

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

Date of meeting:	17 September 2024		
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer		
Portfolio:	Cleansing and Street Scene; Communities and Partnership Engagement; Housing and Highways; Public Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton element) Regeneration, Economy and Skills		
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; to seek formal approval of decisions taken at the informal meeting of the Committee in respect of the provision of housing for former looked after children who are now care leavers; 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 Domestic Abuse Report be deferred and considered at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 5 November 2024;
- (3) 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;

- (4) bearing in mind that a review has recently been undertaken by a Member Reference Group regarding weed control no further action be taken at this time to review the topic of issues associated with weed control/grass cutting;
- (5) In respect of the informal meeting of the Committee held on 28 August 2024 to consider the issue of the provision of housing for former looked after children who are now care leavers:
  - (1) the approach agreed at the Strategic Housing Partnership - Housing for Care Experienced Young People event; and the commitment of housing providers to a Care Experienced Housing Charter be endorsed; and
  - (2) at the conclusion of the Task and Finish Group to develop and agree the Housing Charter, the Assistant Director – Economic Growth and Housing be requested to submit a report to both the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Regeneration and Skills) and (Children’s Services and Safeguarding) updating on the outcomes of the Group; and the Work Programme be updated accordingly.
- (6) 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
- (7) 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 Domestic Abuse Report

The Work Programme indicates that a report would be considered at this meeting of the Committee about Domestic Abuse. Work is ongoing on the preparation of this report and therefore it is recommended that this matter be reported to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 5 November 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 Committee's views are therefore sought on topics for review by informal meetings of the Committee.

#### 1.2.4 **Issues Associated with Weed Control/Grass Cutting**

At the last meeting of the Committee, following Councillor Harvey's presentation of his Cabinet Member - Cleansing and Street Scene report, it was agreed that "issues associated with weed control/grass cutting be a potential topic for review at an informal meeting of the Committee". A number of comments were raised by Members on Councillor Harvey's report and responses to such issues have been sent to Members of the Committee via email on 22 August 2024.

The Assistant Director – Operational In-House services has advised that a significant review of weed control took place in 2021/22 by a Member Reference Group. Also, there is a vacancy for the Street Cleansing Manager position and currently, arrangements are being put in place to appoint to this post. Until this role is filled, it is considered that there isn't the resource capacity to undertake a review of the supervision of the service, particularly bearing in mind that a review has recently been undertaken.

The Assistant Director – Highways and Public Protection alluded to the issue of the comments by members associated with proposals to change the enforcement regime to combat the problems of residents dumping rubbish in their rear entries in the email sent to Members on 22 August 2024. The response indicated that "it has long been an ambition of officers and Members to increase the resource available for environmental enforcement, which would improve our ability to address the issue of residents dumping rubbish in rear entries. Unfortunately, to date, the Council's budgetary pressures have prevented it allocating additional resource to this area. The Council has however recently secured £50,000 of Flytipping Intervention Grant. This was awarded to fund a Pilot Intervention, #WFT (Why Fly Tip), in some parts of Derby and Linacre Wards (the areas worst affected by rear entry flytipping). The funding has enabled a 2-month intervention that has included: a hard-hitting, eye-catching, multi-channel communications and marketing campaign; and employment of additional temporary staff to undertake intensive door-to-door engagement, visiting the streets daily after rear entries have been cleared, promoting the messages, increasing awareness of the household duty of care, and challenging residents as soon as the first waste appears – to try to "nip the problem in the bud". Working with the Council's existing enforcement team, these staff have also supported the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices. As the intervention draws to a close, officers will complete an evaluation of the exercise, and this may help to inform how any future increase in resources might be effectively deployed. The evaluation report will be brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further discussion".

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

#### 1.2.6 **Provision of Housing for Former Looked after Children who are now Care Leavers**

The Committee had previously agreed that an informal meeting of the Committee be arranged to consider the topic of the provision of housing for former looked after children who were now care leavers; that an invitation be extended to

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) to take part in the informal meeting; and that representatives of care leavers, the Corporate Parenting Board and registered social landlords be invited to the meeting.

As members will be aware, the informal meeting took place on 28 August 2024. The meeting was held remotely using Microsoft Teams.

As part of the informal meeting's deliberations on this matter, Members were advised of a Strategic Housing Partnership - Housing for Care Experienced Young People event that took place on 13 June 2024. At the event Housing Providers were also asked to commit to a Care Experienced Housing Charter.

Furthermore, Members were advised that a 'bi-monthly' Task and Finish Group had now been convened with providers to look to:

- Develop and agree the Housing Charter
- Take forward arrangements on the 'Void to Home' work
- Putting in place escalation routes and support for Care Leavers

and it was anticipated that the first Task and Finish Group meeting would take place on the 25 September 2024.

The informal meeting agreed that:

- (1) the approach agreed at the Strategic Housing Partnership - Housing for Care Experienced Young People event; and the commitment of housing providers to a Care Experienced Housing Charter be endorsed; and
- (2) at the conclusion of the Task and Finish Group to develop and agree the Housing Charter, the Assistant Director – Economic Growth and Housing be requested to submit a report to both the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Regeneration and Skills) and (Children's Services and Safeguarding) updating on the outcomes of the Group.

It is recommended that this meeting of the Committee approve formally the two decisions above and that the Committees Work Programme be updated accordingly.

### **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 LCRCAO&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.

Assistant Director – Operational In-House Services  
Assistant Director Highways and Public Protection

## **(B) External Consultations**

None.

### **Implementation Date for the Decision:**

With immediate effect.

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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.