

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	20 December 2022
<b>Subject:</b>	Work Programme 2022/23, 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:

- review the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/23;
- note the progress made in obtaining information relevant to considering the possible re-establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group;
- note that an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values has taken place and to indicate if there are any further informal briefing sessions that Members would wish to be arranged during 2022/23;
- note the outcome of the site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle;
- 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;
- note the preference for the Committee to continue to meet on a six-weekly basis during 2023/24 and to seek the views of the Committee as to whether it would wish to alternate formal and informal meetings during 2023/24.

### Recommendations:

That:

- (1) the 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 made in obtaining information relevant to considering the possible re-establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Secondary School

Performance and Attainment Working Group, be noted;

- (3) the Committee be requested to note that an informal briefing session on the Leeds Family Values has taken place and to give consideration to any further informal briefing sessions during 2022/23;
- (4) the Committee be requested to note the outcome of a site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle;
- (5) 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;
- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
- (7) the preference for the Committee to continue to meet on a six-weekly basis during 2023/24 be noted, and consideration be given as to whether the Committee would wish to alternate between formal and informal meetings during 2023/24.

#### **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:**

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

## 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. POSSIBLE SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC - SECONDARY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND ATTAINMENT WORKING GROUP

- 2.1 At its last meeting held on 7 November 2022, the views of the Committee on the re-establishment of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group were sought and the Committee agreed that:

“further consideration be given to the re-establishment of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group once the Committee has considered the report of the Executive Director of Children’s Social Care and Education providing information on the up- to-date test and examination data;” (Minute No 23 (2) refers);

2.2 The Head of Education has since indicated that she anticipates the information requested to be available in January 2023 and that she will submit the report requested by the Committee to the meeting scheduled for 31 January 2023.

**2.3 The Committee is requested to note the progress made in obtaining information relevant to considering the possible re-establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group.**

### **3. INFORMAL BRIEFING SESSIONS 2022/23**

3.1 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.

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

- Leeds Family Values and the Sunderland model;
- The MacAlister Review;
- How wider partners are supporting Children's Services;

3.3 An informal briefing for Committee Members was held on Microsoft Teams on the Leeds Family Values and a copy of the power-point presentation provided at the briefing was subsequently circulated to all Committee Members.

**3.4 *The Committee is requested to note that an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values has taken place and to indicate if there are any further informal briefing sessions that Members would wish to be arranged during 2022/23.***

### **4. SITE VISIT – MAGDALEN HOUSE, BOOTLE**

4.1 Since the last meeting of the Committee held on 7 November 2022, Committee Members were invited to attend a site visit to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle, and information on the Children's Services Teams has subsequently been circulated to Members.

4.2 At the time of drafting this report, a report addressing Members' queries on referrals and thresholds is anticipated to appear elsewhere on this agenda.

**4.3 The Committee is requested to note the outcome of the site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle.**

## **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 30 November 2022, for the four-month period 1 January – 30 April 2023, contains no key decisions that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion.
- 5.5 **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.**

## **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 (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.

## 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 – 1 December 2022**

The latest meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 1 December 2022 and the Committee considered the following items:

- Development of the Next Local Transport Plan for the Liverpool City Region
- Work Programme Update

The next meeting of the LCRCAO&S will be held on 19 January 2022. At the time of drafting this report the agenda for the meeting has not yet been published. Matters discussed at the 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.**

**7. FREQUENCY OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2023/24**

7.1 Since September 2022 the Committee has met on a six-weekly basis, in order to provide increased scrutiny to the Council's Children's Services function.

7.2 The Cabinet at its meeting held on 1 December 2022 considered the Programme of Meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal Year and agreed that:

“the Programme of Meetings for the Council, Member Briefing Sessions; Regulatory Committees; and Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2023/24 as set out in Annexes B and C of the report be noted; and submitted to the Council for approval subject to the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) being held every six weeks.” (Minute No. 95 (2) refers).

7.3 At the time of drafting this report, the Programme of Meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal Year is scheduled to be submitted to the meeting of the Council on 19 January 2023 for approval.

7.4 A continuation of six-weekly meetings during 2023/24 would result in the following arrangements for meetings of the Committee:

<b>Six-Weekly Cycle for Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) 2023/24</b>			
<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Tuesday	6 June 2023	6.30 p.m.	Bootle Town Hall
Tuesday	18 July 2023	6.30 p.m.	Southport Town Hall
Tuesday	26 September 2023	6.30 p.m.	Bootle Town Hall
Wednesday	8 November 2023	6.30 p.m.	Southport Town Hall



Tuesday	19 December 2023	6.30 p.m.	Bootle Town Hall
Tuesday	30 January 2024	6.30 p.m.	Southport Town Hall,
Wednesday	13 March 2024	6.30 p.m.	Bootle Town Hall

7.5 The Executive Director of Children’s Social Care and Education has suggested that meetings could be rotated with one being a formal meeting and the next, being an informal meeting.

**7.6 *The Committee is requested to note the preference for the Committee to continue to meet on a six-weekly basis during 2023/24 and to give consideration as to whether it would wish to alternate formal and informal meetings during 2023/24.***