

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	Date of Meeting:	17 January 2023
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:	Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton element) Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills		
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 2022/23; to identify any items for pre-scrutiny scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; to consider the views of the Cabinet Member – Locality Services and the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services in response to a request of the Committee concerning the implementation of recommendations arising from the Effectiveness of the Council’s Enforcement Activity Working Group; and to update on issues associated with the reporting on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Digital Inclusion Working Group .

Recommendation: That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2022/23, 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 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;
- (3) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted;
- (4) consideration be given to the views of the Cabinet Member – Locality Services and the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services in response to a request of the Committee concerning the implementation of recommendations arising from the Effectiveness of the Council’s Enforcement

Activity Working Group;

- (5) no further updates be provided on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Digital Inclusion Working Group; and
- (6) the presentation by the Chief Executive of the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority on the Service Delivery Plan 2022/23 be made to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 7 March 2023.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2022/23 and identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny 'adds value' to the Council.

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.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None directly applicable to this report.
Commission, broker and provide core services: None directly applicable to this report but the Committee would be made aware of such issues via the receipt of reports, as referenced in the Work Programme, relating to the review of Winter Service and Operational Plan; the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2019/20; the Update on Operational Activities delivered via Locality Services; and Green Sefton 2019/20 Annual Report, Service Vision 2030, and Service Plan 2020/21.
Place – leadership and influencer: None directly applicable to this report.
Drivers of change and reform: None directly applicable to this report but reports would be submitted to the Committee detailing how the Council is leading on beneficial changes to be made with reference to United Utilities charging policies and new houses being sold as leasehold.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: None directly applicable to this report but the Committee would be made aware of such issues via the receipt of a report in the Work Programme relating to the Sefton Economic Strategy for Growth
Greater income for social investment: None directly applicable to this report.
Cleaner Greener: None directly applicable to this report but the Committee would be made aware of such issues via the receipt of reports, as referenced in the Work Programme, relating to the review of Winter Service and Operational Plan; the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2019/20; the Update on Operational Activities delivered via Locality Services; Green Sefton 2019/20 Annual Report, Service Vision 2030, and Service Plan 2020/21 together with the implementation of recommendations arising from the Shale Gas Working Group.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

This report is not subject to LD and FD comments. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from this report will be included in those reports as appropriate.

Assistant Director of Place (Operational In-House Services)

Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing)

Assistant Director of Place (Communities)

Assistant Director of Place (Highways and Public Protection)

Assistant Director of Place (Commercial Development)

Cabinet Member – Locality Services

Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services

(B) External Consultations

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Sefton CVS

Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority

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 2022/2023
- 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 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. The Work Programme was approved by the Committee on 28 June 2022.

1.2 The Work Programme has been produced based on items included in last year's Programme.

1.3 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 2022/23 and updated, as appropriate.

1.4 Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2022/23

The Work Programme indicates that a presentation will be made to this meeting of the Committee by the Chief Executive of the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority about the Service Delivery Plan 2022/23. The new Chief Executive has very recently taken up her new position and is not yet in a position to make the presentation to this meeting. Accordingly, it is recommended that the presentation be made to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 7 March 2023.

2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2022/23

2.1 It is usual practice for the Committee to appoint a Working Group(s) to undertake a scrutiny review of services during the Municipal Year.

2.2 However, at its meeting held on 28 June 2022 the Committee agreed to a fresh approach to the operation of the Committee during 2022/23 by making arrangements for two additional informal meetings to be held:

- The week commencing 10 October 2022 to focus on Locality Services and to consider an update on the Operational Activities delivered via Locality Services and the Green Sefton 2021/2022 Annual Report, Service Vision 2030, and Service Plan 2022/23; and
- The week commencing 6 February 2023 to focus on Housing and to consider reports on Leasehold House Sales and an update on the operation of Sandway Homes.

This new proposal would obviate the need for the Committee to establish Working Groups as short reviews of services could be undertaken by all Members at informal meetings.

2.3 However, at its informal meeting held on 20 October 2022 the Committee considered a report about Weed Control, Street Cleansing Provision and Waste Containment Consultation.

2.4 Following consideration of the report the informal meeting resolved that the Committee be requested to consider the establishment a working group to review the adoption of a strategic approach for waste containment/disposal across the Borough and to seek input from Sefton's representatives on the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority.

2.5 The Committee, at its meeting held on 8 November 2022 agreed that a review of the adoption of a strategic approach for waste containment/disposal across the Borough be dealt with at an informal meeting of the Committee rather than establishing a Working Group to review the topic; and that the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer be requested to canvas the views of Members on whether the informal meeting referred to should be held remotely or in person; and at what time of the day the meeting should take place.

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer has canvassed the views of Members and it has been agreed that a remote, informal meeting of the Committee take place at 6.30 p.m. on 23 January 2023 to consider the topic.

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 2** 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 2 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.
- 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 Hansen, Howard and Waterfield. Councillor Howard is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

4.6 **Chair and Vice-Chair**

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be Members of the majority group. Councillor Steve Radford, a Liberal Party and Independent Group Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Chair for the 2022/23 Municipal Year; and Councillor Pat Moloney, a Liberal Democrat Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Vice-Chair.

4.7 **Quoracy Issues**

In the past 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.

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?CId=365&Year=0>

4.9 The last meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 1 December 2022. The Committee considered the following items:

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

4.10 The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on 19 January 2023.

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

5. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY WORKING GROUP

5.1 At its meeting held on 28 September 2022 the Committee considered a report updating on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity Working Group. The recommendations had been approved by both Cabinet and Council.

5.2 The Committee resolved (Minute No.15) that:

- (1) the report setting out progress made against each of the recommendations formulated by the Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity Working Group and approved by Cabinet and Council be noted;
- (2) the Cabinet Member – Locality Services and the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be requested to give further consideration to the implementation of the recommendations referred to above and report their findings to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- (3) a further update report be submitted in six months.

5.3 In accordance with resolution (2) above the Cabinet Member – Locality Services and the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services were contacted for their views.

5.4 The views of the Cabinet Members are set out below:

“Prior to and since the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group on the Effectiveness of Council Enforcement were reported to Cabinet and approved by Council in November 2021, the Cabinet Member – Locality Services and the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services have been working with officers to explore how the problems of littering, fly-tipping and rear entry dumping could be better addressed and what resources might be needed to do so.

The Cabinet Members consider that a combination of education, enforcement and engineering measures are required, alongside reversing some of the resource reductions in the Street Cleansing, Waste Management and Environmental Enforcement services that were necessary to balance the Council's budget following significant reductions in government funding since 2010.

In 2021, Council approved £500k of additional revenue investment for “street scene activities including enhancements relating to the removal of fly tipping, street cleansing and weed removal”. A decision was taken in 2021 to await the recommendations of the Working Group before permanently allocating this resource, and in the meantime to temporarily use the resource for enhanced street cleansing, including intensive weed removal in worst affected areas.

In 2022, having received the Working Group's recommendations and assessed the impact of the £500k reinvestment within the Street Cleansing and Waste Management Service, a decision was taken to permanently allocate all of the £500k to Street Cleansing and Waste Management Services. Consideration was given to allocating some of this funding to enforcement and education, but it was considered that the £500k was insufficient to deliver the required level of improvement in street cleansing, a very significant increase in uniformed enforcement officers and a high-profile publicity campaign.

Since then, the Cabinet Members have continued to work with officers to

understand the nature and scale of resources needed to deliver the recommendations of the Working Group, and remain committed to delivering against those recommendations, as soon as the Council’s budgetary position allows”.

6. DIGITAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP

6.1 As Members will be aware, at its last meeting held on 8 November 2022, the Committee considered a report setting out progress made against each of the recommendations contained in the Digital Inclusion Working Group final report. This was the fourth update reported to Committee.

6.2 It was agreed that no further update reports be submitted to the Committee subject to assurances that the actions identified in the report are continued and become “business as usual” operational matters.

6.3 Contact has been made with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Sefton CVS and the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) who have responsibility for implementing the recommendations. All have confirmed that the actions identified in the report are continued and have become “business as usual” operational matters.

6.4 Sefton CVS have advised that in the areas of work that are relevant to them they will continue to deliver as “business as usual” in the context of the following information:

Recommendation	Update
Using the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic” data, areas of high unemployment be targeted to enable those Sefton residents excluded from the labour market to develop their ICT skills to improve their opportunities for gaining future employment	<p>Our Include-IT Mersey (Building Better Opportunities) D.I. project is in the process of being extended post-ESF/Lottery funding, through the UK-SPF from April 2023.</p> <p>Annual funding and volumes are lower than the current equivalent annual amount through BBO (59% in 2023/24, rising to 76.5% in 2024/25); and funding/volumes have to be split across boroughs in line with UK-SPF funding allocations (Sefton 16.79% of LCR). Therefore volumes are proportionally lower compared to previously and, importantly, are relatively low in relation to the continuing scale of the issue.</p> <p>Current approximate targets (TBC with the LCR CA) are for only 35 Sefton participants in 2023/24 and 45 in 2024/25. We will, however, endeavour to exceed these by as much as possible within the funding constraints.</p> <p>We also plan to continue the volunteer-led digital surgeries (drop-ins) currently in</p>

operation across the borough through the current BBO project (again, subject to agreement by the LCR CA), which will assist many more Sefton residents with basic digital skills and knowledge over the coming two years; providing a place that people can go to get support with using their digital devices.

Given the modest volumes our funding is likely to be able to support, additional basic digital skills provision through, for example, Sefton Adult Learning Service would be beneficial.

If further opportunities arise for a roll out of the IncludeIT project and to support the objectives of recommendation 2 then Sefton CVS be requested to consider such roll out to the priority areas identified within the Poverty Modelling and Digital Exclusion document
Digital Inclusion research

We will continue to target/ deliver in the priority wards in the Bootle, Netherton and Southport areas. We will explore potential for delivery in the Ravenmeols ward, subject to the fit of the population demographics in terms of digital exclusion with UK-SPF delivery priorities.

VOLA recently undertook a research project for the LCR CA to map community-based DI provision across the LCR, including Sefton. We liaised with relevant Sefton MBC Officers:

- As part of the planning process to ensure the fitness for purpose of the survey/ proposed data to be captured, to ensure that it met Sefton MBC needs, in addition to those of the LCR CA;
- And in undertaking the research itself, capturing Sefton Library Services and Adult Learning Service DI provision, as well as sense-checking the responses in terms of respondents.

Prior to this LCR research commission by the CA, Sefton MBC was intending to undertake its own, similar research into the same subject. Through our liaison, the relevant council officer was happy to use the results/info/ data from our research rather than duplicate effort.

The final report and online map of DI services is soon to be published by the LCR CA, which we will share with Sefton MBC, along with the background data.

Digital connectivity in community-based facilities

VOLA will be running a grants programme through the UK-SPF aimed at improving and/or creating community (VCFSE sector) facilities where people can go to 'get online'.

The aim of the programme will be to provide funding and support to:

1. Upgrade outdated and poor quality digital kit and/or improve broadband connectivity where current connections are poor;
2. Increase capacity, by providing funding to purchase more devices, where current facilities are insufficient to meet demand; and
3. Target neighbourhoods where there is currently a lack of community based digital facilities to help local community-based organisations to set up new drop-ins.

Priorities and investment decision will be driven and informed, in part, by the recent DI research that VOLA undertook for the LCR CA. CVS Funding Officers will be involved in the assessment of applications and a LA Officer will be asked to sit on the Steering Group along with the Sefton CVS' CEO.

The same % borough splits will apply as for Include-IT Mersey project above (Sefton 16.79% - as set by UK-SPF). £219k will be distributed in grants over the funding period.

The first grant application round will run from January to March 2023 to meet UK-SPF year 1 spend targets, with 4 further rounds over 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.

The LCR CA has requested that the maximum grant amount will initially be set at £10k for round 1 (can/will be reviewed for future rounds).

Assuming an average grant award of £10k, this will result in 22 grants being distributed across Sefton. Ultimately, more than 22

may be achieved if the average grant award is lower than £10k. Equally, if the maximum grant level is increased in years 2 or 3, it could possibly be slightly lower.

I hope you and Sefton MBC agree that this is very much welcomed investment into community-based DI facilities in the borough.

- 6.5 It is therefore recommended that no further updates be provided on the implementation of recommendations arising from the Digital Inclusion Working Group.