

**Work Programme 2024/25, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan**

Date of meeting:	10 September 2024		
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer		
Portfolio:	Corporate Services Communities and Partnership Engagement		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

**Summary:**

To seek the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 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; and to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Recommendations:**

That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be considered, along with any additional items to be included and thereon be agreed;
- (2) the presentation on the Corporate Communications Strategy be made to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 22 October 2024;
- (3) the topic for review, at an informal meeting of the Committee, relating to “Customer Journey/Channel Shift” be no longer pursued;
- (4) 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;
- (5) 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; and

- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

## **1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations**

### **1.1 Work Programme 2024/25**

- 1.1.1 The Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2024/25, as approved by Committee in June 2024, is set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The programme had been produced in liaison with the appropriate Executive Directors/Assistant Directors, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.
- 1.1.2 The Work Programme was produced based on items included in last year's Programme.
- 1.1.3 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.
- 1.1.4 The Work Programme indicates that a presentation would be made to this meeting of the Committee on the Corporate Communications Strategy. It is now recommended that this presentation be made to the next meeting to be held on 22 October 2024.

### **1.2 Scrutiny Review Topics 2024/25**

- 1.2.1 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.
- 1.2.2 However, over the last number of years the Committee agreed to hold informal meetings to consider topics for review rather than establishing Working Groups.
- 1.2.3 The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial has submitted the following comments on a suggested topic for review:

The Council actively monitors its sickness statistics and trends both across the organisation and within each directorate. This is reported through the Council and to the Overview And Scrutiny Committee,

The Council recognises the diverse nature of its services and has had a long standing benchmark of 4% to monitor performance. It is considered that this benchmark should be regularly reviewed to ensure it recognises industry best practice that can in turn help the Council to manage its workforce as effectively as possible. It is therefore suggested that the new Head of HR and workforce work with the Committee to review this benchmark and make recommendations that can be considered by senior officers.

- 1.2.4 The Committee's views are therefore sought on topics for review by informal meetings of the Committee.

#### **1.2.5 Customer Journey/Channel Shift – Informal Meeting**

At the last meeting of the Committee it was agreed to hold an informal meeting to

review the topic of “Customer Journey/Channel Shift”. This related to the review of statistical data showing trends in contact by each channel over the past several years; how this could be compared to show how the situation had changed as more services offered online options; and to identify improvements to the service.

During production of the scoping document for the meeting it became apparent that the Committee would be duplicating work, as the work programme, agreed at the meeting in June 2024, included an item that the Committee, at its meeting to be held on 10 September, receive a presentation about Customer Contact Centre Activity. The information to be considered at both the informal meeting and the meeting on 10 September 2024 would be very similar.

Following consultation with Councillor Bradshaw, Chair of the Committee, it was agreed to defer the arrangement of the informal meeting pending this meeting of the Committee; and that it be recommended that the topic for review of “Customer Journey/Channel Shift” be no longer pursued.

A report and presentation regarding Customer Contact Centre Activity is elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.

1.2.6 The Committee’s views are therefore sought on topics for review by informal meetings of the Committee.

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

### **1.3 Pre-Scrutiny of Items in the Key Decision Forward Plan**

1.3.1 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.

1.3.2 The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.

1.3.3 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.

1.3.4 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.

1.3.5 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.

### **1.4 Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

1.4.1 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).

1.4.2 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.

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

#### 1.4.4 **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.

#### 1.4.5 **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.

#### 1.4.6 **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 are Councillors Steve Radford and Pat Moloney respectively.

#### 1.4.7 **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.

#### 1.4.8 **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>

Since the last meeting the LCRO&S has met twice and details of matters considered at the meetings are set out below:

### **3 July 2024**

- Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair Councillors Steve Radford and Pat Moloney were appointed Chair and Vice-Chair respectively
- Work Programme Update 2024-25
- Appointments of Scrutiny Members to the Audit & Governance Committee 2024/25

### **31 July 2024**

- Verbal Update from Mayor Steve Rotheram
- Uk Shared Prosperity Fund – Update
- Review of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Interim Report
- Work Programme Update 2024-25

1.4.9 The next meeting of the LCRCOA&S will be held on 11 September 2024.

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

## **2. Financial Implications**

2.1 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**

## **3. Legal Implications**

3.1 None. Any legal 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.

## **4. Risk Implications**

4.1 None. Any risk 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.

## **5. Staffing HR Implications**

5.1 None. Any staffing/HR 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.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Committee is requested 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

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

#### Equality Implications:

There are no equality implications. Any equality 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.

(Please note that Council have agreed care experience should be treated like a protected characteristic.)

#### Impact on Children and Young People:

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 Neutral impact.

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.

### What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

#### (A) Internal Consultations

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

Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets  
Assistant Director - Highways and Public Protection  
Executive Director - Corporate Services and Commercial  
Assistant Director - Strategic Support

Chief Personnel Officer

**(B) External Consultations**

None.

**Implementation Date for the Decision:**

With immediate effect.

Contact Officer:	Paul Fraser
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2068
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk">paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk</a>

**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.