective safeguarding arrangements in place.

# Agenda Item 7

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Tuesday 12 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Summary of Recent Audit Activity		
<b>Report of:</b>	Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Review and Quality Assurance	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>			
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

### Summary of recent audit activity

This report provides a summary of quality assurance activity over the last two months. March's Overview and Scrutiny Meeting is unusual in that it takes place before Improvement Board. In order that the documents presented to this board can be viewed as soon as possible by members of O and S, a QA and performance briefing will be offered at a time/format to suit members.

### Recommendation(s):

That the report be noted

### Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To appraise the Committee of developments.

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

Not applicable

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

#### (A) Revenue Costs

Not applicable

#### (B) Capital Costs

Not applicable

# Agenda Item 7

## Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None directly	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None directly	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> No	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b> The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes

## Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Not Applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Report provides a summary of quality activity over the last 2 months
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: Not applicable
Greater income for social investment: Not applicable
Cleaner Greener: Not applicable

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

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7570/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5670/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

### Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee

**(Please delete as appropriate and remove this text)**

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Joe Banham
Telephone Number:	07584 667600
Email Address:	Joe.banham@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Children’s Social Care Performance Scorecard

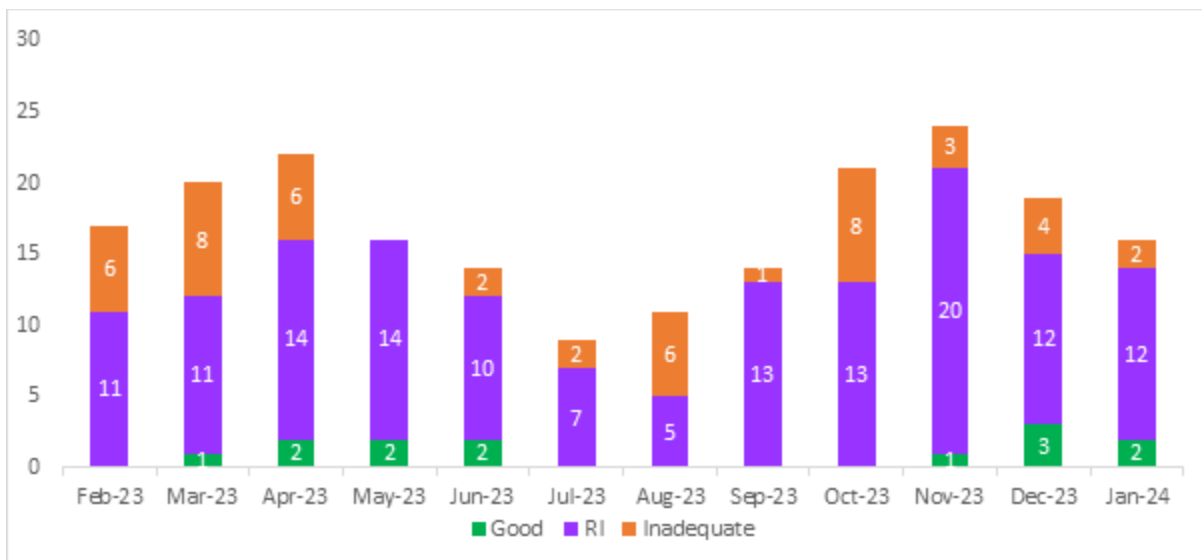
## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

### 1. Introduction/Background

#### Audit judgements - last 12 Months

The chart below summarises activity over the last 12 months; it provides a wider context and shows gradual improvement over time. There is clear evidence that the amount of work graded Inadequate has reduced significantly over the last year; (February 2023 35% versus January 2024 13%). Although good work has been identified each month in the last 3 months, most work audited is considered Requires Improvement to Be Good.

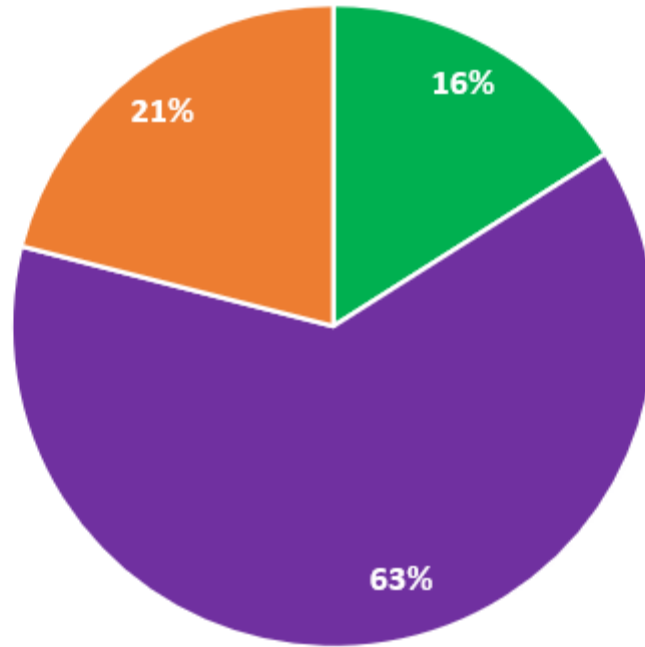


#### Recent Audit Activity – December 2023 and January 2024

Since the last report, **35** deep dive audits have been completed across Childrens Social Care (December 2023 and January 2024). **14** of these audits were moderated (**40%**) which resulted in **2** audits being downgraded from ‘Good’ to Requires Improvement to be good following moderation.

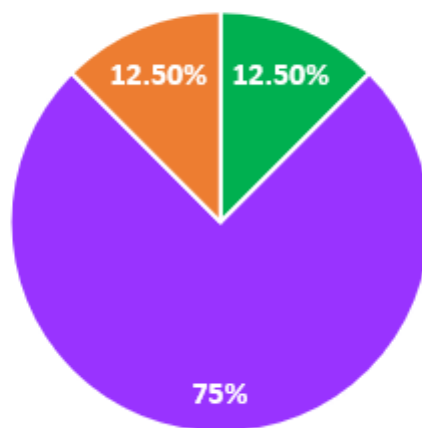
# Agenda Item 7

## Audit judgements December 2023 Post moderation



■ Good ■ Requires Improvement to be good ■ Inadequate

## Audit Judgements January 2024 Post moderation



■ Good ■ RI ■ Inadequate

**Other audit activity undertaken in December 2023 and January 2024**  
Analysis of Inadequate Audits- July- December 2023

This audit was undertaken to understand the factors that continue to contribute to inadequate grades.

20 audits were graded inadequate during July 2023 – December 2023 (20% of all audits undertaken during this period). Of the 20 graded 'inadequate', 11 were moderated (55%) and 5 of these were graded 'Requires Improvement to be Good' prior to being downgraded to 'Inadequate' following moderation.

Main findings:

- For most children, drift and delay in achieving permanence contributed to the inadequate grade.
- In 9 out of 20, it was clear that the lack of timely, thorough assessment which included family, partners and the child contributed to the inadequate grade.
- In 7 out of 20; it was clear that the inadequate grade was linked to a child being deemed to be at risk of significant harm, or there was insufficient evidence to be assured that this risk did not apply.
- In 4 out of 20; it was clear that the inadequate grade was linked to ineffective IRO/CP oversight/contact with the child or escalation.

The findings of this report will be shared with relevant Assistant Directors/Service Managers for them to consider and target individual and team support.

The Practice Improvement team will be allocated every audit graded inadequate to follow up with the Team Manager and Practitioner ensuring that a reflective learning conversation takes place with both; and support is provided to close the loop/ link to any helpful resources e.g. refresh of assessment training, review of care planning video, individual coaching, team sessions etc – ongoing.

Moving forward there will be a far greater focus and challenge on those cases which are graded as inadequate. Over the past twelve months there is clear evidence of improvement, with most practice now being graded as 'requires improvement to be good' alongside increasing amounts of work which is graded as 'good'. The development of the QA Framework, a growing cohort of experienced auditors and increased moderation means that there is far greater confidence than there was 12 months ago that our view of practice is accurate. This progression provides a firm basis to increase our challenge of that work which continues to be graded as inadequate, both in terms of individual practice issues and partnership and systems improvements which will improve outcomes for children and their families.

#### Thematic dip samples

December 2023:

- Quality of assessments in the Help and Protect teams- 16 assessments sampled.
- January 2024:
- Impact of the Safer Families Practice Hub- 10 families sampled.
  - Quality of assessments in the CWCN and Corporate Parenting teams- 7 assessments sampled.

All thematic dip samples have individual actions set by the auditors for follow up and feed into practice improvement activity.

# Agenda Item 7



Data as at end of January 2024

The top seven indicators are measures being monitored in the DfE Commissioner's report and where possible, a rolling 12 month figure is used to show recent progress.

Indicators 8-23 compares the latest 6 month data from January 2024 to 6 month data 12 months ago, as taken from the ChAT report.

The scorecard also shows the direction of travel and comparisons made to published statistics (2022-23)

Key indicator. Targets have been set for all key indicators.														Latest published statistics (2022-23)			
No	Indicator	LA rolling 12m (Feb23 - Jan24)	LA rolling 6m (Aug23 - Jan24)	Direction of travel (RAG rated where low/high is stated)	Target	Low/High is good	RIG Q2 Sefton	RIG Q2 NW	LA	SN	NW	Eng	Compared to mid-50% LA	Analysis			
1	Referrals received (annual rate per 10,000 of children)*	631.7	629.0	↓	650	-	706.7	507	823	630	530	545	Higher	The rate of referrals per 10k children (rolling 12 months) has fallen from 641.3 to 631.7 since last month. This rate was at its peak at 892 referrals per 10k in November 2022. Rolling 6 months rate of 629 - a slight increase compared to last month. However this is expected as the number of referrals have increased since the return of schools after the festive break. Both rates are below target and on par with stat neighbour group, but still above NW and England.			
2	Referrals to social care that were within 12 months of a previous referral (%)*	24.4%	23.0%	↓	22%	Low	27.2%	22.5%	27	24	22	22	Higher	Re-referral rate in rolling 12 months continues to fall and has fallen from 25.7% to 24.4% this reporting period - lowest since Nov 22. Compared to 23% of re-referrals in the last six months, this highlights the progress being made and the rate is slowly moving to the target of 22%. Although progress has been made, the current 12 month rate of 24.4% is par with stat neighbour group, but slightly above NW and England.			
3	Assessments completed (annual rate per 10,000 of children)*	799.9	757	↓	730	-	855	833	919	667	597	557	Higher	The rate of assessments is on a downward trajectory since June 2023 and has fallen from last month from 820.1 to 799.9 this reporting period. The 6 month figure (757) shows that greater progress towards the target of 730 has recently been made. Despite the continued fall in rate, Sefton still has a higher rate compared to the benchmarking group.			
4	Assessments completed within 45 working days (%)*	68.1%	79.0%	↑	84%	High	59.0%	79.6%	74	84	79	82	Lower	The rolling 12 month rate of assessments completed within 45 days has slightly increased from last reporting period, from 67% to 68.1%. However, monthly analysis has shown vast improvement in the last three months. This is reflected in the rolling 6 month figure of 79%. Sefton has the lowest completion rate of all 24 local authorities in North West. However, is recent month's performance is sustained, then this would result in Sefton on par with NW and slightly below stat neighbours and England average.			
5	Children subject to section 47 enquiries (annual rate per 10,000 of children)*	274.3	252	↓	250	-	312.6	200.7	378	222	210	192	Higher	Direction of travel for the rate of s47 enquiries continue in the desired direction - the 6 month rate of 252 emphasising the progress being made in recent months. If this is sustained, then this would be inline with the target of 250, but would still place Sefton in the higher range when compared to benchmarking neighbours.			
6	Percentage of agency social workers (%) in workforce**	30% (Jan24)	-	↓	20%	Low	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Target is to reduce the percentage of agency staff from 50% to 20% and The latest figure from January 2024 of 30% shows very good progress has been made.			
7	Number of children cared for in unregulated and unregistered placements**	36 (Dec22)	33 (Jan24)	↓	19	Low	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	The target of children cared for in unregulated placements is to reduce the number by 50%. The baseline figure was 38 children in April 2023 and this figure fluctuates each reporting period, but has yet to fallen under 30 children yet.			

No	Indicator	Latest published statistics (2022-23)												Analysis
		LA Jan23 ChAT	LA Jan24 ChAT	Direction of travel	Target	Low/High is good	RIG Q2 Sefton	RIG Q2 NW	LA	SN	NW	Eng	Compared to mid-50% LA	
8	Children subject of an initial child protection conference (annual rate per 10,000 of children)	71	70	↓	-	-	78.5	65.8	99	72	69	63	Higher	The rate of children per 10,000 who were subject of an ICPC over a 6 month period is at the same level as a year ago. This would result in a rate similar with statistical neighbours and North West.
9	Initial Child Protection Conferences held within 15 working days of the start of the section 47 enquiry (%)	94%	85%	↓	-	High	84%	79.3%	91	80	80	78	Higher	Compared to the same period last year, ICPC timeliness rate has fallen however, the current 6 month rolling rate is still above benchmarking neighbours. Monthly analysis shows improved performance in the last three months after a dip in completion rates during the summer.
10	Children in need (snapshot rate per 10,000 children)	541.8	453	↓	-	-	438.8	365.5	517	390	387	343	Higher	The rate of children in need has fallen compared to 12 months ago, which ties in with the fall in referrals into social care. Current rate is significantly lower than at the end of 2023 (517), but higher than benchmarking group.
11	Children who are the subject of a child protection plan (snapshot rate per 10,000 children)	66	55	↓	-	-	59.1	50.2	63	50	49	43	Higher	Rate of CP children have continued to fall since August 2022, where the rate was 78. The number of CP children in Sefton is under 300 for the second consecutive month. The current rate would mean Sefton to be slightly above statistical neighbours and above North West.
12	Children who became the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time (%)	14%	21%	↑	-	Low	18.4%	10.9%	18	23	24	24	Lower	Rolling 12 months data shows Sefton has a lower rate of repeat CP compared to benchmarking group, albeit higher than the same period last year.
13	Children who ceased to be on a CP plan whose plan lasted 2 years or more (%)	4	6	↑	-	Low	-	-	4	4	5	4	In range	The percentage of children who ceased to be on a CP plan for 2 years or more has always been low, however an increase recently has pushed the rate marginally above benchmarking groups.
14	Children who are looked after (snapshot rate per 10,000 children) *published stats from 2021-22	114	112	↓	-	-	117	97.2	113	90	97	70	Higher	The number of looked after children has fallen over the last two months to 600. The rate per 10k is higher than statistical neighbours and national. Recent North West analysis shows Sefton to be 7th highest in the group.
15	Children looked after who had a missing incident in the period (%)	11	10	↓	-	-	-	-	10	12	12	11	In range	Rate remains static over 12 month period and inline with statistical neighbours and national.
16	Children looked after who were away without authorisation in the period (%)	1%	2%	↑	-	-	-	-	1	3	2	2	Lower	Rate remains static over 12 month period and low compared with statistical neighbours and national.
17	Children looked after who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the last 12 months (%)	62%	67%	↑	-	High	-	-	87	74	77	76	Higher	Percentage rate has increased since this time last year, but is currently below benchmarking groups. However, this rate usually increases throughout the year and is expected to be inline with benchmarking group by the end of the reporting year.
18	Children looked after who had their annual health assessment (%)	88%	96%	↑	-	High	-	-	98	90	92	89	Higher	Percentage rate has increased since this time last year. Above benchmarking groups.
19	Children who ceased to be looked after in the period who were adopted (%)	3%	2%	↓	-	-	-	-	<1%	10	9	9	In range	Adoption rate remains stable. but is very low compared to benchmarking groups.
20	Children who ceased to be looked after in the period due to a Special Guardianship Order (%)	20%	20%	↔	-	-	-	-	21	-	15	12	Higher	Percentage rate has remained the same since the same period last year. This is line with last year's figure and above benchmarking group.

No	Indicator	LA Jan23 ChAT	LA Jan24 ChAT	Direction of travel	Target	Low/High is good	RIG Q2 Sefton	RIG Q2 NW	Latest published statistics (2022-23)					Compared to mid-50% LA	Analysis
									LA	SN	NW	Eng			
21	Children leaving care over the age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday (%)	93%	74%	↓	-	High	-	-	100	91	81	79	Higher	Percentage rate has fallen since the same period last year and is currently below benchmarking groups.	
22	Care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation (%) - Latest snapshot **	93%	98%	↑	-	High	-	-	91	88	90	88	In range	The rate of care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation has increased compared to same period last year. Above benchmarking group.	
23	Care leavers aged 19-21 in education, employment, or training (%) - Latest snapshot **	47%	47%	↔	-	High	-	-	47	53	54	56	Lower	Young people in employment, education or training (EET) has remained the same when comparing to the same period 12 months ago. This rate is slightly below when comparing to benchmarking group.	

\* rolling 12 months data. All others figures are taken from the ChAT 12 months ago

\*\* snapshot at end of December 2023

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# Agenda Item 8

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Tuesday 12 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Ofsted Inspection Reports		
<b>Report of:</b>	Assistant Director of Education Excellence	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) on Ofsted Inspection Reports and the work of the School Improvement Team.

## Recommendation(s):

That the report be noted.

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To appraise the Committee of developments.

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

Not applicable

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

### (A) Revenue Costs

Any support for schools provided by, or brokered, by the School Improvement Team leading up to or after Ofsted are contained and can be met from within existing budget provision.

### (B) Capital Costs

Not applicable

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## Implications of the Proposals:

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None directly	
<b>Legal Implications:</b> School Inspection Handbook, Education Act 2005	
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.	
<b>Impact on Children and Young People: Yes</b> The report sets out gradings by Ofsted for schools that have been inspected.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>  The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no climate emergency implications as a direct result of this report.	

## Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: The School Improvement Team offers support to all schools receiving an Ofsted inspection.
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: Not applicable
Greater income for social investment: Not applicable
Cleaner Greener Not applicable

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

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7567/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5667/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Lynda Poole /Jacqui Patterson
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:Lynda.poole@sefton.gov.uk">Lynda.poole@sefton.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:Jacqui.patterson@sefton.gov.uk">Jacqui.patterson@sefton.gov.uk</a>

## Appendices:

The following appendix is attached to this report:

- Ofsted summary and outcomes and support Spring 2024-no published results to date for the schools outlined

## Background Papers:

There are background papers available for inspection.

### 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Schools can be inspected under Section 5 or Section 8 guidance.
- 1.2 Under the education inspection framework section 5 inspections, inspectors will make the following judgements about schools: overall effectiveness; quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development and leadership and management. If the school offers early years provision and sixth-form provision, inspectors will also make judgements on these areas.
- 1.3 Under the education inspection framework section 8 inspections may be carried out for a range of reasons: schools judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent section 5 inspection; monitoring inspections of schools judged as requires improvement; monitoring inspections of schools judged to have serious weaknesses; monitoring inspections of schools judged to require special measures; any inspection that is carried out in other circumstances where the inspection has no specific designation, known as 'section 8 no formal designation inspection' and unannounced behaviour inspections.

# Agenda Item 8

- 1.4 The usual interval for section 5 inspections is within 5 school years from the end of the school year in which the last section 5 or relevant section 8 inspection took place.

## **2. Support from School Improvement Team:**

- 2.1 All schools currently judged Requires Improvement or Inadequate receive support and challenge from the School Improvement Team. In addition, the team also broker support. Schools with two RI judgements or judged inadequate could receive support from the DFE by identifying a National Leader of Education to work with the school and the Local Authority on a school improvement programme.
- 2.2 All schools currently judged Good or Outstanding have access to a health check when in the Ofsted window. This enables the school to identify any areas that they need support with. The team will then provide or broker support if required.
- 2.3 Once the school receives the call a member of the team will contact them to check if any support is required and keep in contact throughout the inspection.
- 2.4 The Service Manager for School Improvement meet with the lead inspector or have a telephone conversation during the inspection and attend the final feedback.
- 2.5 Following the inspection report being released the team will again provide or broker support as appropriate.
- 2.6 The Local Authority are held to account by the DFE and the Senior HMI for school performance. The main focus of discussions is regarding all schools judged as Requiring Improvement or Inadequate, the capacity to improve and the impact of support provided.

## **3. Inspections -Spring Term 2023**

The following schools have been inspected and no reports published:

**St Mary's Catholic Primary**  
**Crosby High School**  
**Farnborough Road Junior School**  
**Impact PRU**  
**Springwell Park School**  
**Litherland High School**



OFSTED Summary of Outcomes and Support Spring 2024

Name of School	Inspection Date	Lead Inspector's Name	Latest OFSTED Grade	Previous Inspection Date and OFSTED Grade	Development Areas	LA Relationship and Support
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	David Spruce		Inspection date 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2022 <b>Good</b> <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50198425">50198425 (ofsted.gov.uk)</a>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support school full package from school improvement and EYFS</li> </ul>
Crosby High School	1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2024	Julie Bather		Inspection date 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2018 (short inspection) <b>Good</b> <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50031554">50031554 (ofsted.gov.uk)</a>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support school full package from school improvement</li> </ul>
Farnborough Road Junior School	7 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	Claire Cropper		Inspection date 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2019 <b>Good</b> <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50055521">50055521 (ofsted.gov.uk)</a>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good engagement with LA</li> </ul>
Springwell Park Primary School	20 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	David Spruce		Inspection date October 2018 (short inspection) <b>Good</b> <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50036415">50036415 (ofsted.gov.uk)</a>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food engagement with LA</li> <li>TAS pilot school</li> </ul>
Litherland High School	20 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2024	Eleanor Overland HMI		Inspection date 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2022 <b>Requires Improvement</b> <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50179115">50179115 (ofsted.gov.uk)</a>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academy-engages with SEND/Inclusion</li> </ul>
Impact PRU	21 <sup>st</sup>	Rebecca	Monitoring	Inspection date	•	•

Name of School	Inspection Date	Lead Inspector's Name	Latest OFSTED Grade	Previous Inspection Date and OFSTED Grade	Development Areas	LA Relationship and Support
	February 2024	Sharples HMI	Visit	16 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 <b>Inadequate</b> <a href="https://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspections/50222885">50222885 (ofsted.gov.uk)</a>		

# Agenda Item 10

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Tuesday 12 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Review of the Operation and Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Cabinet Member - Children's Social Care		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To formally present the findings of a review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), together with proposals for amending the Terms of Reference and other requirements of the Committee, within the Constitution.

## Recommendation(s):

### Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)

That recommendations (1) to (5) set out below be supported and commended to the Council for approval.

### Council

That

- (1) changes to membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) in regard to co-opted members, together with the proposed Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), as set out at Appendix 2, be approved;
- (2) the proposal to establish a Children's Services And Safeguarding Parents/Carers Sub-Committee, as set out at Appendix 3, be approved;
- (3) a Public Question Time period for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), as set out at Appendix 4, be approved;

# Agenda Item 10

- (4) the Council's Constitution be amended by the inclusion of Appendices 2,3 and 4 of the report;
- (5) the proposals be reviewed in twelve months' time.

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The Committee has requested a review of the Terms of Reference for the Committee, as set out in the Council's Constitution, to include the use of co-opted members and the possibility of establishing a sub-committee to formally meet with parent groups, be undertaken and any proposals for amendments be submitted to the Adjourned Annual Meeting of the Council to be held in May 2024.

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

Not applicable.

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

### (A) Revenue Costs

None

### (B) Capital Costs

None

## Implications of the Proposals:

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

The proposals for an additional panel for the Committee have staffing implications, in terms of officer time, which can be contained within the budget, at the current time.

### Legal Implications:

The Terms of Reference for the Committee are set out within the Council's Constitution. The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001. The Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012.

### Equality Implications:

There are no equality implications.

### Impact on Children and Young People: Yes

The Committee's remit from the Council is to scrutinise the work and services of Children's Social Care and Education.

### Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will

Have a positive impact	No
------------------------	----

Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report.	

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

Protect the most vulnerable: The Committee’s remit from the Council is to scrutinise the work and services of Children’s Social Care and Education.
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: Not applicable.

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

**(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7556/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5656/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

**(B) External Consultations**

None

**Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Council meeting.

# Agenda Item 10

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Debbie Campbell
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 2254
Email Address:	debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Current Membership and Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding) – extract from the Council’s Constitution;
- Appendix 2 - Proposed Membership and Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding);
- Appendix 3 – Proposed Terms of Reference for the establishment of a Children’s Services and Safeguarding Parents/Carers Sub-Committee; and
- Appendix 4 - Proposed provisions of a Public Question Time for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding).

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 28 November 2023, the Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer proposing a review of the Committee’s Terms of Reference in response to a petition at the meeting held on 26 September. The petition requested representation of a further three independent people on the Committee who they considered had lived experience.
- 1.2 Members also considered that the Terms of Reference within the Council’s Constitution could be streamlined to reflect statutory requirements and the priorities of the Committee.
- 1.3 The Committee resolved that:  
  
"a review of the Terms of Reference for the Committee, as set out in the Council’s Constitution, to include the use of co-opted members and the possibility of establishing a sub-committee to formally meet with parent groups, be undertaken and any proposals for amendments be submitted to the Adjourned Annual Meeting of the Council to be held in May 2024".

## **2. Review Undertaken**

- 2.1 Officers have undertaken a review a review of the Terms of Reference for the Committee, as set out in the Council's Constitution, including the use of co-opted members and the possibility of establishing a sub-committee or other body, to formally meet with parent groups. The findings of the review are set out within paragraphs 3 – 7 below.

## **3. Current Terms of Reference for the Committee**

- 3.1 The Committee's current Terms of Reference, as included in the Constitution, are set out at **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 3.2 Members had previously considered that the Terms of Reference within the Council's Constitution could be streamlined to reflect statutory requirements and the priorities of the Committee.

## **4. Co-Opted Members – Legal and Discretionary Requirements**

- 4.1 At the meeting of the Committee held on 26 September 2023, a petition was received that requested representation of a further three independent people on the Committee who had lived experience.
- 4.2 Committee Members met subsequently to consider the request. It was noted that the Committee already had several co-opted members from the Diocese, Archdiocese and Parent Governor Representatives, as required by the Council's Constitution. In addition, associate members from Healthwatch and an independent advisory member are also on the Committee.
- 4.3 Findings of the review are set out below.

### **Church Representatives - Legal Requirements**

- 4.4 The Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012 require the Committee to have co-opted members nominated from both the Diocese and the Archdiocese. This requirement is reflected within the Council's Constitution.

### **Parent Governor Representatives - Legal Requirements**

- 4.5 The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001 require the Committee to have two Parent Governor Representatives. This requirement is reflected within the Council's Constitution.

### **Associate Co-Members - Discretionary Requirements**

- 4.6 The Committee has previously chosen to have two representatives from Healthwatch Sefton, to provide advice on health-related matters relating to children and young people. The Committee has also previously chosen to retain the services of an independent advisory member who was formerly a parent governor representative on the Committee.

# Agenda Item 10

## **Co-opted Members - Twelve Month Rule - Proposal**

- 4.7 Elected Members are required to attend meetings regularly. If they fail to attend a formal meeting over a period of six months, they are automatically disqualified from holding office as a Councillor. It is proposed that all co-opted members will be subject to a twelve-month rule, in that failure to attend a Committee meeting over a period of twelve months will result in disqualification from the Committee. The Chair of the Committee will have discretion to authorise prolonged absence(s).

## **5. Establishment of a Sub-Committee to Formally Meet With Parent Groups.**

- 5.1 At its meeting held on 28 November 2023, the Committee requested the possibility of establishing a sub-committee to formally meet with parent groups, be undertaken and any proposals for amendments be submitted to the Adjourned Annual Meeting of the Council to be held in May 2024”.

## **6. Public Question Time**

- 6.1 Committee Members have raised the possibility of having a Question Time period at the start of meetings.

## **7. Findings and Proposals**

### **Terms of Reference for the Committee - Proposals**

- 7.1. Proposed Terms of Reference within the Council’s Constitution are set out at **Appendix 2** and have been streamlined to reflect statutory requirements and the priorities of the Committee.

### **Co-Opted Members – Number on the Committee**

- 7.2 The Committee has previously received a request as follows:-

*“We wish for the Scrutiny Committee to be increased by a further three independent people who have lived experience, especially those in the crucial Early Years, Primary and Teen years.”*

- 7.3 As the Committee currently has provision for seven co-opted members, it is not proposed that the number of co-opted members is increased at the current time. The Committee has two Parent Governor Representatives and, as previously reported to the Committee, it is considered that this is sufficient representation. This will not curtail the Committee from seeking advice and consulting with other recognised bodies, either on a formal or informal basis.
- 7.4 Advice has previously been sought from representatives of the Local Government Association (LGA) and as previously reported, they were supportive of the view that parental representation on the Committee could be achieved via the Parent Governor Representatives.
- 7.5 It is also considered that elected Members bring “lived experience” to the Committee.



## **Church Representatives – No Change**

- 7.6 In view of statutory requirements, no changes are proposed to the requirement to have co-opted members nominated from both the Diocese and the Archdiocese on the Committee.

## **Parent Governor Representatives – Primary/Secondary School Proposal**

- 7.7 In view of statutory requirements, no changes are proposed to the requirement to have two Parent Governor Representatives on the Committee.
- 7.8 In line with statutory requirements, Parent Governor Representatives are normally appointed for a minimum of two years and no change is proposed for this approach.
- 7.9 In line with the practice adopted by other local authorities, it is proposed that in future, one parent governor will represent primary schools and one parent governor will represent secondary schools and/or post-16 education. The proposed Membership of the Committee, as set out at **Appendix 2** incorporates this change.
- 7.10 In line with current arrangements, Parent Governor Representatives (PGR) term of office on the Committee will be subject to their appointment as a Parent Governor of a school and also their child(ren's) attendance at either a primary or secondary school in the Borough, according to whether the PGR has been appointed as a primary or secondary PGR.

## **Associate Co-Opted Members – Term of Office Proposal**

- 7.11 In line with current work programming for the Committee and with PGR term of office, it is proposed that Associate Members on the Committee will be subject to a two-year term of office. At the conclusion of the two-year term, the Committee will determine whether to seek re-appointment of Associate Members from the nominating body concerned. The proposed Membership of the Committee, as set out at **Appendix 2** incorporates this change.

## **Proposed Establishment of a Sub-Committee to Formally Meet With Parent Groups.**

- 7.12 It is proposed that a Sub-Committee will be established, to include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, plus 3 other elected Members, to meet with parents and parent groups. Proposed Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee within the Council's Constitution are set out at **Appendix 3**. The Sub-Committee may make recommendations to the Committee. This practice will be reviewed in twelve months' time.

## **Proposed Public Question Time at Committee**

- 7.13 Committee Members have raised the possibility of having a Question Time period at the start of meetings.

# Agenda Item 10

7.14 Some local authorities have this facility, although the practice is not widespread amongst Merseyside authorities

7.15 It is proposed that the Committee will have a Public Question Time at the start of each meeting. This is not intended to replace the current provision of Petitions within the Constitution. Proposals for inclusion within the Constitution are set out at **Appendix 4**. This practice will be reviewed in twelve months' time.

## **8. Timescale for the Proposal**

8.1 If agreed by the Council, the proposals set out within the report would take effect from the commencement of the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING

### MEMBERSHIP

10 Councillors, 4 voting church and parent governor representatives.

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

To fulfil all the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to Children's Services and Safeguarding and to review and make recommendations for improvement in relation to the following functions:

- School Improvement
- Children's Centres
- Special Educational Needs
- Early Years
- Early help – schools
- Statutory LEA functions
- Education Welfare
- Safeguarding
- Children with disabilities
- Looked after Children
- Fostering and Adoptions
- Family Support Pathway
- Targeted Family Support
- Youth Offending Team
- Post 14 Education

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## CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING

### MEMBERSHIP

10 Councillors

2 voting Church Representatives:

- 1 church representative nominated by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool;
- 1 church representative from the Church of England Diocese of Liverpool.

2 voting Parent Governor Representatives:

- 1 parent governor representing primary schools;
- 1 parent governor representing secondary schools.

Up to 3 non-voting Associate Co-Opted Members:

Any non-voting associate co-opted members will be subject to a two-year term of office. At the conclusion of the two-year term, the Chair will have discretion to determine whether to seek re-appointment of Associate Co-Opted Members from the recognised nominating body concerned, where possible.

Co-opted members on the Committee will be subject to a twelve-month rule, in that failure to attend a Committee meeting over a period of twelve months will result in disqualification from the Committee. The Chair of the Committee shall have discretion to authorise prolonged absence(s).

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

To fulfil all the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to Children's Services and Safeguarding and to review and make recommendations for improvement in relation to the following functions:

- Children's social care and safeguarding;
- The education of children and young people within the Borough;
- The health and wellbeing of children and young people within the Borough;
- The commissioning and provision of services for children and young people within the Borough;

# Agenda Item 10

**APPENDIX 2**

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Early Years



Chapter 6  
Overview and Scrutiny Committees

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING PARENTS/CARERS SUB-COMMITTEE

(5 Members)

Membership to include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, plus three other elected Members from the Committee.

1. The Sub-Committee shall meet with parents and parent/carer groups, at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee, officers to attend at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee.
2. The Sub-Committee may make recommendations to the Committee.
3. The Sub-Committee shall meet quarterly and advertise meetings via Family Hubs, Schools and the Sefton Parent Carer Forum.

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## CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

### Public Question Time

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) will hold a Public Question Time as the first substantive item on agendas at each meeting.

Public Question Time shall be dealt with as follows:-

1. A total of 15 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), on matters that fall under the remit of the Committee.
2. Written notice of questions must be provided by 12 noon, 4 working days prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Support Officer. At any one meeting, no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
3. Questions will be directed to the Chair of the Committee.
4. The Chair of the Committee will retain sole discretion as to the management of public speaking and questions, but normally a total period of 15 minutes will be permitted.
5. One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner.
6. Public Question Time is not intended for debate. Issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.
7. The Chair may reject a question if it:
  - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
  - Is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
  - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Committee in the past six months; or
  - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

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# Agenda Item 11

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	12 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Work Programme 2023/24, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Children's Social Care Education		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	No	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	No
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

## Summary:

To:

- seek the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2023/24;
- to identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan;
- note the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023/24;
- note the training proposals available from the Local Government Association and in-house;
- note that the topic of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) has previously been approved as a potential item for in-depth scrutiny during 2023/24; and
- to receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## Recommendations:

That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2023/24, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be noted, along with any additional items to be included and agreed;
- (2) items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit of the Committee, as set out in Appendix C to the report, be considered and any agreed items be included in the work programme referred to in (1) above;
- (3) the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023/24, as set out at Appendix B be noted;

# Agenda Item 11

- (4) the training proposals available from the Local Government Association and in-house be noted;
- (5) It be noted that the topic of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) has previously been approved for in-depth scrutiny by Members of the Committee during 2023/24 and relevant activities are included in the schedule of the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023/24, as set out at Appendix B; and
- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

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

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2023/24; identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny “adds value” to the Council; and to comply with a decision of the Committee to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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

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

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

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

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

**(A) Revenue Costs – see above**

**(B) Capital Costs – see above**

## **Implications of the Proposals:**

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> Yes
Any direct implications on the impact on children and young people are set out within

the report.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
<p>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.</p>	

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

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report. Reference in the Work Programme to any other reports could impact on the Council’s Core Purposes, in which case they will be referred to in the report when submitted.
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 Work Programme Report is not subject to FD/LD consultation. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the Work Programme report will be included in those reports as appropriate.

**(B) External Consultations**

Not applicable

**Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

# Agenda Item 11

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Laura Bootland
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2078
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:laura.bootland@sefton.gov.uk">laura.bootland@sefton.gov.uk</a>

## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A - Work Programme for 2023/24;
- Appendix B – Informal Workshops / Site Visits 2023/24
- Appendix C – Latest Key Decision Forward Plan Items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

## Introduction/Background

### 1. WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

- 1.1 The Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee during the Municipal Year 2023/24 is set out at **Appendix A** to the report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.
- 1.2 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 2023/24 and reviewed/updated, as appropriate.
- 1.3 During the 2022/23 Municipal Year, the Committee agreed the following items for consideration during 2023/24:
  - Representatives of the Police and other Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team members be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee (Minute No. 59 (2) (a) of 06/03/23 refers). This has been arranged for the meeting on 12 March 2024.
- 1.5 **The Committee is requested to comment on the Work Programme for 2023/24, as appropriate, and note that additional items may be added to the Programme during the next Municipal Year.**

## **2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS / INFORMAL MEETINGS / BRIEFING SESSIONS 2023/24**

- 2.1 The Committee has agreed to hold informal briefing sessions, as and when required, rather than establish a traditional working group, during 2023/24.
- 2.2 A schedule of the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023/24, is set out at Appendix B.
- 2.3 The schedule will be updated during the Municipal Year as sessions take place.
- 2.4 **The Committee is requested to comment on the schedule of informal activities to be undertaken during 2023/24 and note that additional items may be added to the schedule at future meetings of the Committee in the next Municipal Year, 2024/25.**

## **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 the 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 published on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, for the four-month period 1 April 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, contains no key decisions that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion.
- 3.5 There are 2 items within the current Plan that falls under the remit of the Committee on this occasion, namely:
  - Approval of Legal Documentation for Academy Conversions
  - Adoption in Merseyside
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 The Committee is invited to consider items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix C 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.

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## 4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION / IN-HOUSE – TRAINING PROPOSALS

- 4.1 During 2023/24, the Council has secured a commitment for the Local Government Association (LGA) to provide training for Members of the Committee, as outlined within the paragraphs below.

### **Dedicated support for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding)**

Workshop sessions have been organised and delivered as outlined within the table below:

<b>Session</b>	<b>Dates – in person (6.00 - 8.00 pm) Bootle Town Hall</b>
Session 1  Introduction to children’s scrutiny and work programming.	Tuesday, 30 May 2023
Session 2  Recap on Session 1, engagement and working with others.	Tuesday, 25 July 2023
Session 3  Demonstrating value and influence and creating a strong organisational culture.	Monday, 2 October 2023

### **Support for Members of all Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

Two alternative training sessions for all O&S Committee Members have been held on Thursday, 15 June 2023, in Bootle Town Hall from 3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. and from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

### **Support for all Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

### **Mentor Support for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding)**

Arrangements have been made and support is on-going.

### **All Member Corporate Parenting Briefing**

The Council’s Corporate Parenting Officer is providing in-house mandatory Corporate Parenting training, as in previous years.



Four alternative one-hour briefing sessions have been arranged remotely via Microsoft Teams during 2023/24. Four sessions have been held to date, as follows:

- Monday, 19 June 2023, 2.00 p.m.
- Tuesday, 11 July 2023, 5.00 p.m.
- Wednesday, 1 November 2023, 6.30 p.m.
- Wednesday, 24 January 2024, 4.00 p.m.

**4.3 The Committee is requested to note the training proposals available from the Local Government Association and in-house.**

## **5. WORK PROGRAMMING / MATTERS ARISING FROM THE TRAINING SESSION HELD ON 11 JULY 2023**

5.1 Members and Substitutes were invited to attend an informal work programming session prior to the meeting of the Committee on 6 June 2023.

5.2 A further an informal work programming session took place prior to the training session held 11 July 2023.

5.3 The following three topics were narrowed down as potential items for in-depth scrutiny during 2023/24, and discussed at the training session held on 11 July 2023:

- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Health Inequalities
- Child Protection and Safeguarding

5.4 As SEND was the topic that appeared to raise the most concerns amongst Members, it is proposed that this is identified as a potential item for in-depth scrutiny during 2023/24,

**5.5 That it be noted that the topic of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) has previously been approved for in-depth scrutiny by Members of the Committee during 2023/24 and relevant activities are included in the schedule of the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2023/24, as set out at Appendix B.**

## **6. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

6.1 During the October/November 2019 cycle of meetings, 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

# Agenda Item 11

Committee's inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny. This Committee considered the matter at its meeting held on 15 October 2019 (Minute No. 32 refers).

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

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

## 6.4 **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.

## 6.5 **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 (Scrutiny Link).

The LCR O&S Committee also include Representatives of the Liberal Democrat Groups and Conservative Groups from the Local Authorities on the LCR O&S.

## 5.6 **Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. The Chair is appointed at the first meeting of the Committee of the Municipal Year.

## 5.7 **Quoracy Issues**

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

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

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

## 5.8 Meetings

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

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

## 5.9 Latest Meeting – 28 February 2024

Matters considered at the meeting related to the following items:

- Verbal update from Mayor Steve Rotherham
- Progress update on the LCR Combined Authority Five Year Climate Action Plan
- Work Programme Update

Details of all meetings can be obtained using the link referred to above

## 5.10 ***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 (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)  
WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

<b>Tuesday, 6 June 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Bootle</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
1.	Sefton Place - Community Emotional Health and Wellbeing Services Update 2022 - 2023	Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, Sefton Place
2.	Children's Services Improvement Programme	Jan McMahon
3.	Children's Social Care Overview of Practice	Joe Banham
4.	Safeguarding Learning and Development Offer	Joe Banham
5.	Education Scorecard	Tricia Davies
6.	Ofsted Inspection Report (Spring Term)	Tricia Davies
7.	Parent Governor Representative	Debbie Campbell
8.	Cabinet Member Update Reports	Tricia Davies/Laura Knights/Debbie Campbell
9.	Work Programme Update	Debbie Campbell

<b>Tuesday, 26 September 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
1.	Cabinet Member Update Reports	Tricia Davies/Joe Banham/Debbie Campbell
2.	Domestic Abuse	Janette Maxwell
3.	Report for Information on Vaping Amongst Young People	Helen Armitage
4.	Children's Services Improvement Programme	Jan McMahon
5.	Children's Social Care Overview of Practice and CHAT	Joe Banham
6.	Executive Scrutiny Protocol	Paul Fraser
7.	Work Programme Update	Debbie Campbell

<b>Tuesday 28 November 2023, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Bootle</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
1.	Cabinet Member Update Reports	Tricia Davies/Joe Banham/Debbie Campbell
2.	Children's Services Improvement Programme	Jan McMahon
3.	Children's Social Care Overview of Practice and CHAT	Joe Banham
4.	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Joint Commissioning Plan	Eleanor Moulton
5.	Education Scorecard	Tricia Davies
6.	Ofsted Inspection Report (Summer Term)	Tricia Davies
7.	Proposals to Amend the Terms of Reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	Debbie Campbell
8.	Work Programme Update	Debbie Campbell

<b>Tuesday, 30 January 2024, 6.30 p.m., Town Hall, Southport</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
1.	Cabinet Member Update Reports	Tricia Davies/Jan McMahon /Laura Bootland
2.	Children's Services Improvement Programme	Jan McMahon
3.	Children's Social Care Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement	Joe Banham
4.	Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report	Karen Gray
5.	SACRE Annual Report	Ian Ross
6.	Serious Violence Duty	Steven Martlew
7.	Ofsted Inspections	Tricia Davies/Jacqui Patterson
8.	Education Scorecard	Tricia Davies/Jacqui Patterson
9.	Work Programme Update	Laura Bootland

<b>Monday, 12 March 2024, 6.30 p.m. Town Hall, Bootle</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Report/Item</b>	<b>Report Author/Organiser</b>
1.	Attendance of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Alex Jones (Verbal item, no report).
2.	Cabinet Member Update Reports	Laura Bootland
3.	Children's Services Improvement Programme	Risthardh Hare (Verbal item)
4.	Summary of Recent Audit Activity	Joe Banham
6.	Ofsted Inspection Reports (Autumn Term)	Jacqui Patterson
7.	Education Scorecard	Lynda Poole
8.	Review of the Operation and Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Debbie Campbell
9.	Work Programme Update	Laura Bootland

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)  
INFORMAL MEETINGS / WORKSHOPS 2023/24**

No.	Report/Item	Organiser
1.	<p><b>Work Programme Session</b></p> <p>Prior to the first formal Committee meeting for the Municipal Year on 6 June 2023, an informal meeting of Committee Members and Substitutes took place to consider matters to be raised during the Municipal Year 2023/24 and a number of different matters were raised.</p>	Debbie Campbell
2.	<p><b>Work Planning Session</b></p> <p>A further Work Planning Session took place on 25 July 2023.</p>	Debbie Campbell
3.	<p><b>Feedback from an Ofsted Monitoring Visit</b></p> <p>An informal meeting took place on 31 August 2023, to receive information on the above. Paul Boyce, Sefton's Commissioner for Children's Services, gave a presentation and Ristardh Hare updated Committee Members on the recent Ofsted letter and the improvement journey for Children's Services. Members <b>agreed that</b> a training induction pack should be developed for new Members of the Committee.</p>	Debbie Campbell Ristardh Hare Paul Boyce

4.	<p><b>Emotional Health &amp; Wellbeing Services</b></p> <p>An informal meeting with Health Partners was held on 21 September 2023, when Members received a presentation from the Cahmelions Group, which was comprised of service users aged 18 and under.</p> <p>Committee Members also received a presentation from health providers on Emotional Health and Wellbeing Services for children and young people.</p> <p>Committee Members made a number of recommendations which were subsequently approved by the Committee at its meeting on 26 September 2023.</p>	Debbie Campbell / Laura Bootland
4.	<p><b>SEND</b></p> <p><b>Ofsted Inspection Readiness</b></p> <p>An informal meeting of Committee Members was held on 16 October 2023, via MS Teams.</p> <p><b>Graduated Approach</b></p> <p>An informal meeting of Committee Members was held on 23 November, in person. Visits to schools took place during February with a follow up meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	Laura Bootland/Louise Veney/Emma Hart
5.	<p><b>Home Education</b></p> <p>An Informal meeting of the Committee was held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January at 4.30pm via Teams, to receive a briefing on Home Education in Sefton and the Council's response to the Government consultation on home education.</p> <p>4 recommendations were made and are attached to the work programme report at appendix c.</p>	Laura Bootland/ Tracy McKeating

<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Improvement Board Update</b></p> <p>An informal meeting of the Committee has been arranged for Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April at 10am, via Teams, for the Committee to receive an update on the work of the Children’s Services Improvement Board.</p>	<p>Laura Bootland/Joe Banham</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Meeting(s) with Groups</b></p> <p>Sefton Parent Carers Forum - Members met with Sefton Parent Carers Forum on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023</p> <p>To meet with the Making a Difference (MAD) Group – to be arranged.</p>	<p>Laura Bootland</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Visits</b></p> <p>To visit the Menai Wellbeing Centre – to be arranged.</p> <p>To visit Children’s Services at Magdalen House, Bootle – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024</p> <p>To visit the Sunflowers House building at Alder Hey - to be arranged (<i>this is being looked in to by NHS partners as of March 2024</i>).</p>	<p>Laura Bootland</p>

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## SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 APRIL 2024 - 31 JULY 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](http://www.sefton.gov.uk)

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

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

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

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

**NOTE:**

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

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

## FORWARD PLAN INDEX OF ITEMS

Item Heading	Officer Contact	
Approval of Legal Documentation for Academy Conversions	Tracy McKeating tracy.mckeating@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3269	
Adoption in Merseyside	Alison Taylor alison.taylor@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3936	

## SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<p><b>Approval of Legal Documentation for Academy Conversions</b></p> <p>To inform Cabinet of the decision by the governing bodies of:                      Lander Road primary School Litherland joining the Great Schools Trust; The Grange Primary School Netherton joining the Lydiate Learning Trust; Our Lady of Walsingham, Netherton, Our Lady of Lourdes, Birkdale, St Edmunds and St Thomas, Waterloo and St Mary's Catholic Primary School Crosby joining Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust; and Trinity St Peters, Formby, joining All Saints Multi Academy Trust in accordance with statutory requirements and seek authorisation for officers to sign the documentation required by the academy conversion process.                      The Regional Director for the Department of Education has indicated that the date of conversion will be 1st September 2024.                      Linacre Primary School Bootle and Linaker Primary School Southport will be converting with an identified academy sponsor. The Regional Director for the Department of Education has indicated that the date of conversion will be 1st June 2024.</p>			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	4 Apr 2024			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	Birkdale; Church; Harington; Kew; Linacre; Litherland; Manor; Netherton and Orrell; Norwood; Ravenmeols; St. Oswald			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Children's Services and Safeguarding			
Lead Director	Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education)			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Schools, Governing bodies, Sefton Council, Parents, Archdiocese			



# Agenda Item 11

## Appendix C

Method(s) of Consultation	Meetings with Department for Education. Consultation between schools, governing bodies and Sefton Council. Consultations via surveys and conversations
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Approval of Legal Documentation for Academy Conversions
Contact Officer(s) details	Tracy McKeating tracy.mckeating@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3269

## SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Details of Decision to be taken	<b>Adoption in Merseyside</b> The report is seeking approval to procure a replacement Family Action - Adoption Services Contract to commence 01/06/2024			
Decision Maker	Cabinet			
Decision Expected	4 Apr 2024 Decision due date for Cabinet changed from 07/03/2024 to 04/04/2024. Reason: work is ongoing on the procurement exercise			
Key Decision Criteria	Financial	Yes	Community Impact	Yes
Exempt Report	Open			
Wards Affected	All Wards			
Scrutiny Committee Area	Children's Services and Safeguarding			
Lead Director	Assistant Director of Children's Services (Social Care)			
Persons/Organisations to be Consulted	Assistant Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (Strategic Support); Service Providers; Service Users			
Method(s) of Consultation	Emails; Soft market testing via the Chest; Meetings			
List of Background Documents to be Considered by Decision-maker	Adoption in Merseyside -			
Contact Officer(s) details	Alison Taylor alison.taylor@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3936			