



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS)

INFORMAL REMOTE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18TH JANUARY, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Blackburne (Vice-Chair in the Chair)
Councillors D'Albuquerque, Cluskey, Hansen, Killen,
Chris Maher, Myers, Page, Robinson, Sathiy and
John Sayers

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Atkinson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from the Chair, Councillor John Sayers, who was unable to attend at the commencement of the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the Minutes of the meetings held on 9 November and 14 December 2021 would be submitted for approval to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 8 March 2022.

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

Further to Minute No. 34 of 9 March 2021 the informal meeting of the Committee received a presentation from Andrea Watts, Executive Director (People) updating on progress of the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy (the Strategy).

Ms. Watts highlighted:

- How does LCR compared with the north west and the UK in relation to internet usage within the last 3 months
- The progress to date on the CA strategy and that digital inclusion was now a priority set out in the CA's Corporate Plan; that Digital Inclusion working group had been re-established to identify areas of digital inclusion activity for the CA priorities; and that the CA's Digital Infrastructure project includes a substantial social value element that had significant ambitions towards supporting digital access and inclusion, as well as jobs and apprenticeships

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- The elements of digital inclusion in respect of connectivity, equipment and skills
- The next steps and aspects relating to LCRCA Digital Inclusion Group being re-established to drive the approach; that Sefton had its own emerging Digital Inclusion Strategy (as a borough rather than a Council); the links to all elements of Sefton's Digital Strategy ; and efforts to maximise opportunities to link all aspects together
- A reminder of Sefton's Digital Strategy 2021 – 23 under the headings connected Council; empowered residents; and business growth

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

- The extent of the Department for Education provision of laptops and tablets and mobile data
- Difficulties experienced by residents, particularly older persons, using ICT to access services and the concern that such people could be digitally excluded.

RESOLVED:

That Andrea Watts be thanked for her informative presentation.

5. MERSEYSIDE RECYCLING AND WASTE AUTHORITY - SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2020/21

The Informal Meeting of the Committee received a presentation from Carl Beer, Chief Executive, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MWRA) on his Authority's Service Delivery Plan 2020/21.

Mr. Beer highlighted the following:

- MRWA Service Infrastructure which covered 1.5 Million people, 660,000 households and dealt with 650,000 tonnes of refuse/waste per year
- The operation of the material recovery facilities at Bidston and Gillmoss
- Operations associated with the 15 household waste recycling centres which received 162.380 tonnes of waste each year
- Kirkby rail loading and transfer station
- Wilton energy from waste combined heat and power facility
- The circular economy associated with MWRA operations
- Upcycling initiatives
- The MWRA community fund
- The Love Food Hate Waste campaign that aimed to reduce food waste by 20% per household in the UK by 2025
- Education and awareness campaigns including the waste prevention programme at Southport Eco Centre

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- Recycling performance by district from 2017/18 to 2020/21
- LCR kerbside residual waste results - 2015/16 and that food at 39% (148,000 tonnes), still remained the biggest waste management issue across the region
- The “waste hierarchy” of prevent, reduce, re-use, recycle, energy recovery, landfill
- Social value associated with re-use and third sector involvement
- Strategic outcomes associated with carbon reduction, climate action, cost efficiency and social value
- Green jobs
- National Direction of Travel and the new targets for re-use and recycling - 55% by 2025, 60% by 2030 65% by 2035
- Zero waste targets associated with new ideas, new technologies and new challenges
- MWRA 5-year plan and new opportunities for green jobs, costs and climate

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

- The responsibility for removing fly-tipped tyres, how they were disposed of and recycling initiatives to ensure they did not end up in landfill sites
- The potential to offer recycled materials, such as woodchips, for use by charitable organisations
- A strategic approach to engage with producers of commodities that require packaging for their goods with the aim of eliminating or reducing the amount of packaging used
- The reason why various supermarkets could collect plastic bags and soft plastic packaging for recycling but Sefton could not in its co-mingled recycling collection service; the economic viability of introducing such a service; and how new Government regulations may direct local authorities to introduce such a service

RESOLVED:

That Mr. Beer be thanked for his informative presentation.

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

The informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer on the Work Programme for 2021/22; the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan; that updated on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and updated Members on the progress of items that have previously been considered by the Committee.

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In respect of Working Group topics the report indicated that that the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer had contacted appropriate Heads of Service whose roles fell under the remit of the Committee seeking their ideas on the selection of a topic for a Working Group review; but that no topics had been suggested

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (2) It be noted that the Head of Highways and Public Protection would be requested to submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee on the potential to establish a Working Group to review the topic of dog fouling in public places and methods to combat such an anti-social practice;
- (3) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
- (4) it be noted that the Head of Operational In-House Services will submit a report to the Cabinet Member – Locality Services seeking re-consideration of the project regarding single stream glass collection and accordingly, this matter be removed from the Committee’s Work Programme.

7. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS

The informal meeting of the Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent reports from the Cabinet Members for Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing; Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills.

Councillor Atkinson, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills advised Members that figures published for the period ending October 2021 showed that Sefton was the local authority (out of 144) with the third lowest number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET); and indicated that the Council should be proud of this achievement.

Members of the Committee commended the work undertaken in Councillor Atkinson’s portfolio and wished to thank staff for their continued work during the Covid-19 pandemic.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update reports from the Cabinet Members for Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing; Locality Services; Planning

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and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills be noted; and

(2) Councillor Atkinson be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.