

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

Date of meeting:	24 September 2024		
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny (Childrens Services and Safeguarding)		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer		
Portfolio:	Children, Schools and Families		
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.

**Recommendation(s):**

That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2024/25, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be noted, along with any additional items to be included and agreed;
- (2) the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2024/25, as set out at Appendix B be noted;
- (3) It be noted that the topics of ASD/ADHD Services, Child Poverty and Health Inequalities in Care Experienced Children are being considered for in-depth scrutiny by Members of the Committee during 2024/25 and relevant activities are included in the schedule of the informal meetings of Committee Members and site visits to be undertaken during 2024/25, as set out at Appendix B; and
- (4) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted;

(5) To formally note the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) following their review of the provision of housing for former looked after children who were 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.

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

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

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 A schedule of the informal meetings so far for 2024/25 and site visits to be undertaken, is set out at Appendix B. The schedule will be updated during the Municipal Year as lines of enquiry develop and sessions take place.

1.2.4 The Committee is requested to comment on the schedule of informal activities to be undertaken during 2024/25 and note that additional items may be added to the schedule at future meetings of the Committee.

### **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 for 1 October 2024 to 31 January 2025, contains no items relevant to the remit of this committee.

### **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 Page 89 Agenda Item 8 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 15 October 2019 (Minute No. 32 refers).
- 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>

Latest Meeting – 11 September 2024

Matters considered at the meeting related to the following items:

- Financial Performance April-July 2024
- LCR Freeport and Innovation Zone Progress Report
- Liverpool City Region Long Term Skills Plan
- Work Programme Update

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

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

### 1.5 Recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)

1.5.1 In respect of the informal meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) held on 28 August 2024 to consider the issue of the provision of housing for former looked after children who are now care leavers, the following recommendations were made:

- (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.

- 1.5.2 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Childrens Services and Safeguarding) were informed of the scrutiny review and were invited to participate. This Committee is asked to formally note the above recommendations which have also been taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) on 17<sup>th</sup> September. It is recommended that this meeting of the Committee approve formally the two recommendations above.

## **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. Corporate 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.

**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.

**(B) External Consultations**

None

**Implementation Date for the Decision:**

With immediate effect.

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**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2024/25

Appendix B – Informal Meetings and Visits

**Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspections

