

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	Date of Meeting:	5 July 2022
Subject:	Work Programme 2022/23, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Children's Social Care Education		
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 draft Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2022/23;
- note the progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group;
- consider deferring the re-establishing the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group for a further 12 months, to the Autumn of 2023;
- invite Committee Members to participate in informal briefing sessions during 2022/23, rather than establish a traditional working group;
- to identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan; and
- to receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations:

That:

- (1) the draft Work Programme for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be noted, along with any additional items to be included and agreed;
- (2) progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group be noted;
- (3) the re-establishment of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group be deferred for a further 12 months, to the Autumn of 2023;

- (4) rather than establish a traditional working group during 2022/23, all Members of the Committee be invited to participate in informal briefing sessions;
- (5) 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; 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 2022/23; 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:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None	
Legal Implications: None	
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes

Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes

There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from the consideration of reports referred to in the Work Programme will be contained in such reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

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

Contact Officer:	Debbie Campbell
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2254
Email Address:	debbie.campbell@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A - Work Programme for 2021/22;
- Appendix B – Terms of Reference for the Committee (extract from the Council's Constitution); and

- 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 2022/23

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2022/23 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 (set out at **Appendix B**). The Work Programme will be submitted to each meeting of the Committee during 2022/23 and updated, as appropriate.
- 1.3 At the time of drafting this report, there is a possibility that the frequency of the Committee's meetings could be increased during 2022/23 and any further information will be reported at the meeting.
- 1.4 **The Committee is requested to comment on the Work Programme for 2022/23, as appropriate, and note that additional items may be added to the Programme at future meetings of the Committee during this Municipal Year.**

2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC 2021/22 – IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM WORKING GROUP

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Committee held on 28 September 2021, the Committee agreed that:

a working group on the impact of Covid 19 on the primary curriculum be established, to include the consideration of the impact of lockdown and home schooling, comprised of the following Members of the Committee:

- Councillor Spencer
- Councillor Yvonne Sayers
- Mrs. S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member
- Ms. M. McDermott, Parent Governor Representative

(Minute No. 22 (4) refers).

- 2.2 A number of meetings of the Working Group have taken place and Members have suggested recommendations arising from the review.
- 2.3 At the time of drafting this report, the Final Report of the Working Group is in course of preparation, and it is anticipated that it will be attached elsewhere on this agenda.
- 2.4 **The Committee is requested to note the progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group.**

3. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC 2021/22 - SECONDARY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND ATTAINMENT WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) held on 6 July 2021, the progress of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group was noted, and the Committee agreed that the Working Group be deferred for twelve months, until such time as data is available.
- 3.2 The Head of Education has confirmed that data is not yet available.
- 3.3 **The Committee is requested to defer consideration of re-establishing the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group for a further 12 months, to the Autumn of 2023.**

4. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2022/23

- 4.1 It is good practise for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to appoint a Working Group to undertake a scrutiny review of services during the Municipal Year.
- 4.2 Rather than establish a traditional working group during 2022/23, it is suggested that all Members of the Committee could be invited to participate in informal briefings on the work of Children's Services and Safeguarding, where the information could be deemed useful. An informal briefing took place on 25 May 2022.
- 4.3 **The Committee is requested to agree to hold informal briefing sessions, rather than establish a traditional working group during 2022/23.**

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

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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.

- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 The latest Forward Plan, published on 31 May 2022 and covering the period 1 July – 31 October 2022, is attached at **Appendix C** for this purpose. For ease of identification, items listed on the Forward Plan for the first time appear as shaded.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 At the time of drafting this report, the Forward Plan to be published on 30 June 2022, covering the period 1 August – 1 November 2022, is in course of preparation and any items that fall under the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be shared with Members prior to the meeting.
- 5.7 **The Committee is invited to consider items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix B 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.**

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 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 Howard, Hansen and Waterfield (Scrutiny Link).

Representatives of the Liberal Democrat Group and Conservative group on the Committee will be reported to Members at the next meeting.

6.6 **Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. The Chair will be appointed at the first meeting of the Committee on 13 July 2022.

6.7 **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.

6.8 **Meetings**

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

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

6.9 **Latest Meeting - 12 April 2022**

The latest meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 12 April 2022.

Matters considered at the meeting related to:

- Metro Mayor S Rotheram's Update
- Apprenticeship Task and Finish Group - Final Report
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Self-Assessment

The next meeting of the LCRCOA&S will be held on 13 July 2022. Matters discussed at this meeting will be reported to Members at the next meeting of the Committee.

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

6.10 *The Committee is requested to note the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.*