



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES)**

**MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL,
SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 11TH JUNE, 2024**

PRESENT: Councillor Bradshaw (in the Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Johnson, McNabb, Catie Page, Parker
and Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Howard

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, Councillor Bradshaw, welcomed Members to the first meeting of Sefton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) in the 2024/25 municipal year.

Councillor Bradshaw especially welcomed Councillors Brodie-Browne, McNabb, Parker, Shaw and Thomas as newly appointed members of the Committee; and expressed her thanks to Councillors Evans, Grace, Killen and McGinnity and former Councillor D'Albuquerque for their help and involvement on the Committee during the previous year.

Councillor Bradshaw also paid special thanks to Councillor Lappin, former Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services for her invaluable help and attendance at meetings of the Committee during the last municipal year; and extended the best wishes of the Committee to Councillor Lappin in her newly appointed role as Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Skills.

Finally, Councillor Bradshaw welcomed to the meeting Councillor Howard as the new Cabinet Member for the newly named portfolio of Corporate Services; and again, on behalf of the Committee, wished Councillor Howard every success in her new role.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Murphy and Sir Ron Watson.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Paragraph 9 of the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declaration of personal interest was made and the Member concerned remained in the room during the consideration of the item:

Member	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Councillor Catie	Minute No. 5 –	She owns a property in use as

Page	Changes to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Potential Impacts on Service Users in Sefton	part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme
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4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

5. CHANGES TO THE HOMES FOR UKRAINE SCHEME AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON SERVICE USERS IN SEFTON

Further to Minute No. 52 (2) of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 the Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of People (Communities) that updated on visas issued to refugees as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, and how this would impact those that arrived in Sefton.

The report provided information on the Government announcement on 19 February 2024 to various visa schemes currently open to Ukrainians as follows:

- the Ukraine Family Scheme closed to all new applications on 19 February 2024
- the Ukraine Extension Scheme closed on 16 May 2024
- the intention to create a new Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme
- changes to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme

The report also identified that currently, 105 individual Ukrainians were living with Sefton hosts on the Homes for Ukraine programme and detailed when their visas would expire; and that there were 140 Ukrainians that had moved on into their own accommodation and were no longer on the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Attached to the report was a fact sheet that provided a brief overview of the different types of international migrants that may come to the UK and a summary of some of the schemes that they may have accessed.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- the excellent support provided to Ukrainian families resettled in the Formby area

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- acknowledgement that Ukrainian families would like to move back home but due to the ongoing conflict in their country this was impossible
- the number of Ukrainian families who had not yet moved into their own accommodation
- the numbers of unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and young people who were seeking asylum in the UK but who had been separated from their parents or carers; and how they were looked after and cared for

RESOLVED:

That the report updating on visas issued to refugees as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme, and how this would impact those that arrived in Sefton, be noted.

6. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services on the Annual Progress Report Climate Emergency.

The report indicated that Sefton Council had declared a climate emergency in July 2019; that following that declaration, work had progressed within the council and a climate emergency strategy and associated action plan created; and that Annual reporting on progress made was required as part of the governance approach to the programme.

Progress during 2023/24 was highlighted in the 'Climate Change Annual Report 2023/24' which was attached to the report as Appendix 1; and the report indicated that the Council emissions continued to fall for the 4th successive year; that during 2023-24 the Council had reduced overall emissions by 29%; that the fall was in line with the planned reductions in the Council's net zero trajectory; and that this had been achieved by the move to use electricity from renewable energy sources and had counteracted the rise in gas use (driven by a resumption of operations at Dunes Splashworld, the Council's largest gas user).

The report also provided a summary of highlights of the progress made in relation to:

- Street lighting
- Public engagement
- Adapting to the effects of Climate Change
- Decarbonising our buildings
- Purchase of 'clean' electricity
- Gren Sefton

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The report concluded that work would continue to deliver the climate emergency action plan and that in 2024-254 key projects would focus on:

- Delivering some decarbonisation works (works awarded under PSDS 3c)
- Updating and relaunching climate emergency training for all staff and elected members
- Build upon the engagement and educational activities already underway.
- Work with colleagues in property service to embed climate friendly policies within the emerging corporate landlord property management framework.
- As we near the half-way point to our 2030 target, to review the strategy and make any adjustments necessary to remain on track.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- the award from Sports England Swimming Pool Improvement Fund to be used to provide additional photovoltaic (PV) panels at Formby Pool was greatly welcomed
- opportunities for the Council to ensure that vehicles used via fleet rental or lease schemes were electric rather than diesel vehicles; and the requirement to increase the number of charging points available for the Council's fleet vehicles
- concerns expressed about the capacity of the National Grid to cope with a large increase in demand for electric vehicle charging
- concerns raised about vulnerable people, particularly during a cost of living crisis, and their ability to afford increased utility costs for charging their electric wheelchairs and scooters; and the negative impact this could have on their ability to go about their everyday lives
- the requirements of new technology to continually improve to meet the challenge of the climate emergency
- investment in new technology to decarbonise buildings rather than repairing and updating outdated systems was essential
- the adoption of nature-based solutions, such as the introduction of wildflower meadows, to help adapt to the flooding risks associated with a changing climate

RESOLVED:

That the progress made on the targets in the Sefton climate emergency strategy and action plan be noted.

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that sought the views of the Committee on the draft Work Programme for 2024/25; the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by informal meetings of the Committee; the identification of items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; that updated on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and that provided an update on cyber security attacks on Sefton MBC.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- brute force cyber-attacks
- cyber-attacks on governmental and public utilities aimed at shutting down critical infrastructure networks or industrial control systems

RESOLVED: That

- (1) subject to (2) below the Work Programme for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (2) the Corporate Communications Strategy be submitted to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 10 September 2024;
- (3) “Customer Journey/Channel Shift” be approved as a topic for review by an informal meeting of the Committee; and that a scoping document be produced in accordance with the terms of reference set out in paragraph 2.6 of the report;
- (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.

8. CABINET MEMBER REPORT - FEBRUARY 2024 TO JUNE 2024

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent report from the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- The numbers of residents using One Stop Shops and the feedback they provided by leaving reviews about the services they received; and it was suggested that there was room for improvement with the service

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- Equality and diversity training
- The organisation and clerking of school admission appeal hearings and the potential for the number of hearings to increase in the coming years
- the training event for new and existing Education Appeal Panel Members in March 2024

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update report from the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services be noted; and
- (2) Councillor Howard be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.