

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)	Date of Meeting:	11 June, 2024
Subject:	Work Programme 2024/25, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Corporate Services Communities and Partnership Engagement		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek the views of the Committee on the draft Work Programme for 2024/25, identify potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by informal meetings of the Committee; to identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and to provide an update on cyber security attacks on Sefton MBC.

Recommendation:

That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be considered, along with any additional items to be included and thereon be agreed;
- (2) consideration be given to the selection of a topic(s) for review by either a Working Group or at informal meetings of the Committee as detailed in section 2 of the report;
- (3) consideration be given to items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the Work Programme referred to in (1) above;
- (4) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
- (5) the update on cyber security attacks on Sefton MBC be noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2024/25 and identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny 'adds value' to the Council.

The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues before making formal decisions.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

No alternative options have been considered as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to approve its Work Programme and identify scrutiny review topics.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from the consideration of a key decision or relating to a recommendation arising from a Working Group/informal meeting review will be reported to Members at the appropriate time.

(A) Revenue Costs – see above

(B) Capital Costs – see above

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None	
Legal Implications: None	
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.	
Impact on Children and Young People: No	
There are no direct children and young people implications arising from this report. Any children and young people implications arising from the consideration of reports referred to in the Work Programme will be contained in such reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from the consideration of reports referred to in the Work Programme will be contained in such reports when they are presented to Members at	

the appropriate time.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report but the Work Programme indicates that reports will be submitted to each meeting updating on the work of the Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group

Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None directly applicable to this report.

Commission, broker and provide core services: None directly applicable to this report.

Place – leadership and influencer: None directly applicable to this report.

Drivers of change and reform: None directly applicable to this report.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: None directly applicable to this report.

Greater income for social investment: None directly applicable to this report.

Cleaner Greener: None directly applicable to this report but reference in the Work Programme to the submission of the report on Air Quality Monitoring will raise awareness of associated issues with Members.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD7659/24) and the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD5759/24) have been consulted and have no comments to make. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the report will be included in those reports as appropriate

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2024/25
- Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review
- Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Introduction/Background

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2024/25 is set out in **Appendix 1** to the report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Executive Directors/Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.
- 1.2 The Work Programme has been produced based on items included in last year's Programme.
- 1.3 Members are requested to consider whether there are any other items that they wish the Committee to consider, that fall within the terms of reference of the Committee. The Work Programme will be submitted to each meeting of the Committee during 2024/25 to provide Members with the opportunity to add items to the Programme.

2. SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2024/25

- 2.1 It has been usual practise for the Committee to appoint a Working Group(s) to undertake a scrutiny review of services during the Municipal Year.
- 2.2 However, last year the Committee agreed to hold informal meetings to consider topics for review rather than establishing Working Groups.
- 2.3 The Committee's views are therefore sought on topics for review by informal meetings of the Committee.
- 2.4 To help Members in this matter, contact has been made with officers whose roles fall within the remit of this Committee seeking suggestions.
- 2.5 The Executive Director of Customer Services and Corporate Resources has suggested that a potential topic for review could be "Customer Journey/Channel Shift"; and background information for the review is set out below.
- 2.6 Terms of reference for the informal meeting could include those set out below. However, if the Committee agree to select this topic then the terms of reference could be refined.

The production of evidence with statistics/data.

In the past few years, the Council has invested in technology in areas such as:

- CXP – customer platform (online options for customers to report e.g. missed bins, pest control, bulky items collections, anti-social behaviour)
- Citizens Access – Benefits (online claim and reporting changes for

- Housing Benefit / Council Tax Reduction)
- Citizens Access – Revenues (online management of Council Tax/ Business Rates)
- New Taxi-licensing portal (online application process)
- Parking portal
- Web-chat – whereby contact centre advisers can signpost customers to website etc
- Enhanced messaging facility on contact centre telephony to encourage customers to use online services.

The Council holds a great amount of statistical data showing trends in contact by each channel over past several years and this could be compared to show how this has changed as more services offer online options.

The inclusion of case-studies showing benefits to customers of using online; and not forgetting that we still offer support to those digitally excluded.

The Council's Communications Manager would be useful for the collation of web statistics – areas of website getting most hits/ social media engagement; how this has changed over recent years etc; and future development plans.

- 2.7 For the information of Members, a criteria checklist for selecting and rejecting potential topics to review is attached at **Appendix 2**.

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

- 3.1 Members may request to pre-scrutinise items from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit (terms of reference) of this Committee. The Forward Plan, which is updated each month, sets out the list of items to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration during the next four-month period.
- 3.2 The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has requested that only those key decisions that fall under the remit of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be included on the agenda for consideration.
- 3.4 The latest Forward Plan is attached at **Appendix 3** for this purpose. For ease of identification, items listed on the Forward Plan for the first time appear as shaded.
- 3.5 Should Members require further information in relation to any item on the Key Decision Forward Plan, would they please contact the relevant Officer named against the item in the Plan, prior to the Meeting.

4. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 4.1 As Members will be aware, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and

the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered a report on the guidance produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government relating to Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities following on from the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny. This Committee considered the matter at its meeting held on 22 October 2019 (Minute No. 20).

4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees all agreed the recommendations contained in the report, one of which being that updates on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (LCRCAO&S) be included in the Work Programme report considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

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

4.4 **Role**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was established by the Combined Authority in May 2017 in accordance with the Combined Authorities Order 2017.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Scrutinise the decision and actions taken by the Combined Authority or the Metro Mayor;
- Provide a 'critical friend to policy and strategy development;
- Undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region; and
- Monitor the delivery of the Combined Authority's strategic plan.

4.5 **Membership**

The Committee is made up of 3 elected Members from each of the constituent Local Authorities of the LCR Combined Authority, along with one elected Member from both the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

Sefton's appointed Members are Councillors Desmond, Hart and Hinde. Councillor Hart is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

4.6 **Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee for 2024/25 will be reported to Members at the next meeting.

4.7 **Quoracy Issues**

The quorum for meetings of the LCRCAO&S is 14, two-thirds of the total number of members, 20. This high threshold is not set by the Combined Authority but is

set out in legislation. This has on occasion caused meetings to be inquorate.

4.8 Meetings

Information on all meetings and membership of the LCRCAO&S can be obtained using the following link

<https://moderngov.merseytravel.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=365&Year=0>

Latest Meeting - 28 February 2024

The last meeting of the LCRCAO&S was held on 28 February 2024 and considered the following matters:

- Verbal Update from Mayor Steve Rotheram
- Progress Update on the LCR Combined Authority Five Year Climate Action Plan
- Work Programme Update 2023-24

4.9 The next meeting of the LCRCAO&S will be held on 19 June 2024.

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

5.0 CYBER SECURITY ATTACKS ON SEFTON MBC

5.1 At its meeting held on 27 February 2024, the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that provided a summary of the performance of the Managed Services ICT Contract over the last 12 months, currently outsourced to Agilisys.

5.2 Following questions and comments by Members the Committee resolved (Minute No. 48) that the Senior Manager ICT & Digital be requested to produce statistics detailing the % increase in the number of Cyber-attacks year on year on Sefton's corporate network.

5.3 The Senior Manager ICT & Digital has advised that Sefton has had an actual reduction in attacks which goes against the national trends; and it is believed that this can be attributed to the work Sefton has proactively done to mitigate the risks as summarised below.

	percentage change 21/22 to 22/23	percentage change 22/23 to 23/24
Phishing emails	+13	-44
Malware	-44	-53
Brute Force	-71	-97