

<b>Report to:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 June 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Work Programme 2023/24, 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:

- seek the views of the Committee on the draft Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2023/24;
- invite Committee Members to participate in informal briefing sessions during 2023/24, rather than establish a traditional working group;
- identify any site visits to be made during 2023/23
- to identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan; and
- note the training proposals available from the Local Government Association and in-house; and
- to receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### Recommendations:

That:

- (1) the draft Work Programme for 2023/24, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be agreed, along with any additional items to be included and agreed;
- (2) informal briefing sessions be held, as and when required, rather than establish a traditional working group during 2023/24;
- (3) an informal site visit by Committee Members be undertaken to meet with the Making a Difference (MAD) Group, and consideration be given to any other site visits that Members would wish to be undertaken during 2023/24;

- (4) 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;
- (5) the training proposals available from the Local Government Association and in-house be noted; 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 2023/24; 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
<b>Legal Implications:</b> None
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> Yes  Any direct implications on the impact on children and young people are set out within the report.

**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 - Work Programme for 2023/24;
- 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 2023/24**

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2023/24 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 2023/24 and reviewed/updated, as appropriate.
- 1.3 During the 2022/23 Municipal Year, the Committee agreed the following items for consideration during 2023/24:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Item Reference</b>
1.	Representatives of the Police and other Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team members be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.	Minute No. 59 (2) (a) of 06/03/23 refers.
2.	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) annual report.	

- 1.4 The above items will be inserted into the Committee’s Work Programme for 2023/24, as appropriate.
- 1.5 **The Committee is requested to comment on the Work Programme for 2023/24, 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 TOPICS / BRIEFING SESSIONS 2023/24**

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Rather than establish a traditional working group during 2022/23, all Members of the Committee were invited to participate in informal briefings on the work of Children's Services and Safeguarding, where the information was deemed to be useful. Informal briefings took place during 2022/23 on the Ofsted Report and Improvement Plan and on the Leeds Family Values model.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the Committee adopts a similar approach during 2023/24 and informal briefings can be arranged as and when deemed necessary throughout the Municipal Year.
- 2.4 **The Committee is requested to agree to hold informal briefing sessions, as and when required, rather than establish a traditional working group during 2023/24.**

### **3. SITE VISITS**

- 3.1 Prior to the Covid pandemic, it was common practice for Overview and Scrutiny Members to undertake site visits that were deemed relevant to their remit. It has been suggested that Members of the Committee may wish to visit the Making a Difference (MAD) Group, comprised of Care Experienced young people who work closely with the Council to support the improvement and development of services for cared for children and care experienced young people. The venue would be a location of the Group's choosing, but it is likely to be either Magdalen House or Bootle Town Hall.
- 3.2 There may be other site visits that Committee Members would wish to undertake during 2023/24, in order to view services or hold discussion with service users.
- 3.3 **The Committee is requested to indicate if it wishes to undertake any informal site visits to meet with the Making a Difference (MAD) Group, and/or if there are any other site visits that Members would wish to undertake during 2023/24.**

### **4. PRE-SCRUTINY OF ITEMS IN THE KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN**

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.

- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 The latest Forward Plan, published on 28 April 2023 and covering the period 1 June 2023 - 30 September 2023 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.
- 4.5 There are two items within the current Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee on this occasion, namely:
- Placements North West - Children's Social Care Service Provision
  - SEND Joint Commissioning Plan
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 At the time of drafting this report, the Forward Plan to be published on 31 May 2023, covering the period 1 July 2023 – 31 October 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.
- 4.8 **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.**

## **5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION / IN-HOUSE – TRAINING PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 During 2023/24, the Council secured a commitment for the Local Government Association (LGA) to provide training for Members of the Committee.
- 5.2 At the time of drafting this report, the following training is planned:

### **Dedicated support for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)**

Workshop sessions have been organised as outlined within the table below and Members are requested to note the details:

<b>Session</b>	<b>Potential dates – in person (6.00 - 8.00 pm) Bootle Town Hall</b>
Session 1 Introduction to children’s scrutiny and work programming.	Tuesday, 30 May 2023
Session 2 Recap on Session 1, engagement and working with others.	Tuesday, 25 July 2023
Session 3 Demonstrating value and influence and creating a strong organisational culture.	Monday, 2 October 2023

### **Support for Members of all Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

Two alternative training sessions for all O&S Committee Members will be held on Thursday, 15 June 2023, in Bootle Town Hall from 3.00pm to 5.00pm and from 6.00pm to 8.00pm

### **Support for all Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

Details to be determined.

### **Mentor Support for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children’s Services and Safeguarding)**

Arrangements to be made.

### **All Member Corporate Parenting Briefing**

The Council’s Corporate Parenting Officer will provide in-house mandatory Corporate Parenting training, as in previous years.

Four alternative one-hour briefing sessions will be held remotely via Microsoft Teams during 2023/24. Sessions have been arranged as follows:

- Monday, 19 June 2023, 2.00 p.m.
- Tuesday, 11 July 2023, 5.00 p.m.
- Wednesday, 1 November 2023, 6.30 p.m.
- Wednesday, 24 January 2024, 4.00 p.m.

5.3 **The Committee is requested to note the training proposals available from the Local Government Association and in-house.**

## **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 Desmond, Hart and Howard (Scrutiny Link).

Representatives of the Liberal Democrat Group and Conservative Group on the LCR O&S will be reported to the next Committee 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 21 June 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://modern.gov.merseytravel.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=365&Year=0>

## 6.9 Latest Meeting – 1 March 2023

The latest meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 1 March 2023 and was inquorate.

Matters considered at the meeting related to:

- Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram's Update
- Appointment to the Audit and Governance Committee.

The next meeting of the LCRCAO&S will be held on 21 June 2023. 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.***