

Overview & Scrutiny



SEFTON COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Sefton Council 



Overview & Scrutiny

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



Councillor Christine Howard

*Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
2022/23*

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for 2022/23.

Communication has always been a key consideration for the Management Board and the Board has previously agreed that Cabinet Member reports would be submitted to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee to contribute towards the relationship between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Members.

Members have welcomed the Cabinet Member update reports and attendance of relevant Cabinet Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings; and this process will remain in place during 2023/24.

The Management Board met four times during 2022/23 and considered the following issues:

- Terms of Reference for the Management Board
- Executive / Scrutiny Protocol
- Overview and Scrutiny Member Training Event - "Scrutiny Essentials & Questioning Skills"
- Health and Care Act
- Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – Newsletters
- Updates on Working Groups
- Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report to Council
- 2021/22 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies
- Liverpool City Region Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Scrutiny Link - Councillor Howard
- Strategic Scrutiny in Practice Network
- Member Development Survey
- Scrutiny of Children's Services

More detailed information about some of the issues considered can be found below.



Executive/Scrutiny Protocol

As Members may be aware from last year's Annual Report, the Management Board responded to a request from the Cabinet to develop an Executive/Scrutiny protocol for use in Sefton.

The Management Board was happy to undertake this task as the Annual Survey of the Centre for Public Scrutiny found that the presence of an Executive/Scrutiny protocol made a difference to the quality of the scrutiny/executive relationship; and it was also considered that the protocol could be utilised as a training tool, particularly for new Members.

An [Executive/Scrutiny Protocol](#) was subsequently developed and was approved by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet.

Centre for Governance and Scrutiny

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) is a national centre of expertise on governance and scrutiny. The Management Board considered a number of newsletters from CfGS providing information on the following topics:

- Scrutiny Improvement Reviews
- Training and Development Opportunities: Induction and Support for New Members
- Levelling up and Regeneration Bill
- Health and Social Care Act 2022
- Fire and Rescue Governance Offer Launched
- Upcoming CfGS Publications
- CEO update from Ed Hammond
- Call out for case studies
- Blog on the cost of living
- New publication: Learning from the pandemic
- Blog: How to write effective survey and research questions
- Blog: Into the horizon
- Call-in roundtable for members
- 'A spotlight on scrutiny' Ed's recent article in the Municipal Journal
- Levelling up
- Recent publications
- Blogs: debriefing from the pandemic, reviewing council constitutions, carrying out electoral reviews and a reminder of our "governance risk and resilience framework"
- Forthcoming events: call-in, and support for new scrutiny officers
- Ongoing work on health scrutiny
- A Chief Exec update from Ed Hammond.



- Sign up for our webinar with Guy Clifton, from Grant Thornton, about financial scrutiny.
- Our latest blog about scrutiny and the cost of living crisis.
- Ed's article in Local Government Lawyer about why it is important for councils to review their constitutions.
- The LGA hosting a webinar on devolution, 'Making a success of governance, accountability, and scrutiny'
- Health and Care Act: discussion paper
- Council size changes: learning lessons from the submissions and implementation – publication as a result of research commissioned by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) Conference.
- Scrutiny and Work Programming Publication.
- Health Scrutiny Guidance Roundtable, in collaboration with DHSC.
- Financial Scrutiny Webinar.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion blog.
- Statutorily the same? – the CfGS had written a blog which reflects upon the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny, published in 2019.
- Look after yourselves people - blog explores how colleagues within Scrutiny are exposed to particular stresses.
- Improving Scrutiny: Working with our members - The team at Essex County Council have written a blog which looks at reviewing the scrutiny function.
- Evaluating Innovation and Risk – article which examines the value of scrutinising councils' financial innovation and commercial opportunities.
- Update from Interim CEO, Ed Hammond (including info on the Annual Conference 2023)
- Briefing note from the recent Financial Scrutiny Webinar, in collaboration with Guy Clifton (from the auditor, Grant Thornton).
- Article in the Local Government Chronicle 'Councils should use electoral reviews to examine councillors' role', detailing the work undertaken alongside the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- Cost-of-Living information digest from Researcher, Megan Ingle.
- New publication - 'A Scrutineers Guide'.
- Blog from guest practitioner, Gennie Holmes (Scrutiny Co-Ordinator, Coventry City Council) 'One Coventry Response to Supporting Our Communities with the Cost-of-Living Crisis – Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee'.
- Blog from guest practitioner, Charlotte Cameron, Democratic Services Officer, Peterborough City Council, 'Improving Scrutiny: From the perspective of a new Democratic Services Officer'.
- Case Study from Cllr Maxine Clark (Chair of the Children and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at Stoke-on-Trent City Council) on Scrutiny and Children's Services.
- Case Study from Knowsley Council's Scrutiny Team on how Scrutiny is engaging with the Cost-of-Living crisis.



- Article from The MJ on the recent governance review at Southampton City Council.
- Details on Notwestminister, of which CfG&S would be one of the sponsors.
- CfGS website update, which now had a page that outlines all the details of the Regional Scrutiny Networks in England.
- the Annual Conference 2023: Governance and scrutiny fit for the future'.
- The Annual Survey; and a link to the survey was attached to the update
- The latest Chief Executive update from Ed Hammond.
- 2023 marking the 20th Anniversary of CfGS! And a piece written by the Chief Executive 'The past and future of CfGS' outlining plans and how CfGS wanted to hear from local authorities
- BLOG: 'Time to think about member induction!
- Two new blogs from CfGS Associates Mark Egan and Kieran Timmins, 'Tackling the big stuff- tips for helping scrutiny make a meaningful contribution to the most complex political debates' and 'Managing Finances in a Crazy World'.

The CfGS annual survey provided an opportunity to see how the Scrutiny world was functioning; and any responses to the survey would help CfGS to understand the pressures being faced by the sector and inform their conversations with stakeholders and to shape the CfGS offer to scrutiny practitioners. Accordingly, the Management Board agreed that the link to the CfGS Annual Survey be circulated to all Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members and Substitute Members to provide them with an opportunity to express their views.

North-West Employers' Network Events

The Management Board was kept abreast of business conducted at North-West Employers' Network Events, including the Strategic Scrutiny in Practice Network, and updates were provided on the following matters:

- key findings from the 21/22 annual scrutiny survey
- the launch of the Regional Networks page on the CfGS website
- Contingency Planning through the scrutiny lens
- Scrutiny and budgets
- Rogue landlords
- Network stocktake – end of year reflections and forward plan

Email addresses of the Management Board Members have been shared with the North-West Employers' organisation so that they can be invited to digital events.

Update on Working Groups/Informal Meetings

The Management Board received updates at each meeting on the current position of on-going Working Groups established by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees.



Overview and Scrutiny Committees in 2022/23 also established a new way of undertaking short reviews of services at informal meetings of the Committees. The new proposal obviated the need to establish Working Groups as short reviews of services could be undertaken by all Members at the informal meetings.

Details of Working Groups and informal meetings can be found in the individual Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Reports contained within this document.

Preparations for Municipal Year 2023/24

The Management Board kept an overview of the preparations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for the Municipal Year 2023/24; particularly the production of Work Programmes and the operation of Working Groups/informal meetings as referred to above. Overview and Scrutiny Committees will continue to hold physical meetings in 2023/24 in accordance with Government advice.

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (LCRCA O&S)

I was appointed as Sefton's Scrutiny Link to the LCRCA O&S for 2022/23 and I provided updates on the work of the LCRCA O&S to each Management Board meeting. Sefton's other representatives on the LCRCA O&S were Councillors Hansen and Waterfield. Councillor Hansen was subsequently replaced on the Committee by Councillor O'Brien. The Chair of the Committee cannot be from the majority group and Councillor Steve Radford, a serving Liverpool City Councillor representing the Liberal Party and Independent Group, was Chair of the Committee during 2022/23.

The Committee continues to have problems being quorate. The quorum for meetings of the LCRCA O&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.

Overview and Scrutiny Training

A training event for Overview and Scrutiny Members, "Scrutiny Essentials and Questioning Skills" was held on 26 May 2022 and attended by 20 Members. The event was facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and presented by Lisa Smart, an elected Member of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. Documentation associated with the event has been circulated to all Overview and Scrutiny Members and Substitute Members.

The Management Board considered problems experienced in Children's Social Care which culminated in discussions being held with the Local Government Association (LGA) on the provision of a programme of support for Members of the Council on Overview and Scrutiny issues. The Management Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) approved that the following support be provided by the LGA:



- Dedicated support for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)
- Mentor Support for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)
- All Member Corporate Parenting Briefing
- Support for Members of all Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Support for all Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs

On 14 March 2023 a dedicated training event, facilitated by LGA representatives, Su Turner, Cllr Victoria Cusworth, and Linda Clegg was held and attended by 7 Committee Members, 2 Substitute Members and 2 Co-opted Members.

The purpose of the session was to support the Committee to identify strengths and areas for development using an established LGA self-assessment tool. From this, dedicated support and resources will be used in a tailored way, to the needs of the Committee helping to enhance the ability and confidence of the Committee, around the following themes:

- Knowledge of Children's Services
- The role of children's scrutiny
- Work programming and planning
- Demonstrating value and influence
- Engagement and working with others
- Creating a strong organisational culture

Arising from the self-assessment it was agreed by attendees that Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) Members, Substitutes and Co-opted Members should receive the full programme of development on the six themes in 2023-2024. Accordingly, in the first instance three sessions will be provided in 2023 commencing with the first session being held on 30 May 2023.

The Year Ahead

Given the scale of the financial and service challenges facing the Council, the year ahead will be extremely busy for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Management Board. A key role of Members will be to scrutinise such challenges, including how they impact on the Council's statutory requirement to remain financially sustainable, provide a wide range of services and the desire to deliver Sefton's 2030 Vision and Core Purpose.

Further updates on the work of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are anticipated including the full results of the 2022 Annual Survey.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Officers of the Democratic Services Team for all their hard work during the year; and to thank the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and my colleagues serving on the Sefton's Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their on-going input into the work of the Management Board.

Councillor Christine Howard
July 2023



During 2022/23 the following Members served on the Committees indicated-

Overview & Scrutiny Management Board

Councillor Howard (Chair)
Councillor Dowd (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Bradshaw
Councillor June Burns
Councillor Byrom
Councillor Myers
Councillor Spencer
Councillor Thomas

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health)

Chair: Cllr. Thomas
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Myers
Cllr. Brodie-Browne
Cllr. Brough
Cllr. Cluskey
Cllr. Halsall
Cllr. J. J. Kelly
Cllr. Killen
Cllr. Lunn-Bates
Cllr. Pugh

Mrs. D. Blair, Healthwatch Representative
Mr. B. Clark, Healthwatch Representative



Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)

Chair: Cllr. J. Burns
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Spencer
Cllr. D. Burns
Cllr. Carlin
Cllr. Evans (subsequently replaced by Cllr. Lloyd-Johnson)
Cllr. Hardman
Cllr. C. Maher (subsequently replaced by Cllr. McKee)
Cllr. Murphy
Cllr. Prendergast
Cllr. Wilson

Mr. M. Byrne, Healthwatch Representative
Ms. K. Christie, Healthwatch Representative
Mrs. S. Cain, Advisory Member
Mr. S. Harrison, Church Diocesan Representative
Father D. Seddon, Church Archdiocesan Representative
Ms. M. McDermott, Parent Governor Representative
(subsequently replaced by Ms. C. Swainbank)
Ms. C. McDonough, Parent Governor Representative

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)

Councillor Dowd (Chair)
Councillor Howard (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Corcoran
Councillor Hansen
Councillor Chris Maher
Councillor Myers
Councillor Catie Page
Former Councillor Sathiy (subsequently replaced by Councillor Dodd)
Councillor Sir Ron Watson
Councillor Webster



Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)

Councillor Bradshaw (Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Former Councillor Bennett
Former Councillor Brennan (subsequently replaced by Councillor McGinnity)
Councillor Carlin
Councillor D'Albuquerque
Councillor Grace
Councillor Killen
Councillor Robinson
Councillor Shaw



Adult Social Care and Health



Councillor Carla Thomas
Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
(Adult Social Care and Health)

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2022/23 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health).

Introduction

This is my second Annual Report as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health). 2022/23 saw a return to more “normal” ways of working as we moved away from remote meetings towards traditional physical meetings.

I believe that the Committee has built on the existing good working relationships it has with many of our health partners. The trust that has been established has meant that we are recognised in our role of “critical friend”; we are listened to and have been able to have a positive influence on the development of health and adult social care services within Sefton. This Annual Report is presented to the Council and a wider audience beyond in the hope that the information it contains will contribute to the debate and discussion about the provision of health and adult social care services for Sefton residents and their development, improvement and access.

The Committee held five formal scheduled meetings during 2022/23 and details of agendas/Minutes of meetings held during can be obtained using the following link: [Sefton Home](#) Two informal meetings of Members of the Committee also took place, one remotely and one in person. Details of all the items considered at meetings are set out in the paragraphs below.

Draft Quality Accounts

Early in the Municipal Year my Vice-Chair and I met with the Healthwatch representatives on the Committee to consider the draft Quality Accounts from Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUFT) and Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust. Draft Quality Accounts are reports published annually about the quality of services offered by NHS healthcare providers. They provide a way of illustrating improvements in the services they deliver to local communities and stakeholders. There is also an opportunity for local Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Healthwatch organisations to comment on the draft and we met



remotely to discuss the documents submitted by the two Trusts and to provide our feedback on them.

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton)

The merger of Clinical Commissioning Groups across Cheshire and Merseyside and the Integrated Care System means that NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton) is now responsible for the planning and commissioning of health care services for the local area. During 2022/23 various representatives reported to the Committee on a range of activities designed to promote health and wellbeing amongst residents. I believe that excellent relationships exist between Committee Members and officers of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton), particularly Deborah Butcher in her Director of Place for Sefton capacity, who has attended virtually every Committee meeting and has always been willing to take up issues raised by Members and explain aspects of the services provided.

Throughout 2022/23 the Committee received regular update reports from that NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton) and the updates allow Members to raise questions and scrutinise aspects of the services provided.

Throughout the year NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton) has also submitted statistics to the Committee on Health Provider Performance which has enabled us to scrutinise the key performance areas of our local NHS Hospital Trusts, including the Friends and Family Test and A&E monitoring for both Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust and Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. These statistics have been useful, particularly in scrutinising services during winter pressures and we also receive information on ambulance performance. I look forward to receiving regular updates on the performance of our local NHS providers.

We also received separate reports from NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton) on the following matters set out in the paragraphs below.

Sefton Partnership Development Update

The Committee received a report that updated on the establishment of a Sefton Partnership. This was as a result of the Royal assent given to the Health and Care Act 2022 in April of this year. The Act introduces significant reforms to the organisation and delivery of health and care services in England. The Committee was requested to receive the report and to engage on further work on the requirements within the policy document.

National GP Access Survey

The Committee considered the report of NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton) that presented the findings of the GP General Access engagement that had been carried out to gather feedback from residents on their GP practice and the findings were outlined within the report. Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters and agreed to note the report.



I would like to place on record my thanks to Deborah Butcher, in her capacity as Director of Place for Sefton, and her staff, for their input into the work of the Committee and their attendance at Committee meetings.

NHS Trusts / Partners

Throughout 2022/23 the Committee has received reports and presentations on work and activities undertaken by certain NHS organisations. Details of attendance at meetings by senior NHS representatives are set out within the following paragraphs and this attendance has enabled Committee Members to scrutinise NHS performance in the areas concerned.

Liverpool University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust - Update

The Committee received a presentation from Dr. Clare Morgan, Director of Strategy, Liverpool University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, on recent developments at the Trust. Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the update on developments at Liverpool University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust be noted and Dr. Morgan be thanked for her attendance; and
- (2) Dr. Morgan be requested to provide further information on transport links between the hospital sites to the Senior Democratic Services Officer, for circulation to Members of the Committee.

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust

Anne-Marie Stretch, Managing Director, Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, attended to give a presentation that outlined information on services provided, and pressures faced, by the Trust, together with progress on the Shaping Care Together programme. Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that:

- (1) Anne-Marie Stretch, Managing Director, be thanked for her attendance;
- (2) the presentation be noted; and
- (3) the Managing Director be requested to provide additional information on stroke service provision and clinical cover provided at Southport Hospital, in due course.

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust - Next Steps in Proposed Partnership

Anne-Marie Stretch, Managing Director, Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, and Ann Marr, Chief Executive at Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS



Trust and St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust, attended the meeting and made a presentation that updated on the next steps in the proposed partnership between Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust and St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust. The Committee raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that the information provided on the next steps in the proposed partnership between Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust and St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust, be noted.

Paediatric Radiotherapy Services

Andrea Doherty, Head of North West Women and Children's Transformation, North West Acute Strategy & Transformation (Specialised Commissioning), NHS England, attended the meeting to present a report on the Proposed Cheshire & Merseyside Paediatric Radiotherapy Service Transfer. Ms. Doherty also gave a presentation that outlined the following:

- Radiotherapy
- Background Information and Current Service Challenges
- Planned Future Service Arrangements
- Limiting the potential impact for patients and their families

Members of the Committee raised a range of queries/matters. It was agreed that:

- (1) Andrea Doherty be thanked for her attendance;
- (2) the report and presentation be noted and it be agreed that the proposals for Paediatric Radiotherapy Services for Cheshire and Merseyside do not represent a substantial variation and that the approach taken to engage with patients to inform the proposal is commensurate with the scale of the proposed change; and
- (3) NHS England be requested to provide further feedback on the impact of travel in due course, once the clinical pathway has been completed.

Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance

The Committee considered the report of the Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance that provided an overview of the activities of Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance in Sefton and was submitted for information and discussion. The report highlighted the work of the Alliance with particular reference to improving cancer outcomes for the population of Sefton.

Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance was an NHS organisation that brought healthcare providers, commissioners, patients, cancer research institutions and voluntary and charitable sector partners together to improve cancer outcomes for the local population.

The Alliance was responsible for:



- Delivering the NHS Long Term Plan objectives for cancer, including the ambition that, by 2028, 75% of cancers would be diagnosed at stages 1 and 2.
- Reducing unwarranted variation in care, access, patient experience and outcomes.
- Improving performance against cancer waiting times standards.
- Supporting innovation and safeguarding the long-term sustainability of cancer services.

The Alliance was funded by, and accountable to, the national cancer programme within NHS England and the Alliance was hosted by The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust.

Jon Hayes, Managing Director, Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance, attended the meeting to present information and to respond to any questions or issues raised by Members of the Committee.

Members of the Committee raised a range of queries/matters. It was agreed that:

- (1) the report and the information provided be noted; and
- (2) a further update on the activities of Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance in Sefton be provided to the Committee in 6 to 9 months' time.

Safeguarding Update

Michelle Creed, the independent Chair and Joan Coupe, Board Business Manager, of the Sefton Adult Safeguarding Board (SSAPB), attended the meeting to give a presentation on the work of the Board. Members of the Committee raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that the presentation and information provided be noted.

Liverpool Clinical Services Review - Stakeholder Update

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer submitting a stakeholder update that provided information on the Liverpool Clinical Services Review commissioned by NHS England that had identified recommendations for greater collaboration between Liverpool's acute and specialised hospital trusts. The three priorities identified to be taken forward were:

- 1) Solving the clinical sustainability challenges affecting women's health in Liverpool.
- 2) Improving outcomes and access to emergency care, making optimal use of existing co-adjacencies at the Aintree, Broadgreen and Royal Liverpool Hospital sites.
- 3) Significant opportunities to achieve economies of scale in corporate services.



Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters. It was agreed that:

- (1) the report and the stakeholder briefing be noted; and
 - (2) the Committee's concerns be noted about the review and therefore further clarifications on the proposals contained in the report be submitted to the first meeting of the Committee in the new Municipal Year 2023/24.
- NHS representatives that have attended Committee meetings during 2022/23.

Adult Social Care

During the year, the Committee received a range of reports on various aspects of the Council's Adult Social Care function and details are set out within the paragraphs below.

Safeguarding Update

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Adult Social Care and Health that sought to provide an update on current safeguarding activity across the Sefton Borough and to provide assurance on the actions being taken to mitigate risk and investigate safeguarding concerns. The report provided a particular focus on safeguarding across the care home market.

The report set out safeguarding activity during the last twelve months; timeliness and making safeguarding personal; types of abuse and location; care homes and safeguarding; the role of the quality assurance team; additional support to care providers; and the Safeguarding Adults Board.

The report also requested the Committee to consider:

- whether a further focused report on safeguarding people with care and support needs should be presented to the next Committee; and
- whether it would wish to receive a more detailed update on the work of the Sefton Safeguarding Adults Board and specifically the role of the subgroups.

Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters. It was agreed that:

- (1) the contents of the report be received and noted; and
- (2) a further report on safeguarding people with care and support needs be presented to the next Committee meeting, to include a more detailed update on the work of the Sefton Safeguarding Adults Board and specifically the role of the subgroups.

Sefton New Directions



The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health / Place Director the aim of which was to allow Members to carry out effective scrutiny of the Council company Sefton New Directions to provide a level of assurance that both the Council's interests and the services or products provided by the company to our residents, were safe and well managed and offered good value for money.

The report provided information on the aims of the Sefton New Directions Annual Report; expected outcomes; the Council's objectives for the company; the Council's governance arrangements including the governance arrangements in place for the company in 2021/22; the key objectives for the Company as per the Business Plan in 2021/22; a review of performance for 2021/22; key areas of risk during the year; evaluation of performance in 2021/22 compared to Council objectives for setting up the company and the approved Business Plan for the year; and the Delivery and Improvement Plans for 2022/23.

The Committee was requested to:

- consider the content of the report in respect of Sefton New Directions;
- provide feedback on key issues arising from the report and to advise on further information that would support the scrutiny review in future years;
- provide feedback on current performance (operational and financial) and how this supported the Council's strategic aims and ambitions and aligned with the objectives and reasons for setting up the companies; and
- seek clarification or additional information from officers in order to carry out the scrutiny function.

It was agreed that the report on Sefton New Directions 2021/22 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies be noted.

Adult Social Care Performance Update

The Committee considered the report submitted by the Executive Director Adult Social Care and Health that provided an update on progress within Adult Social Care against key performance metrics.

The report set out the background to the matter, together with information on Key Performance Updates; Contacts and Activity; Assessments and Reviews; Support Services; Safeguarding; and the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF), including Employment, Housing, and Self-directed support and direct payments.

It was agreed that the contents of the report and assurances on the actions being taken in any area requiring increased focus, be noted.

Winter Plan



A report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health provided an overview of the activity to plan additional services and prepare for Winter 2022/23 and the expected increased demand and challenge to service delivery this may bring. The report indicated that there had been a delay in allocating additional monies to Health and Social Care which had led to a delay in developing new services and bolstering existing ones. Members raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that the information contained within the report be received and noted.

Adult Social Care Local Government Association Peer Review

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health that presented the findings of the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review into Adult Social Care in Sefton. For assurance, it also provided details of the actions being taken following the review.

The report set out the background to the matter, indicating that the Executive Director of Adult Social Care, with the approval from the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Executive, invited the LGA to complete a review of the service ahead of the arrival of the Care Quality Commission's assurance inspections which could be as early as 2023. The Peer Review was conducted in July 2022 by colleagues from the LGA, Northwest Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NW ADASS) with senior officers from other participating local authorities. The Peer Review team was led by the Director of Adult Social Services from Leeds City Council and consisted of colleagues from Lancashire, Leeds, Tameside, Waltham Forest, and Wigan Councils. Representatives from the LGA also formed part of the challenge tea., The Peer Review mirrored the scope of the new assurance approach which would be implemented by the Care Quality Commission into all Councils with Adult Social Care responsibilities. Following the review, a detailed improvement plan had been developed to address the areas identified for strengthening by the Peer Review Team and this was detailed within Appendix 1 of the report. It was proposed that progress against the plan should be provided to Committee on a regular basis, with ongoing monitoring being undertaken by the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health. Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the content of the report and the full LGA Peer Review be noted;
- (2) the improvement plan and feedback provided be noted;
- (3) the proposal for on-going monitoring of the plan through this Committee, the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health, be confirmed; and
- (4) updates to the Committee on progress within the improvement plan, to enable robust assurance on progress, be provided as and when deemed necessary.



Update on Implementation of Mental Health Services Working Group Recommendations

The Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health submitted a report that presented the progress on implementation of the findings and implementation of the recommendations of the former Mental Health Services Working Group. The findings and recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny are being taken forward as part of the Sefton Mental Health Programme Task and Finish Group which consists of key representatives from Sefton Council, Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups, Mersey Care NHS Foundation, Sefton CVS and the wider Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. The report set out progress updates against each of the recommendations made by the Working Group.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

Adult Social Care faces a range of challenges, not least in meeting demand and I am very grateful to Deborah Butcher in her capacity as Executive Director Adult Social Care and Health, and her Teams for their input and their attendance at Committee meetings. I hope the Committee will retain its focus on Adult Social Care in the forthcoming year and I look forward to receiving Deborah's reports in the future.

Public Health

Public Health became an extremely important function throughout the covid pandemic and during 2022/23 the Committee received reports on a range of aspects of the Council's Public Health function. Details are set out within the paragraphs below.

Public Health Outcomes Framework

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health that provided an update on the Public Health Outcomes Framework and a briefing previously received by the Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing was attached to the report. Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters.

The Committee agreed that the report be received.

Cost Of Living Crisis

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health that sought to provide an update on current Cost of Living interventions across Sefton and assurance on the actions being taken to mitigate risks to the health and wellbeing of residents. Members of the Committee raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the contents of the report be received and noted; and



(2) the Director of Public Health and the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and the Sefton Place Director, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, be requested to provide additional information to the Senior Democratic Services Officer for circulation to Members of the Committee on:

- increases to costs associated with swimming pools and other high maintenance leisure facilities;
- monitoring of pay and pensions associated with the care sector;
- payment of any employer contributions when contracts are commissioned;
- increases in respiratory conditions, as a result of inadequate housing conditions; and
- how venues for Warm Spaces are communicated to the wider public.

I am very grateful to Margaret Jones, Director of Public Health, and her Team for keeping the Committee informed of Public Health developments during the year.

Other Items

In addition to Adult Social Care and Public Health, reports were received from other areas of the Council during 2022/23 and details are set out in the paragraphs below.

Domestic Abuse Update

During the year we received a report by the Head of Communities updating on Sefton's strategic approach to tackling domestic abuse, including an overview of the Domestic Abuse Act and work of the Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board to date. The report set out the background to the matter; an overview of the Domestic Abuse Act; local authority statutory duties within the Act; the roles and responsibilities of the Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board; links to other national/statutory guidance; and cross-partnership collaboration. The Terms of Reference for the Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board were attached to the report. Committee Members raised a range of queries/matters.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (Hyper-Acute Stroke Services)

Work on a joint review of the proposal for a Comprehensive Stroke Centre to be established to serve the populations of Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and West Lancashire had commenced prior to 2022/23 and the Committee was kept informed of developments. Councillor Brodie-Browne and I represented Sefton Council on the Joint Health Committee and the proposals were agreed. At the Sefton level the Committee continues to keep a watching brief on the delivery of stroke services, with a particular brief for services for residents in the north of the Borough.

Joint Health Scrutiny Committee – Liverpool University Hospitals University Foundation Trust (LUFT)

In January 2022, the Committee had held a Special Meeting to consider the proposed integration of a number of Liverpool University Hospitals clinical services, as follows:

- General surgery
- Vascular services
- Urology services
- Nephrology services
- Breast services

The Committee agreed that each of the proposals detailed in the report constituted a substantial development / variation in services delivered by Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, for Sefton residents. Knowsley, Liverpool, and Sefton Councils formed a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and were asked to review the process undertaken by the NHS in developing these proposals and the public consultation. Councillors Tony Brough, Greg Myers and I represented Sefton and the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee agreed to the proposals in respect of the services.

Sefton's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) was kept informed of developments regarding the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

Informal Meetings of Committee Members

Two informal meetings of Members of the Committee took place during 2022/23 and details of items considered at meetings are set out in the paragraphs below.

Primary Care

During the summer months, concerns were raised by Ward Members on the temporary closures of Crosby Village Surgery, Litherland Practice and Netherton Practice. The Vice-Chair and I, Councillor Myers, organised an informal briefing for Ward Members which was delivered by NHS Cheshire and Merseyside, Sefton (formerly the CCGs).

In September 2022 we held a remote informal meeting of Committee Members to receive information on PC24 practices and temporary closures of premises in South Sefton. This matter had caused some concerns for Ward Members and local residents alike, and we were able to gather information concerning the reasons for the temporary closures, together with plans in place to allow the re-opening of the practices concerned.

Public Health Outcomes & Performance and Framework Indicators

During November 2022 we held an in-person workshop style session for Committee Members which allowed a “deep-dive” on the Public Health Outcomes Framework



and we were particularly concerned about the growing trend in vaping amongst young people, together with vaping products being marketed towards this group. As a result of the workshop, the following recommendations were subsequently submitted and agreed by the Committee:

- (1) the Public Health Director be requested to submit the Public Health Outcomes Framework to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) on a six-monthly basis, for information; and
- (2) the Public Health Director be requested to investigate the possibility of obtaining information on sales of vaping products, with a view to identifying possible trends.

I look forward to receiving regular reports from the Director of Public Health on the Public Health Outcomes Framework during 2023/24.

Site Visits

In the past Committee Members have occasionally been provided with opportunities to visit NHS Trust premises to view the provision of services and such visits allow Members to ask questions and make observations. Unfortunately, this practice ceased during the pandemic and I hope that opportunities will arise for Committee Members to resume physical visits during 2023/24.

Pre-Scrutiny and the Key Decision Forward Plan

As ever, the Key Decision Forward Plan provided the Committee with an opportunity to pre-scrutinise Key Decision items from the Council's Forward Plans, as each of the latest Forward Plans are submitted to the Committee as part of its Work Programme update. The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet and Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by allowing Overview and Scrutiny Committees to examine issues beforehand and make recommendations prior to a determination being made by the Executive.

Cabinet Member Reports

The regular attendance at Committee meetings of both Councillor Paul Cummins, Cabinet Member - Health and Social Care, and Councillor Ian Moncur, Cabinet Member – Health and Wellbeing, has been very much appreciated by Members of the Committee. Throughout the year all the relevant Cabinet Member Update Reports have been included on agendas and I feel that it is particularly important to include regular updates on major areas of the Council's activities, particularly as budgets have become increasingly under pressure. The Cabinet Member Update Reports have included a wealth of valuable information on aspects of the services and the Cabinet Members' attendance, together with the presence of senior officers from both the Council's Adult Social Care and Public Health service areas, has been very useful, providing Members with an opportunity to raise question and scrutinise developments within those Council Portfolio areas. I hope that scrutiny of those areas will continue into the next Municipal Year.



Sefton Healthwatch

In 2014/15 the Committee was fortunate in securing the services of two Advisory Members from Healthwatch Sefton who bring additional experience and expertise to the table, and this good practice has continued into 2022/23.

My Vice-Chair and I have met informally with the Healthwatch representatives on occasions and these informal meetings have proved to be very useful, enabling us to discuss a wide range of issues, to exchange information, and to strengthen the excellent working relationship between Healthwatch Sefton and the Committee.

I am very grateful to both our Healthwatch co-opted Members for their valuable input into the work of the Committee and their attendance at Committee meetings. We have been very fortunate in securing the services of the Healthwatch Manager, Diane Blair, as a co-opted Member on the Committee, together with Brian Clark, our other Healthwatch co-opted member and I look forward to continuing to work with both Diane and Brian on the Committee. I also appreciate receiving the Healthwatch Sefton update that is submitted to each meeting of the Committee.

Contributions Made During 2022/23

The attendance of representatives of organisations and partners, including senior officers of NHS Trusts, has been much appreciated and I would like to thank all our partners for their openness and their responses to our requests and suggestions.

I am grateful to all the Members of the Committee for their support and for the enthusiastic way that they have contributed to our work. I would specifically like to thank my Vice-Chair during 2022/23, Councillor Greg Myers, for his help and assistance with the work of the Committee. His attention to detail and his ability to spot potential risks and issues have been invaluable. Greg has also attended informal meetings with Healthwatch representatives with me, and this has assisted in strengthening the excellent working relationship between Healthwatch Sefton and the Committee.

My particular appreciation goes to our Democratic Services Officers for their commitment, advice and support. Specific thanks go to the officer who supports the Committee, Debbie Campbell, Senior Democratic Services Officer, for all her hard work and knowledge of the Health Scrutiny process.

The Year Ahead – 2023/24

Looking ahead to 2023/24, it is anticipated that informal meetings of Committee Members / workshops may be held during 2023/24 to consider the following items in greater detail:

- Informal on-line session with representatives of the Primary Care Networks (PCNs) on GP access
- Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF)



With on-going pressures on social care and health services whilst expectations from the public remain high, I am aware that the Committee faces fresh challenges at the beginning of each new Municipal Year and 2023/24 could see exceptional challenges. Despite these challenges, I am confident that the Committee will rise to meet the expectations on it and that Members will be kept fully informed and continue to play an active role on the Committee.

Councillor Carla Thomas
July 2023



Children's Services and Safeguarding



Councillor June Burns
*Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Children's Services and Safeguarding)*

I am very pleased to introduce Sefton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) Annual Report 2022/23 to the Council.

Introduction

2022/23 has been a challenging year for Children's Services following the Ofsted report and the Committee increased the number of formal meetings held in order to closely scrutinise the work of services, meeting formally on six occasions. Details of the meetings and the items considered are outlined here: [Sefton Home](#) We also met informally on four occasions in order to receive information and to consider matters relating to the Improvement Programme. Further information is set out within the paragraphs below.

Children's Services Improvement Journey

The Committee received reports and information at each meeting that updated on progress made and set out priorities for the next quarter. During 2022/23, the Committee was advised of the draft of the Improvement Plan for Phase 2. that would continue to be comprised of the four themes of improvement, namely:

- Quality - Ensuring the right staff are in the right place at the right time to deliver a consistent standard of good quality safeguarding services to children and families.
- Improving Implementation of Learning - Using what we know and learn to continuously improve and enhance the services we deliver for children and families.
- Improving Tools - Ensuring we have the right tools to enable the workforce to deliver good quality services for children and families.
- Improving Strategic Partnerships - Effective partnership working to enable the delivery of common goals and a high-quality multi-agency response for children and families.



The draft Improvement Plan also identified four key areas that would be strengthened through the actions included, namely:

- Corporate Leadership
- Governance and Partnerships
- Practice
- Enablers and Resources

The draft Improvement Plan also included milestones and measures for the four themes that would be monitored and reported on. The Improvement Plan was a live document that would be updated on a regular basis; and Committee Members were requested to consider and comment on the draft Improvement Plan at each meeting.

The regular reports enabled Members of the Committee to ask questions and raised matters on a wide range of issues regarding the Improvement Plan at each meeting.

Children’s Services Commissioner

During 2022/23 the Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Social Care and Education that outlined the role of the Children’s Services Commissioner for Sefton and the final report of the Commissioner. The report set out the background to the matter; key issues; and recommendations made to the Council. A copy of the Commissioner’s report was attached and outlined the role of the Commissioner; an executive summary and recommendations to the Secretary of State for Education; the local authority area: Sefton; the challenges as described by Ofsted; methodology used key issues; and recommendations to the Council.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on a number of issues it was agreed that the content of the report be noted.

Attendance of Paul Boyce, Improvement Board Chair

Further to Minute No. 34 (3) of 20 December 2022, Paul Boyce, the independent Improvement Board Chair, attended the meeting and outlined his experience in the Children’s Services field; interventions taken by the Department for Education for delivering improvements, following the Inadequate inspection grading by Ofsted, and possible future interventions in the event that improvements were not sufficient; the appointment of the Children’s Services Commissioner for Sefton; the role and responsibilities of the Improvement Board Chair; the reporting mechanisms and timescales undertaken by him to report to the Secretary of State for Education on Sefton’s performance in Children’s Services; the role of the Improvement Board in Sefton; oversight of the Children’s Services Improvement Programme; and issues perceived regarding the requirement of the Committee for transparency and good quality information from Council Officers.

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on a number of issues.



Mr. Boyce stressed the importance of safeguarding children in Sefton; that his responsibility was to the Secretary of State for Education; the role of the Committee in exhibiting political leadership; and that assurances on the quality of social work practice and the role of partners could be sought.

It was agreed that the information provided be noted.

Children's Social Care

The Local Authority has duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need. Details of reports received in relation to children's social care during 2022/23 are set out within the paragraphs below.

Early Help Services

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education that provided an update on the work to review Early Help Services and set out an approach to present to Members of the Committee. The report detailed the background and current position.

Performance Dashboard

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Social Care and Education that provided an overview of the September performance dashboard. A copy of the dashboard was attached to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on the item it was agreed that:

- (1) the performance dashboard be noted;
- (2) the intention to share education data at the next meeting be noted;
- (3) in relation to the cycle of performance reporting, a rotation of Children's Social Care, Education and Health performance be agreed.

Referrals and Thresholds

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education setting out the current process around referrals into Sefton's Integrated Front Door (IFD). The report outlined key functions of the IFD; how contact was made to Sefton's Children's Services; the IFD process; child contact outcomes; and an overview of the key working practices in the Sefton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The new Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Level of Need Guidance was attached to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on the item and it



was agreed that the report be noted.

Sefton Corporate Parenting Board – Annual Report 2022

The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member – Children’s Social Care presenting the Annual Report of the Sefton Corporate Parenting Board for 2022. The Sefton Corporate Parenting Board - Annual Report 2022 was attached to the report and set out information on the following:

- Purpose of the Sefton Corporate Parenting Board
- Roles and Responsibilities of the Board
- Review and Restructure 2021
- Sefton Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Five Key Priority Areas
- Ofsted Inspection of Sefton Children’s Services 21 February to 4 March 2022
- Children and Young People’s Participation
- Achievements
- Sefton Corporate Parenting Board – Terms of Reference

The Committee was requested to comment on the Annual Report and to note it.

Recruitment and Support for Newly Qualified Social Workers

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children’s Social Care and Education that set out Sefton’s response to the recruitment and support for newly qualified social workers (NQSW’s). The report detailed the difficulties that existed on a national and local level and the impact on the local authority, the newly qualified social worker and most importantly, the families that the Council worked with.

The report detailed Sefton’s response, outlined progress of the new Social Work Academy and set out the Academy working model and the impact it was hoped would be achieved, together with some of the early signs of impact. The report concluded that the Academy could continue to support Sefton’s Children Services and the wider Council.

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on the matter and it was agreed that the report be noted.

Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) Annual Report 2021-2022

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of Children’s Services (Quality Assurance and Safeguarding) on the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) Annual Report 2021-22. Detailed within the Sefton SCP annual report 2021-22 was the work undertaken by the Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership, whose purpose was to safeguard children and work together with a collective aim to better improve the outcomes for children and young people.

The Sefton SCP Annual Report 2021-22 was attached to the report and outlined the following:

- Introduction
- Covid 19
- Voice of the Independent Chair/Scrutineer
- Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)
- Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs)
- Multi-Agency Quality Assurance and Audit Activities
- Multi-Agency Training and Development
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Conclusion

Members of the Committee raised a number of questions and issues on the matter.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) representatives of the Police and other Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team members be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (3) the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Quality, Assurance and Safeguarding) be requested to submit the report presented to the Improvement Board on training and development to a future meeting of the Committee.

Education

Local Authorities have a responsibility to ensure a sufficient supply of school places and to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children with their educational requirements. Details of the reports submitted to the Committee on education matters during 2022/23 are set out within the paragraphs below.

Ofsted Inspection Reports

Throughout 2022/23 the Committee considered received three reports from the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) that updated on recent Ofsted Inspection Reports and the work of the School Improvement Team. The reports set out details of schools that had been inspected and reports received during each of the school terms. A Summary of Ofsted Outcomes and Support during each term was attached to each report.

Committee Members were able to raise any issues and to note the information received.



Education Excellence Strategy for Sefton 2022-2027

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director Children's Services (Education) that presented the Education Excellence Strategy for Sefton 2022-2027. The development of the Strategy, together with the proposed next steps in terms of programme development were also set out. The report was also considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 6 October 2022. The Strategy was received and noted.

Summer 2022 Data

The Committee considered a report that updated on summer 2022 test and examination data. The report set out the background to the matter and referred to the current position and next steps with regard to the possibility of re-establishing the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Executive Director of Social Care and Education be requested to submit a further report to the next meeting of the Committee providing information on the up-to-date test and examination data.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Annual Update

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education that updated the Committee on the progress made in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) within the Education Portfolio and with reference to the SEND Continuous Improvement Plan. The report set out the background to the matter; issues regarding the SEND Team and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans), together with actions taken to address those issues; Sefton's High Needs Funding/Budget position 2022/23; delivering the Better Values Programme; the new Ofsted Local Area SEND Inspection Framework; and monitoring and review of the SEND Improvement Plan.

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on a number of issues.

It was agreed that:

- (1) it be noted that the SEND Continuous Improvement Board will continue to provide robust governance of further developments in this area with oversight provided by the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- (2) the current position in relation to the SEND Team and the linkages with the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments and compliance, be noted;



- (3) the fact that the Council will be engaging with the Delivering Better Value Programme delivered with the support of the Department for Education and financial advisors in order to address the long-term financial sustainability of the High Needs Funding Budget, be noted; and
- (4) the Assistant Director Education be requested to submit an update report to the next meeting of the Committee on 6 March 2023, on progress regarding compliance with statutory timescales to complete Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessments and to produce a final EHC Plan, to include figures for the appeals process where parental preferences were unable to be met.

Education Scorecard

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education presenting the Education Scorecard.

The Education Scorecard was attached to the report and set out statistics on:

- Pupil absence
- Pupil exclusions
- Education, Health and Care Plans
- Early Years Foundations Profile
- Phonics
- Key Stage 1
- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 4

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on related issues.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the data contained in the Education Scorecard be noted;
- (2) the Assistant Director Education be requested to consider the possibility of including a category of English as a second language in future Education Scorecards; and
- (3) the Senior Democratic Services Officer be requested to circulate a revised version of the Education Scorecard to Committee Members.

Education, Health and Care Plans

The Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) reported verbally on children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), including the following:

Nursery to reception - achieved by 15 February 2023 deadline, 47 children, 45 placed for September 2023, 41 named in line with parental preference (2 children continued placement not impacted by deadline).



Year 6 to Year 7 - achieved by 15th February 2023 deadline, 141 children, 102 placed for September 2023, 91 named in line with parental preference (39 continuation of placement not impacted by deadline).

Year 11 to Year 12 - no data yet as deadline would be 31 March 2023.

Number of assessments completed in February 2023 - 87 plans were finalised in February, which was the highest number of plans completed in a single month since the Performance Indicator tracker was created in 2019.

Outstanding assessments - decreased from 186 to 93.

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on the matter.

It was agreed that the information provided on Education, Health and Care Plans be noted.

Health Related Matters - NHS Trusts / Partners

Throughout 2022/23 the Committee has received reports and presentations from senior NHS representatives of certain NHS organisations, on the work and activities undertaken to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people. This attendance has enabled Committee Members to scrutinise NHS performance in the areas concerned and details are set out within the following paragraphs.

Integrated Care Systems and Start Well Update

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health that provided a brief overview of the Integrated Care System development through the Sefton Partnership and provided specific detail on the Start Well Plan and its delivery. The report set out the background to the matter; an overview of the Start Well Plan; next steps, and key updates. Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on the matter.

It was agreed that:

- (1) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (2) ongoing support for the delivery of the Start Well Plan be agreed and further updates and reports be received in due course and that such reports include updates on the issues above raised by Members.

Maternity Service Briefing

The Committee considered the report and presentation submitted by Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton). Kate Clark, Executive Medical Director and Dawn Meredith, Maternity Services, Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, and Kerrie France, Associate Director of Quality and Safety Improvements, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton), attended to present information on Maternity Services for women and babies and an overview of maternity provision by Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust. The presentation outlined the following:



- Maternity Services
- Geographical area covered by Southport and Ormskirk
- The areas and population served
- Population Demographics 2020-21
- Maternity Services offered across the two Hospital sites
- Activity 2021/22, in terms of booking and deliveries
- Additional Specialist Clinics
- Community Midwifery
- Action Plan following 2015 Quality Assurance (QA) Visit
- Headlines
- Reding the Signs – overview of East Kent services led by Kirkup (October 2022)
- Implementation System learning

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on the matter.

It was agreed that:

- (1) Kate Clark, Dawn Meredith and Kerrie France be thanked for their attendance;
- (2) the report and the presentation be noted; and
- (3) additional information be requested on stillbirth rates, neonatal death and brain injury.

Children and Young People Commissioned Health Services Update

The Committee considered the report and presentation of the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board, Sefton Place. The report provided an overview of the performance of children and young people commissioned health services delivered by Alder Hey Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, including:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) assessment and diagnostic service
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Other therapy services: Continence, Dietetics, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy

It was anticipated that a detailed CAMHS/mental health update would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

Peter Wong, Children and Young People Commissioning Lead, Sefton, gave a presentation that outlined the following:

- Children and Young People: Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)



- Children and Young People: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Specialist CAMHS
- Therapies

Members of the Committee raised a number of questions and issues on the matter.

It was agreed that the children and young people commissioned health services performance update be noted and accepted.

Other Items

In addition to Childrens Social Care; Education; and health related matters, reports have been received from other areas of the Council during 2022/23, details of which are set out within the following paragraphs.

Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group

In September 2021, the Committee agreed that a working group would be established to consider the impact of Covid 19 on the primary curriculum to be comprised of the following Members:

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

Details of the outcome are set out within the paragraph below.

Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group - Final Report

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer presenting formally the final report of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group and Councillor Spencer, Lead Member of the Working Group, introduced the Final Report. Amongst other things, the Working Group had found that many teachers and support staff felt unappreciated and that there were recruitment issues with teaching. As a result of the findings, the Council agreed to formally write to all Headteachers to thank teaching staff for their on-going input throughout the pandemic; to remind schools of the various options available for securing additional teaching staff; and to remind schools of the availability of mental health support, including the Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit. Later in the Municipal Year the Mayor of Sefton hosted an event for representatives of all schools throughout the Borough, to thank them for their ongoing input throughout the pandemic.

Domestic Abuse Update

The Committee received a report of the Assistant Director of People (Communities) updating on Sefton's strategic approach to tackling domestic abuse, including an overview of the Domestic Abuse Act and work of the Sefton Domestic Abuse



Partnership Board to date. The report set out the background to the matter; an overview of the Domestic Abuse Act; local authority statutory duties within the Act; the roles and responsibilities of the Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board; links to other national/statutory guidance; and cross-partnership collaboration. The Terms of Reference for the Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board were also attached to the report.

LGA Training Proposals and Frequency of Meetings

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (Strategic Support) outlining proposals for the Local Government Association (LGA) to provide training for Members of the Committee and for all Members in relation to corporate parenting.

The report also sought approval for the Committee to return to its normal pattern of five meetings per year.

The report outlined information on:

- LGA Proposals
- Dedicated support for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)
- All Member Corporate Parenting Briefing
- Support for Members of all Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Support for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)
- Support for all Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs
- Frequency of Meetings during 2023/24

Members of the Committee asked questions and raised matters on a number of issues and it was agreed that:

- (1) the proposals for training by the Local Government Association be endorsed; and
- (2) the Committee return to the normal cycle of 5 meetings per municipal year.

Informal Training/Briefing Sessions

In addition to formal Committee meetings where formal business is conducted and decisions are taken, Members are also able to meet for informal discussions or to undertake an in-depth examination or analysis of a topic that would not be possible in a formal Committee setting. Details of informal sessions held during 2022/23 are set out within the paragraphs below.

Informal Briefing Session – Improvement Plan – 17 August 2022



A Confidential Informal Briefing Session for Members of the Committee took place on 17 August 2022 when Members were provided with copies of the Children's Improvement Plan and received a presentation on Phase 1 of the Improvement Plan that outlined details of the themes of improvement.

Informal Briefing on the Leeds Family Values Model – 21 November 2022

Committee Members attended a remote meeting on 21 November to receive a presentation on the Leeds Family Values model, Sefton Stronger together that outlined details on the model. This provided an opportunity for Members to raise questions.

Site Visit – 23 November 2022

Members of the Committee met on site at Magdalen House, Bootle and were provided with an overview of the Children's Services function that provided Members with an opportunity to ask a range of questions. Senior Officers provided a tour of Children's Services for Members and follow-up information was requested as a result of the visit.

Covid severely restricted Members from undertaking any site visits to meet with service providers and service users and I hope that opportunities will arise for Committee Members to undertake physical visits during 2023/24.

Cabinet Member Reports

In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had previously agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports for to be submitted to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. During 2022/23, the Cabinet Member Update Reports for the Children's Social Care and the Education portfolios have been included on Committee agendas for general information purposes for Members of the Committee. The Cabinet Member update reports have outlined a range of information and have provided an opportunity for Councillors Doyle and Roscoe to attend Committee meetings to present their reports and to respond to any questions or issues raised by Members of the Committee.

The regular attendance at Committee meetings of both Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care, and Councillor Roscoe, Cabinet Member – Education, has been very much appreciated by Members of the Committee and reflects on the value placed by our Cabinet Members on the work of the Committee.

Work Programme Key Decision Forward Plan

Throughout 2022/23 the Committee has considered reports seeking the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2022/23; reporting on progress of Working Groups; identifying any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan; and updating on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



Pre-Scrutiny and the Key Decision Forward Plan

The Key Decision Forward Plan provides the Committee with an opportunity to pre-scrutinise Key Decision items from the Council's Forward Plan, as the latest Forward Plan is submitted to the Committee as part of its Work Programme update. The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet and Cabinet Members in making effective decisions as it allows Overview and Scrutiny Committees to examine issues and make recommendations prior to the executive decision being made.

The regular Work Programme report presents Committee Members with an on-going opportunity to pre-scrutinise Key Decisions relating to the Children's Social Care and Education Portfolios.

At the meeting on 15 March 2022 the Committee requested to pre-scrutinise the Key Decision on the Education Excellence Strategy for Sefton 2021-2025 and the item was submitted to the meeting on 27 September 2022 for consideration. I hope that the Committee receives further opportunities for pre-scrutiny in the future.

Co-Opted Members

The Committee has the following representatives as part of its membership:

- 1 Church of England diocese representative;
- 1 Roman Catholic archdiocese representative;
- 2 parent governor representatives;
- 2 advisory members from Healthwatch Sefton; and
- 1 independent advisory member.

Co-opted members regularly attend the Committee to contribute towards debates and bring additional experience and expertise to the table. I would like to thank all our Added Members for their attendance and contributions during 2022/23, as it is very much appreciated.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

I am particularly appreciative of our Democratic Services Officers for their commitment, advice and support. Our responsible officer is Debbie Campbell, and I am grateful for the contributions she has made during 2022/23 towards running the Committee.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all Committee Members, officers and partners for their support, hard work and contributions to our endeavours throughout the year, particularly Laura Knights, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Cared for Children and Care Experienced); and Tricia Davis, Assistant Director Children's Services (Education); and Joe Banham, Assistant Director Children's Services (Safeguarding and Quality).



Particular thanks must also go to Martin Birch, who was the Executive Director of Children’s Social Care and Education during 2022/23, and I wish his successor, Risthardh Hare, well in the future.

The Year Ahead – 2023/24

The Committee will be examining a number of key areas during 2023/24 in order to ensure that the services we provide are continually improved to benefit the children and young people of the Borough and to capture “the voice of the child”. The Committee will also play a vital role in monitoring the Improvement Plan for the service and ensuring that it is implemented. I am confident that the Committee will work as a “critical friend” to our Cabinet Members and partners during 2022/23.

Councillor June Burns
July 2023



Regeneration and Skills



Councillor Liz Dowd
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Regeneration and Skills)

It gives me great pleasure to introduce Sefton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) Annual Report 2022/23.

During the year the Committee met five times formally and twice informally. Reports and presentations considered by the Committee related to:

- Riverside Dispersed Accommodation Pilot
- Domestic Abuse Update
- Winter Maintenance Policy & Operational Plan
- United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund Update
- Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group Final Report – Update on Recommendations
- Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity Working Group Final Report – Update on Recommendations
- Southport Market - 1 Year Review
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Annual report to Overview and Scrutiny 2021-2022
- Green Sefton Annual Review 2022
- Digital Inclusion Working Group – Update on Recommendations
- Update on the Progression of the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy – Presentation
- Sandway Homes Limited - 2021/22 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies
- Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited (SHOL) - 2021/22 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies
- Sefton Economic Strategy for Growth
- Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2022/23
- Data on Weed Control Operations since April 2022



All agendas and minutes of the Committee can be accessed [here](#)

Working Groups/Informal Meetings – New Way of Working

At the first meeting in the municipal year the Committee agreed a fresh approach to its operation during 2022/23 by arranging additional informal meetings to be held; and that the new proposal obviated the need for the Committee to establish Working Groups as short reviews of services could be undertaken by all Members at the informal meetings. Two informal meetings were held during the year at which reviews were undertaken on the following topics:

- Green Sefton Annual Review 2022
- Weed Control, Street Cleansing Provision and Waste Containment Consultation
- Housing Supply and Demand
- Leasehold House Sales
- Sandway Homes

A further topic for review at an informal meeting has also been agreed in relation to the strategic approach for waste containment/disposal across the borough. This informal meeting will be held in 2023/24.

The Committee also received updates on the implementation of recommendations arising from the two Working Groups below:

- Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity
- Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People

In respect of the Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity Working Group, the Committee was not fully satisfied with responses about how recommendations would be implemented. Accordingly, the Committee made frequent contact with the Cabinet Members for Locality Services and Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services throughout the year. This matter is still ongoing and will roll forward to the 2023/24 municipal year.

Cabinet Member Reports

In keeping with previous years and to keep Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Committee therefore received regular Cabinet Member update reports; and I would like to take the opportunity to thank Councillor Hardy, Cabinet Member – Communities and Housing, Councillor Moncur, Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton element), Councillor Veidman, Cabinet Member – Planning and Building Control, Councillor Fairclough, Cabinet Member – Locality Services and Councillor Atkinson, Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Skills for their attendance at meetings and their regular and informative update reports.



Work Programme 2022/23, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan

At each meeting the Committee considered the reports of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that sought views of the Work Programme for 2022/23, the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee or at informal meetings; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; and provided an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The pre-scrutiny process referred to above can assist the Cabinet to make effective decisions by giving the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to examine issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.

The Year Ahead

The Committee will continue to make progress on the following priorities over the coming year. The list is not exhaustive and other service operational reports as deemed appropriate by the Committee will also be considered.

- Flood & Coastal Risk – Annual Report
- Review of Winter Service and Operational Plan
- Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2023/24
- Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan (with a focus on the new Crosby Library project and the Bootle Regeneration Strategy)
- Update on the progression of the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy
- Update on Operational Activities delivered via Locality Services
- Leasehold House Sales
- Green Sefton Annual Review 2023
- Damp, Mould and Condensation in Residential Properties
- Riverside Dispersed Accommodation Pilot
- Domestic Abuse Report
- Southport Market Update
- Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited (SHOL) - 2022/23 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies
- Sandway Homes Limited - 2022/23 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies
- Monitoring reports on the implementation of recommendations arising from Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity and Housing Support Services to Vulnerable People Working Group reviews.

The Committee will continue with the arrangement of holding informal meetings to undertake short reviews of services; and that the first review be on the topic of refuse and waste recycling. In connection with this matter the Committee will undertake a visit to the Gillmoor Recycling Discovery Centre.



As part of the Committee's pre-scrutiny function all Executive Directors and Assistant Directors, whose responsibilities fall within the remit of the Committee, will be requested to seek the views of the Committee on all strategies and plans prior to submission to Cabinet and Council; and that if it is not possible, due to time constraints, to submit the final strategy or plan for consideration, then an outline or synopsis be submitted to the Committee to allow an oversight of the proposals to be considered and commented upon.

Given the scale of the financial and service challenges facing the Council the year ahead will be extremely busy for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise such challenges, including how they impact on the Council's statutory requirement to remain financially sustainable and the desire to deliver Sefton's 2030 Vision and Core Purpose.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our work over the past year. I would personally like to thank all Members of the Committee, Cabinet Members Councillors Atkinson, Fairclough, Hardy, Moncur and Veidman and all of those officers who have attended meetings for their support to me over the past year and provided the Committee with valuable information.

Councillor Liz Dowd
July 2023



Regulatory, Compliance, and Corporate Services



Councillor Sue Bradshaw
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)

On behalf of the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) it gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2022/23 Annual Report.

During the year the Committee has met six times formally and considered matters relating to financial issues and updates associated with the 2022/23 revenue and capital budget and financial management across the Council. As is the usual practice, a Special Meeting of the Committee was held prior to Budget Council to scrutinise budget options and proposals. An informal meeting of the Committee was also held to consider a topic identified for review.

Other reports/presentations considered by the Committee related to:

- Member Development Programme
- New Ways of Working
- Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity at Work and Sickness Absence
- Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Reference Group – Updates were submitted to each meeting of the Committee to keep Members abreast of the scale of the problem in Sefton; and the measures being taken to alleviate them
- Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land/Asset -Management Strategy
- Elections Act 2022
- Digital Inclusion Working Group – Update on Recommendations
- Overview and Security Update Cloud March 22
- Update on the Progression of the Liverpool City Region Digital Inclusion Strategy – Presentation
- Corporate Communications Update – Presentation
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Council Tax Base 2023/24
- Annual ICT Update Report
- Air Quality Update 2022
- Ethical Business Practices Working Group Final Report – Update on Recommendations

- Corporate Communications and Covid-19

At each meeting the Committee also received Work Programme and Cabinet Member update reports. This enabled the Committee to add/amend topics to be considered to reflect priorities; and to scrutinise the work being undertaken in the Cabinet Member's portfolio.

All agendas and minutes of the Committee can be accessed [here](#)

Financial Scrutiny

The Committee received regular budgetary update reports during the year and a Special Meeting of the Committee was held on 7 February 2023 prior to the budget meetings of both Cabinet and Council. At this Special Meeting the Committee considered reports relating to: Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy 2023/24; Prudential Indicators 2023/24; Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2023/24; Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2027/28; Robustness of the 2023/24 Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of Reserves – Local Government Act 2003 - Section 25; and Revenue and Capital Budget Plan 2023/24 – 2025/26 and Council Tax 2023/24.

At this meeting the main report for consideration was the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that explained that on 9 February 2022 Cabinet would be asked to recommend to Council a Budget Plan for 2023/24; and that on 2 March 2023, the Council would be asked to consider and approve the Budget Plan for 2023/24 – 2025/26 and the level of Council Tax for 2023/24; The report provided the Committee with:

- an assessment of the Council's current financial position and approach to the 2023/24 Budget Plan and preparation for the additional two-year budget period 2024/25 to 2025/26
- an update on the Government's announcement of resources that were available to the Council for 2023/24 and 2024/25
- the Council's current financial position and the assumptions built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan
- the proposed Budget for 2023/24; and
- the proposed Capital Programme for 2023/24

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- individual school budgets 2023/24;
- budget saving proposals;
- draft Council budget summary 2023/24;
- the Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2025/26

Members of the Committee scrutinised the budget proposals and asked questions/commented on the following issues:



- the need for the Social Worker Academy to be successful to reduce the reliance on agency workers; and retention initiatives to ensure staff stayed with Sefton
- concern that neither the Autumn Statement or Settlement mentioned the Public Health Grant and therefore no information was available on the national totals or individual allocations
- was rental income from the Strand Shopping Centre more adversely affected than other similar sectors during the pandemic; and
- the effects of businesses struggling during the pandemic and its impact on Business Rates collection performance; and the consequent increase in Business Rates appeals provision

Work Programme 2022/23, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan

At each meeting the Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that sought views of the Work Programme for 2022/23, the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; and provided an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Working Group/Informal Meeting - Corporate Communications and Covid-19

The Committee established a Working Group to review the topic of Corporate Communications and Covid-19 to assess the changes instigated by Corporate Communications in communicating with residents during the Covid-19 pandemic; the impact the changes have had; and how such changes could shape the future of the Council communicating with its communities.

Unfortunately, problems were encountered arranging meetings of the Working Group and it was agreed that an informal meeting of the Committee be held to allow a short review to be undertaken. This enabled all Members of the Committee to get involved in the review rather than the smaller number who were Members of the Working Group. The informal meeting was held on 3 February 2023 and a host of recommendations were approved for consideration by the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services. The Cabinet Member subsequently approved all the recommendations, details of which can be accessed [here](#)

The Committee also received update reports on the implementation of recommendations on previously approved Final Reports relating to:

- Ethical Business Practices
- Digital Inclusion



Cabinet Member Reports

In keeping with previous years and to keep Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee covered the portfolio of the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Councillor Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services for her regular attendance at meetings to update Members not only on issues associated with her portfolio but also on the Members Welfare Reform Reference Group.

Pre-Scrutiny – The Key Decision Forward Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also been given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise items from the Council's Key Decision Forward Plan. The Forward Plan is submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Work Programme update. The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet to make effective decisions by giving the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to examine issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.

The Year Ahead

The Committee will continue to make progress on the following priorities below over the coming year. The list is not exhaustive and other service operational reports as deemed appropriate by the Committee will also be considered.

- Review the Council Tax Reduction Scheme
- Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land/Asset -Management Strategy
- Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group – Updates
- Air Quality Monitoring
- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and Sickness Absence Monitoring
- Armed Forces Covenant
- Update on Progress of LCR Digital Inclusion Strategy
- Annual ICT Update Report (Performance of Agilisys)
- The consideration of budget proposals in preparation of the Budget Report 2024/25 to 2027/28 and savings and the Medium-Term Financial Plan
- Corporate Communications Update

I envisage the forthcoming year to be extremely busy and challenging for the Committee and the Council due to the difficult budgetary position and financial savings that have to be met in Sefton. The Council has an excellent record



regarding financial management over the last 13 years however, it is now estimated that there will be additional financial pressures between 2024/25 and 2025/26 of at least £18.535m, which may need to be met by implementing additional service delivery options. This shortfall will have to be met on top of the significant budget reductions that have been implemented since 2010. Work has commenced on updating the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan, which will include assessing the requirements of Adult and Children's Social Care, which will also include initial forecasts for 2026/27.

Finally, and on behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our work over the past year. I would personally like to thank all Members of the Committee, Councillor Paulette Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services and officers who have attended meetings for their support to me over the past year and provided the Committee with valuable information.

Councillor Sue Bradshaw
July 2023

