

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	Date of Meeting:	7 November 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:

- review the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/23;
- note the progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group;
- seek the views of the Committee on the re-establishment of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group;
- seek the views of the Committee on the review of health services for children in Sefton;
- note the progress of informal briefing sessions for Committee Members to be held during 2022/23, and the intention to hold an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values in due course;
- note the intention to hold a site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle, in due course;
- note that there are no items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan;
- receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- formally approve the nomination for a new Parent Governor Representative to sit on the 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 views of the Committee be sought on the re-establishment of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group, and in the event that the Working Group is re-established, to appoint at least 3 Members of the Committee to serve on the Working Group;
- (4) the views of the Committee on the review of health services for children in Sefton be sought;
- (5) the Committee be requested to note the progress of informal briefing sessions for Committee Members to be held during 2022/23 and the intention to hold an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values in due course.
- (6) the Committee be requested to note the intention to hold a site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle, in due course;
- (7) the fact that there are no items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion, be noted;
- (8) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
- (9) the nomination received for a new Parent Governor Representative to sit on the Committee be formally approved.

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.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2022/23;
- Appendix B – Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review;

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Introduction/Background

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

- 1.1 The 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. The Programme is submitted to each meeting of the Committee and updated, as appropriate, to reflect any additional items requested by Members and Officers.
- 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.
- 1.3 **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 The Final Report of the Working Group was submitted to the meeting of the Council held on 29 September 2022 and the recommendations were approved. Where appropriate, an update report on progress on each of the recommendations will be submitted to the Committee in approximately six months' time.
- 2.4 **The Committee is requested to note the progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group.**

3. POSSIBLE SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC 2022/23 - SECONDARY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND ATTAINMENT WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 At its last meeting held on 27 September 2022, the Committee agreed that:

“(3) previous reports on school performance be provided to the Assistant Director Children’s Services (Education) and she be requested to submit a report on exam results and performance this year of secondary schools, by school, if possible, in order for the Committee to ascertain whether there is a need to re-establish the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group;” (Minute No. 19 (3) refers).

- 3.2 At the time of drafting this report, a separate report on Summer 2022 Data is anticipated to appear elsewhere on the agenda and Members may wish to consider the report to ascertain whether there is a need to re-establish the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group at the current time.
- 3.3 For the information of Members, a criteria checklist for selecting and rejecting potential topics to review is attached at **Appendix B**, to assist the Committee in selecting topics and appointing Working Group(s) for the Municipal Year.
- 3.4 In the event that the Working Group is re-established, at least 3 Members of the Committee will be required to be appointed to serve on the Working Group;

3.5 The views of the Committee's views are sought on the establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group.

4. POSSIBLE SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC 2022/23 – CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

4.1 A request has been received from the Sefton Place Director for the Committee to review health services for children in Sefton, with a view to ensuring future improvements in health outcomes for children. The request has arisen as a result of the recent Ofsted report on Children's Services in Sefton.

4.2 The Committee may wish to establish a traditional working group comprised of at least 3 Members of the Committee. Alternatively, the Committee may wish to consider holding an informal meeting to which all Committee Members could be invited, to review health services for children in Sefton, as a task and finish group.

4.3 The views of the Committee's views are sought on the review of health services for children in Sefton.

5. INFORMAL BRIEFING SESSIONS 2022/23

5.1 All Members of the Committee have been invited to participate in informal briefings on the work of Children's Services and Safeguarding, where the information is deemed to be useful.

5.2 A number of possible topics have been suggested for informal briefings, including the following:

- Leeds Family Values and the Sunderland model; and
- The MacAlister Review.

5.3 At the time of drafting this report, initial arrangements are being made for Committee Members to be invited to an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values and any further information will be reported verbally at the meeting.

5.4 The Committee is requested to note the progress of informal briefing sessions for Committee Members to be held during 2022/23 and the intention to hold an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values in due course.

6. POTENTIAL SITE VISIT – MAGDALEN HOUSE, BOOTLE

6.1 At its last meeting held on 27 September 2022, that Committee agreed that:

“(5) visits by Committee Members to the Children's Services Teams based in Magdalen House, Bootle, be arranged in due course;” (Minute No. 19 (5) refers).

6.2 At the time of drafting this report, initial arrangements are being made for Committee Members to be invited to a site visit to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle, and any further information will be reported verbally at the meeting.

6.3 The Committee is requested to note the intention to hold a site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle, in due course.

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

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 The latest Forward Plan published on 30 September 2022 contains no key decisions that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion.

7.5 At the time of drafting this report, the Forward Plan to be published on 31 October 2022, covering the period 1 December 2022 – 31 March 2023 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.

7.6 The Committee is requested to note that there are no items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion.

8. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8.1 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).

8.2 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.

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

8.4 **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.

8.5 **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 (Scrutiny Link), Hansen and Waterfield.

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

8.6 **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.

8.7 **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.

8.8 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>

8.9 Latest Meeting – 7 September 2022

The latest meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 7 September 2022. Matters considered at the meeting related to:

- Portfolio Holder Update - Business Support
- Race Equality Programme
- Recommendations of the Improving Disability Employment Opportunities in the Liverpool City Region Task and Finish Group
- Work Programme Update

The next meeting of the LCRCAO&S will be held on 9 November 2022. Matters discussed at the meeting will be reported to Members at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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

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

9. PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES

9.1 The Committee has two Parent Governor Representatives that sit on the Committee.

9.2 At the last meeting of the Committee on 27 September 2022, it was reported that one of the Parent Governor Representatives had tendered her resignation and the other Parent Governor Representative's term of office was due to expire.

9.3 The Governor Services Team within the Council has been advised of the position and has sought nominations for new Parent Governor Representatives to sit on the Committee.

9.4 Just one nomination has been received to date and the Committee will be requested to approve the nomination at its meeting. A further recruitment drive will take place early in 2023.

9.5 The Committee is requested to formally approve the nomination received for a new Parent Governor Representatives to sit on the Committee.