

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	12 January, 2021
Subject:	Work Programme 2020/21, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2020/21, identify potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and receive an update on the Armed Forces Covenant/Toolkit.

Recommendation:

That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be considered, along with any additional items to be included and thereon be agreed;
- (2) the Committee considers the establishment of a Working Group to review a topic during the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year;
- (3) the Committee considers items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the work programme referred to in (1) above;
- (4) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted;
- (5) the update on the Armed Forces Covenant/Toolkit be noted; and
- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy be noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To consider the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2020/21 and identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny 'adds value' to the Council. 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:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None
Legal Implications: None
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the approval of, and monitoring of recommendations contained in Digital inclusion Working Group Final Report will help with the aim of ensuring that people have the capability to use the internet to do things that benefit them on a day to day basis - whether they be individuals, businesses or other entities e.g. the voluntary sector; and aim to reduce digital exclusion and the digital divide that can exist within society for a variety of reasons.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None directly applicable to this report. See reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Commission, broker and provide core services: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the presentation on the update on the Commissioning and the Procurement Policy will raise awareness of associated issues with Members. The Working Group established by the Committee to review the Council's Ethical Business Practices will look into ethical procurement. See also reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.

Place – leadership and influencer: None directly applicable to this report.
Drivers of change and reform: None directly applicable to this report. See reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: None directly applicable to this report. See reference to the Digital Inclusion Working Group referred to above.
Greater income for social investment: None directly applicable to this report.
Cleaner Greener: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the submission of the report on Air Quality Monitoring will raise awareness of associated issues with Members.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

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

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2020/21 – Appendix 1
- Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review – Appendix 2
- Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Appendix 3
- Bronze Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme – Appendix 4

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Introduction/Background

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

- 1.1 The Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2020/21 is set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.

- 1.2 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 2020/21 and updated, as appropriate.
- 1.6 The Committee is requested to comment on the Work Programme for 2020/21; and note that additional items may be submitted to the Programme at future meetings of the Committee during this Municipal Year.

2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2020/21

- 2.1 It is usual practise for the Committee to appoint a Working Group(s) to undertake a scrutiny review of services during the Municipal Year.
- 2.2 Last year the Committee agreed to establish a Working Group to review the topic of the Council's Ethical Business Practices. This review has now been completed. Previous meetings of the Committee have not established a new Working Group.
- 2.3 The Committee's views are therefore sought on the establishment of a new Working Group for 2020/21; and the appointment of Members to serve on it.
- 2.4 A criteria checklist for selecting and rejecting potential topics to review is attached at Appendix 2.

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

- 3.1 Members may request to pre-scrutinise items from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit (terms of reference) of this Committee. The Forward Plan which is updated each month, sets out the list of items to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration during the next four-month period.
- 3.2 The pre-scrutiny process assists 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 is attached at Appendix 3 for this purpose. For ease of identification, items listed on the Forward Plan for the first time appear as shaded.
- 3.5 Should Members require further information in relation to any item on the Key Decision Forward Plan, would they please contact the relevant Officer named against the item in the Plan, prior to the Meeting.
- 3.6 The Committee is invited to consider items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the Work Programme

referred to in (1) above.

4. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

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

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

4.4 Role

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

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

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

4.5 Membership

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

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

Councillors Pugh and Sir Ron Watson are the respective representatives of the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

4.6 **Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. Councillor Thomas Crone, a Green Party Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

4.7 **Quoracy Issues**

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

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

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

4.8 **Meetings**

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

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

4 November 2020

The last meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 4 November 2020 and considered the following items:

- Metro Mayor S Rotheram's Update
- Youth Unemployment
- The Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy - Phase 2 Engagement Proposals
- Finalising the Liverpool City Region's Air Quality Action Plan
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019-20
- Public Engagement at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- LCR LEP Task and Finish Review - Outcome of Consideration by the LCR LEP Board & The LCR Combined Authority
- Work Programme 2020/21
- Public Engagement at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

4.9 The Committee is requested to note the update on the Liverpool City Region

Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5. ARMED FORCES COVENANT/TOOLKIT

5.1 In accordance with the Committee's Work Programme Members had requested regular updates regarding the Armed Forces Toolkit. The following information can now be provided.

5.2 The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve or who have served, and their families, are treated fairly. This commitment is made in recognition of the sacrifices they make on behalf of the country. The Armed Forces Covenant is not designed to give the Armed Forces, Veterans and their families' preferential treatment compared with other citizens but it should ensure that they get a fair deal and are not disadvantaged because of their Service.

The Armed Forces Covenant relies on the government, communities, businesses, and individuals of the UK to actively support it in order to make a difference. Local Authorities are at the heart of that support group. The six councils in the Liverpool City Region have all signed the Covenant, and this ensures that they are working hard to make sure that Servicemen and women, veterans and their families get a fair deal.

The Armed Forces Community is part of the local community, and as such, ensuring that they are treated fairly and not disadvantaged should be integrated into all the services, support, engagement and work councils do in their local community.

5.3 When considering how local authorities should approach the Armed Forces Covenant they need to be mindful that underlying the promise that the Armed Forces Community should be treated fairly lay two principles:

- The Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services
- Special consideration is appropriate in some cases for those who have given the most, such as the injured, psychologically scarred, or bereaved.

Via email correspondence between the City Region Lead Officer and the Merseyside Officers It was agreed that as a next step the City Region Covenant should apply for the Bronze Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme; and each authority was tasked to fill out the paperwork which was not exhaustive. Sefton was successfully awarded this on 17 March 2020. The next stage of this is to look at achieving the silver and gold award.

A copy of the Bronze Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme is attached as Appendix 4

5.4 In terms of the actual 'toolkit' document there have not been any current updates. However as this is a constantly evolving document, further updates may occur in the new year. To this end, there is a meeting scheduled for Tuesday 5 January

2021 were there may be further updates on the document.

5.5 Any updates from the meeting on 5 January 2021 will be reported to the meeting.

6. DIGITAL INCLUSION

6.1 The Work Programme indicates that a report would be submitted to this meeting updating on progress of the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy.

6.2 Andrea Watts, Executive Director has advised that the LCR digital Infrastructure programme is in the process of procuring a joint venture partner – due to be announced on 15th January 2021.

The LCR Digital Strategy is currently out for consultation until 13th Jan 2021 and is available at the following link

<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/engagement-campaign-launched-on-liverpool-city-region-digital-strategy/>

The Council's digital strategy is on the Forward Plan for Cabinet in February 2021

Both of the last 2 strategies include sections on digital inclusion.