

Overview & Scrutiny



SEFTON COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

Sefton Council 



Overview & Scrutiny

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Improvement'**

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board



Councillor Dave Robinson
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for 2015/16.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has met twice during 2015/16.

Communication has always been a key consideration for the Management Board and the Board has previously agreed that Cabinet Member reports would be submitted, to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to contribute towards the relationship between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Members.

Members have welcomed the Cabinet Member update reports and attendance of relevant Cabinet Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings. This process will remain in place despite Cabinet Member decisions being managed electronically.

The Management Board has offered support and guidance, where necessary, in the promotion of mini- reviews/single item meetings with a view to being more productive and adding value with reduced resources. This has been welcomed by all Committees and we hope to build on the successes from the previous years to ensure we continually improve.

The Board welcomed receiving a report in relation to a Motion that had been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Health and Social Care) and to the Board from the Council concerning Accident and Emergency Services. The Board agreed with the sentiments of the Motion that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Health and Social Care) should continue to monitor local Accident and Emergency Services as part of the Committee's Work Programme. You will note from the Annual Report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Health and Social Care), Councillor Catie Page, that the Committee has received regular updates in that respect.

The Council appointed former Councillor Nina Killen (Scrutiny Link) and Councillor Michael O'Brien onto the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority Scrutiny



Panel. Former Councillor Killen had been invited to attend the Management Board to report progress in relation to the LCR Scrutiny Panel and the Board has appreciated receiving progress reports from Councillor Killen. The Board will keep a watchful eye on the Liverpool Scrutiny Panel and how its role evolves as the devolution of powers picks up momentum.

The Management Board welcomed Overview and Scrutiny Training being offered to all Members of the Council, Co-opted Members and Advisory Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The training was provided by North West Employers and facilitated by Councillor John Lamb, Trafford M.B.C. and North West Employers Associate. The sessions have been attended by 43 Members of the Council and received positive feedback and in that respect further training will be provided during the Summer 2016. The additional training will target those Members who were unable to attend the previous sessions.

Training was also provided for Chairs and Vice Chairs of the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Feedback from the Chairs and Vice Chairs was well received. Members felt that a full day would have been more appropriate than the half day provided.

Following a suggestion to amend the call in procedure, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the report of the Head of Regulation and Compliance which recommended that the procedure be amended to allow the Members calling in a decision to present their case to the Committee first. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed with the recommendation in relation to the change of the call in procedure and the constitution was amended accordingly.

The Year Ahead

I think the forthcoming year will be extremely busy for Overview and Scrutiny and the Board. The Board will continue to be updated on the prioritisation of Council services and the One Council approach, thereby ensuring that we continue to deliver services that meet the needs and expectations of our residents, partners and clients, within the set budget available.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Officers of the Democratic Services Team for all their hard work during the year.

Councillor Dave Robinson
June 2016



Children's Services and Safeguarding



Councillor Paula Murphy
*Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Children's Services and Safeguarding)*

I am pleased to introduce Sefton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) Annual Report 2015/16 to the Council.

During 2015/16 the Committee met on 5 occasions. At its meeting on 23 June 2015, following a request made at a previous meeting in November 2014, the Committee received a report by the Head of Vulnerable Children and Young People on the process and level of inspection of Children's Homes and other care provision within which looked-after children reside. The Committee also received a presentation on this matter by the former Director of Young People and Families, Colin Pettigrew. The Committee asked the Director to contact the Head of Planning Services with a view to clarifying the provision for Children's Homes in the draft Local Plan and to arrange to inform all Members of the Council of the revised system of inspecting Children's Homes.

On 22 September 2015, the Committee considered the report of the Head of Schools and Families which concluded the School Performance Review (which was initiated in January 2014) and set out detailed recommendations to continue improving standards in the Borough's secondary schools. The report also set out the key issues and concerns identified by the School Performance Working Group, together with details of ongoing actions undertaken since the Review commenced, which had contributed to considerable improvements in schools. The Committee approved the report's proposals for continued improvement in secondary school standards and subsequently the Cabinet approved those proposals, together with specific associated resources. In addition, the Head of Schools and Families was requested to submit an annual report on school performance.

At its meeting on 26 January 2016, the Committee considered a report of the Director of Social Care and Health on the Sefton CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service) Strategy. Fiona Taylor, Chief Officer of the Southport and Formby and South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups, also submitted a presentation on the CAMHS commissioning "journey" since the Overview and Scrutiny review which was undertaken in 2011. The committee also considered the draft Children's and Young Peoples Plan and offered suggestions to be incorporated into the final version.



Other agenda items considered and scrutinised during the year included the following:-

- School Organisation and School Places;
- Sefton Education Strategy;
- Special Educational needs and Disabilities Assessment Process;
- Increased Number of Children Entering the Care of the Local Authority;
- Standards in Childminder Outcomes;
- Innovation Programme Grant – Community Adolescence Service;
- Sefton Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report 2015;
- Annual Report of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills 2014/15; and
- Public Health Annual Reports 2014 and 2015

Pre-Scrutiny – The Key Decision Forward Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also been given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise items from the Council’s Key Decision Forward Plan. The Forward Plan is submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Work Programme update. The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet and Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made. During the year, the Committee decided to pre-scrutinise two issues: the Children’s Transport Review and the draft Sefton Mental Health Strategic Plan for Sefton 2015 – 2020. Pre-scrutiny of this latter issue led to an update of the CAMHS being requested and a visit by representatives of the Committee to the Fairhaven Young People’s Unit in Winwick on 18 January 2016 and subsequently to Alder Hey’s CAMHS facility at 3TC House, Waterloo on 27 April 2016.

Cabinet Member Reports

In order to keep Overview and Scrutiny Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had previously agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports for the Children, Schools and Safeguarding portfolio to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs for them to determine what items should be reported to Committee. During 2015/16, I have again requested Cabinet Member Update Reports to be included on Committee agendas for general information purposes for Members of the Committee. The Cabinet Member was able to attend 4 of the 5 meetings of the Committee to elaborate on issues and respond to questions, as appropriate. Items considered within Cabinet Member reports have included issues relating to:-

- Learning Support Service – Inspections by Ofsted
- Vulnerable Children and Young People - Community Adolescent Service
- Ofsted Unannounced Inspection of Sefton’s Vulnerable Children and Young People Service
- Children and Young People’s Plan
- Ofsted Inspection Results
- Education Strategy



- Closure of St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic College
- School Admissions Arrangements 2017
- Children Sufficiency Strategy
- CAMHS Strategy
- Community Adolescence Services
- Pressures on Children's Social Care
- Allocation of Secondary School Places for September 2016
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Outcome of Annual Meeting with Ofsted's Regional Director.

The Year Ahead

I am sure that the Committee will look forward to the new Municipal Year as it works as a critical friend to our Cabinet Member and partners. The Committee will be examining Key Priorities for the Council and in light of the recent Ofsted inspection, key areas for us to investigate in order that the services we provide are continually improved to benefit all who live and work in the Borough.

I am particularly appreciative of our Democratic Services Officers for their commitment, advice and support and especially to the responsible officer during 2015/16, Mike Morris, for his assistance.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all Committee Members, officers and partners for their support, hard work and contributions to our endeavours throughout the year. In addition, I would like to place on record my thanks to our Cabinet Member, Councillor John Joseph Kelly, for taking the time to attend our Committee meetings. This has greatly assisted the Committee and is much appreciated by the Members.

Councillor Paula Murphy
June 2016



Adult Social Care



Councillor Catie Page
Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
(Adult Social Care)

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2015/16 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care).

Introduction

This is my fourth Annual Report as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care). I believe that the Committee has built on the existing good working relationships with many of our health partners. The trust that has been established has meant that we are recognised in our role of “critical friend”; we are listened to and have been able to have a positive influence on the development of health and adult social care services within Sefton.

The Committee met formally on five occasions during 2015/16, plus an informal meeting and two meetings dedicated to consideration of draft Quality Accounts. This Report is presented to the Council and a wider audience beyond in the hope that the information it contains will contribute to the debate and discussion about the provision of health and adult social care services for Sefton residents and their development, improvement and access.

NHS Trust Quality Accounts

As usual, the Committee commenced 2015/16 with the consideration of draft Quality Accounts from local healthcare providers. This provided Committee Members with an opportunity to comment on the performance of local NHS Trusts during the preceding twelve months, particularly in relation to patient experience, safety and clinical effectiveness. A number of local NHS Trusts submitted their draft Quality Accounts for consideration and comment in May 2015. It is always a challenge to provide adequate time to consider all the draft Quality Accounts in sufficient detail. Following a revision of the arrangements to consider draft Quality Accounts, an informal meeting was held during May 2015, dedicated to considering the draft Quality Accounts, and this proved to be an effective method of scrutiny. The Committee adopted a much more informal approach in considering the draft Quality Accounts during May 2015, with help and guidance from a representative of the Clinical Commissioning Groups and Healthwatch Sefton representatives

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

Throughout 2015/16 the Committee received regular update reports from the two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) within Sefton, namely the South Sefton



Clinical Commissioning Group and the Southport and Formby Clinical Commissioning Group. This was the third year of full operation for the CCGs and they reported to the Committee on a range of activities designed to promote health and wellbeing amongst residents. I believe that excellent relationships exist between the Committee and officers of the CCGs, particularly the Chief Officer who attends virtually every Committee meeting and has always been willing to take up issues raised by Members and explain aspects of the services provided. She also contributed in providing very valuable informal presentations to Members of the Committee on Primary Care Commissioning and Access Sefton and the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service.

Updates submitted by the CCGs have included details of CCG Board meetings to which members of the public were invited; strategic planning for the CCGs; plus details of the following:-

- Shaping Sefton – Frail Elderly Care and primary care;
- Blueprint for transforming services;
- Annual Reports and Accounts for 2014/15;
- Access Sefton – the new name for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies across Sefton;
- Annual stakeholder survey;
- the Breathe Well course;
- Annual Reviews meet Big Chats;
- Cancer survival rates among the best in England;
- Community services;
- Residents give views about community dermatology services;
- Projects make good use of CCG funds;
- CCGs’ pledge to improve patient safety;
- Sefton residents give their views on community services;
- Strand By Me - health and community shop;
- NHS Atlas of Variation;
- Working in partnership to promote annual flu vaccines;
- Views wanted about Southport cancer centre
- Winter resilience;
- CCGs awarded for their work;
- Trinity Practice;
- Patient Transport Service;
- Only order what you need – repeat prescriptions;
- Macmillan event;
- Residents asked for views and experiences about community services;
- NHS events in support of World Cancer Day; and
- Medicines waste campaign gains national interest.

Throughout the year the CCGs have also submitted statistics to the Committee on Health Provider Performance which has enabled us to check the performance of our local NHS Trusts, including A&E monitoring.



The CCGs have also provided reports and presentations to the Committee on the Sefton Mental Health Task Group Report; the Blueprint for Transforming Services, describing the aims and ambitions for the CCGs' transformation programmes; Commissioning Intentions for 2016/17; and the future provision of Community Services.

NHS Trusts

Throughout 2015/16 the Committee received a number of reports and presentations on work and activities undertaken by various Trusts. Attendance at meetings by Trust representatives has enabled Committee Members to scrutinise Trust performance in the following areas:-

- Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust – in relation to the ratings in the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Report; and also Data on Performance - Follow-Up to Quality Accounts;
- NHS England - Briefing on SSP Health Ltd. operated GP Practices in Sefton
- Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust - Data on Performance - Follow-Up to Quality Accounts; and
- Mersey Care NHS Trust – in relation to the ratings in the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Report; and also Data on Performance - Follow-Up to Quality Accounts.

Damian Reid, Deputy Chief Executive and Finance Director, Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, has been a regular attendee of the Committee in recent years and Damian departed for pastures new during 2015/16. We wish Damian well and look forward to forging good working relationships during 2016/17 with Simon Featherstone, Director of Nursing at the Trust, who is rapidly becoming the main link between the Committee and the Trust. Despite the current difficulties faced by the Trust and our concerns about it, we remain committed to supporting the Trust as best as we are able.

Adult Social Care

Throughout the year the Committee received a number of reports and presentations from Tina Wilkins, the Council's Head of Adult Social Care. Dwayne Johnson, the Council's Director of Social Care and Health, has also been a regular attendee and contributor at the Committee. Reports and presentations received on Adult Social Care have included the following:-

- Adult Safeguarding;
- Care Act 2014 Updates and Carers;
- Dementia Strategy;
- Supported Living Review;
- Adult Social Care - Assessment and Eligibility; and
- Sefton's Mental Health: A Strategic Plan for Sefton 2015 – 2020.

The Care Act 2014 has proved to be a particularly important piece of legislation, with far reaching consequences for the Council's Adult Social Care function. I remain confident that the Committee will receive further update reports during 2016/17, to



enable it to scrutinise the on-going work required in implementing fully this legislation in Sefton.

Public Health

Throughout 2015/16, Margaret Jones took on the role of Interim Head of Health and Wellbeing and undertook sterling work in maintaining good working relationships with partner organisations and carrying out the Council's Public Health function throughout her role. We thank Margaret for the work she has undertaken in enabling the Committee to scrutinise the Council's Public Health function. Reports and presentations received by the Committee on Public Health have included the following:-

- Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment 2014/15;
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy; and
- Public Health Annual Report 2015.

We look forward to forging good working relationships during 2016/17 with Matt Ashton, who has recently been appointed as the Council's new Head of Health and Wellbeing, on a shared basis for six months with Knowsley MBC.

Scrutiny Review Working Group

During 2015/16 the Committee established a Care Services (Domiciliary) Working Group, comprised of certain Members of the Committee, which undertook a review on customer satisfaction and quality with regard to the provision of domiciliary care, against the background of a number of recent developments. We were very pleased with the Final Report produced by the Working Group, together with the recommendations that received approval by both this Committee and the Cabinet. I look forward to receiving update reports on progress in implementing the recommendations in due course.

Site Visits

During 2015/16 Members of the Committee visited Southport Hospital to view various services including stroke services and bereavement services; Aintree University Hospital to view stroke services; and Liverpool Women's Hospital to receive an overview of services provided to Sefton residents. All these site visits provided ideal opportunities for Members to ask questions and to view and scrutinise a range of services provided. Site visits also provide opportunities to forge greater working relationships with colleagues from NHS Trusts. Looking forward to 2016/17, we particularly wish to remain vigilant of the privacy and dignity of patients during any site visits.

Pre-Scrutiny and the Key Decision Forward Plan

As ever, the Key Decision Forward Plan provided the Committee with an opportunity to pre-scrutinise Key Decision items from the Council's Forward Plans as each of the latest Forward Plans are submitted to the Committee as part of its Work Programme update. The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet and Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.



Cabinet Member Reports

The regular attendance at meetings of both Councillor Paul Cummins, Cabinet Member - Health and Social Care, and Councillor Ian Moncur, Cabinet Member – Health and Wellbeing, has been very much appreciated by Members of the Committee. Throughout the year I have agreed the inclusion of all the relevant Cabinet Member Update Reports on agendas as I feel that it is particularly important to include regular updates major areas of the Council’s activities, particularly as budgets have become increasingly under pressure. The Cabinet Members’ attendance, together with the presence of senior officers from both the Council’s Adult Social Care and Public Health service areas, has been very useful and provides Members with an opportunity to raise question and scrutinise any developments within those Council Portfolio areas.

The Cabinet Member Update Reports - Adult Social Care, have included the following matters:-

- Advocacy;
- Market facilitation;
- Information services;
- Provider failure; and
- Prisoners and prisons.
- Safeguarding of adults;
- Re-modelling day opportunities update;
- Supported living review;
- The mental health strategy;
- Early intervention and prevention.
- The Care Act Update;
- Re-modelling day care – modernisation;
- Carers Centre.
- Safeguarding Peer Review;
- Personal Budgets;
- Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards;
- Older People’s Champions;
- Nursing Home Closure; and
- Supported Living – tenancies and shared lives;
- Personalisation and the Personal Budgets Strategic Plan; and
- Mental Health Team Restructure.

The Cabinet Member Update Reports – Health and Wellbeing have included the following matters:-

- Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care North West Coast (CLAHRC NWC) - Household Health Survey;
- Director of Public Health recruitment process;
- Hypertension - tackling high blood pressure across Cheshire and Merseyside;
- Air quality;
- Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment (SSNA);
- Well North Programme in Sefton;



- Introduction of Meningitis ACWY vaccine for teenagers/young adults;
- Introduction of Meningitis B (Men B) vaccine;
- Roll-out of flu nasal spray for children;
- Bowel cancer screening;
- Heatwave and summer preparedness;
- Integrated Wellness Service;
- Tobacco Free Futures;
- 0-5 Public Health Services; and Transition;
- Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) Service.
- Well Sefton;
- NHS Health Checks;
- Public Health Annual Report;
- Commissioning of Integrated Wellness Service;
- Commissioning of 0-19 Healthy Child Programme (HCP) (Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership, School Nursing).
- Sefton Council Staff Seasonal Flu Vaccinations;
- Sefton Health Protection Forum.
- National Diabetes Prevention Programme (NDPP);
- Sefton Health Protection Priorities, including seven priorities for action;
- Sexual health services; and
- Procurement of substance misuse residential detoxification services.

Sefton Healthwatch

During 2014/15 the Committee was fortunate in securing the services of two Advisory Members from Sefton Healthwatch who were able to bring additional experience and expertise to the table, and this practice has continued into 2015/16.

I have also met informally with the Healthwatch representatives, together with the Chair of the Organisation and my Vice-Chair, and these informal meetings have enabled us to discuss a range of issues and strengthen the relationship between Sefton Healthwatch and the Committee.

Contributions Made During 2015/16

The attendance of representatives of organisations and partners, including senior officers and members of NHS Trusts, has been much appreciated and I would like to thank all our partners for their openness and their responses to our requests and suggestions. I have also appreciated the advice and support of Fiona Clark, Chief Officer for both the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Dwayne Johnson, the Director of Social Care and Health, Tina Wilkins, Head of Adult Social Care and Margaret Jones, Interim Head of Health and Wellbeing during 2015/16.

I am also grateful to all the Members of the Committee for their support and for the enthusiastic way that they have contributed to our work. I would also like to express my gratitude to members of the public who attended the Committee during 2015/16. My particular appreciation goes to our Democratic Services Officers for their commitment, advice and support and specifically the officer who supports the Committee, Debbie Campbell, for her hard work, commitment and patience.



The Year Ahead

With continuing pressures on social care and health services at a time when public expectations remain high, I am conscious that the Committee will face fresh challenges during 2016/17. However, I am confident that the Committee will rise to the challenges it faces.

Councillor Catie Page
May 2016



Regeneration and Skills



Councillor John Kelly
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Regeneration and Skills)

It gives me great pleasure to introduce Sefton Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) Annual Report 2015/16.

As the new Chair, it has been a pleasure and privilege to chair the Committee during the year. The Committee met on eight occasions during the year, and we were grateful to all those who were invited to attend and the various Council Officers who presented reports and offered guidance, advice and support to the Committee.

As Chair, I have built strong relationships with the four Cabinet Members whose portfolios are within our Terms of Reference. As part of that process, we have continued to welcome update reports from Cabinet Members on to our agendas. This ensures that the Committee are briefed upon current Cabinet Member activities. It also allows the Committee to make judgements and offer assistance to the Cabinet Members where they agree it's required.

The Committee held two Special Meetings to deal with two Cabinet Member decisions that had been "called in" during the year 2015/16 in relation to:-

- Advertising of Traffic Regulation Orders – Sumner Road Car Park, Formby; and
- Advertising of Traffic Regulation Orders – Extension of Days / Hours of operation of Pay and Display – Various Streets, Southport.

The Committee resolved, on both occasions, that it was not concerned about the decision made by the Cabinet Member for Locality Services and so the decisions were implemented immediately.

The call-in mechanism allows at least three Members, who are not Members of the Cabinet, to call in a decision for further review. There are certain stipulations associated with what constitutes a valid call-in and the Committee must, in the first instance, determine if the call in is a valid one. When considering a call-in at Committee, there is a set procedure to be followed and this assists the Committee in ensuring that they receive all the evidence required to determine if the original decision was a sound one.



The Floods and Water Management Act 2010 has placed a number of duties on Local Authorities, in particular those that are Lead Local Flooding Authorities (LLFA).

I note that in previous years this Committee has been instrumental in ensuring that the Council complies with the sentiments of the Act by working with Cabinet to ensure that the Council are fulfilling its duty as a LLFA. This year being no exception, the Committee received an Annual Report on Flood and Coastal Risk Management.

Members raised concerns regarding the alleged increased risk of flooding as a consequence of the extensive work undertaken by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds on Marshside Road, Southport. The Committee will receive a report addressing those concerns in July 2016.

The Committee will continue to monitor compliance with the Act.

Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Annual Report

The Committee received an update from The Head of Locality Services detailing the progress of the Merseyside Waste Partnership against the delivery of the objectives of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Unfortunately the Annual Merseyside Waste Partnership Performance Report was not available for 2014/15 before the last Meeting of the Committee in the Municipal Year 2015/16.

The Committee agreed that it would be most appropriate to continue to scrutinise the progress of the Merseyside Waste Partnership in delivering the key objectives of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy on an annual basis.

The Committee will scrutinise the Strategy at the time the Annual Report which details performance is published. We look forward to working with the Partnership to ensure that the targets are met.

Review of Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan

The Committee welcomed the Annual Report reviewing the winter service policy and operational plan. The pre-scrutiny process allows Overview and Scrutiny Committees to pre-scrutinise reports such as this and feed comments back to the Cabinet Member or Cabinet for consideration. In terms of the Winter Service Policy/Operational Plan, the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to ensure that the policy and plan are “fit for purpose” in the coming Winter months and it’s fair to say that the plan was “fit for purpose” and all roads across Sefton were deemed to be safe during the Winter months 2015/16.

The Winter Service Policy and Operational Plan is subject to an annual reassessment and consultation and in that respect the Committee will continue to monitor this on an annual basis.



Local Plan Update

A Special Meeting of the Committee was held on 17 June 2015 in order that the Committee could receive an up to date briefing of the key issues arising from the publication of the Local Plan and changes which had taken place since then, prior to the Plan being submitted for examination.

Members of the Committee raised numerous questions and observations which demonstrated that full and frank scrutiny had been undertaken by the Members of the Committee.

United Utilities – Surface Water and the Increase of Charges

The Committee considered a verbal update from the Head of Corporate Services in relation to surface water and the increase of charges that had been proposed by United Utilities regarding Parks and Cemeteries and Schools.

Local Authority Officers across the North West were advised in June 2012 of United Utilities intention to impose new drainage charges for parks & cemeteries.

A network of Officers was established which was led by Sefton Council and supported by Councillor Dave Thompson from Halton M.B.C. and Members of Parliament representatives; Derek Twigg and Maria Eagle whereby Officers and Councillors attended meetings with United Utilities. All the hard work had resulted in the proposed increase in charges, in the main, being dropped and that this had been confirmed in writing in August 2015.

The initial forecast for Parks and Cemeteries was an increase of £404,000 per annum in charges and it was stated that the interventions initiated by Sefton Council had reduced this impact to around just £3,000 per annum. The impact on all North West Local Authority's was likely to be in the region of £10 - £15 million per annum.

Additional analysis of this type of Surface Water charging and the use of the Department for Education schools expenditure data has shown the North West region was spending £16,000,000 more than a similar area of the South East for water service charges. North West schools were paying, on average, 2.5 times more than the South East due to existing differences in how regional water companies are allowed to charge.

The same network group including North West schools finance officers forum were seeking a similar outcome and had been active in:

- Responding to DEFRA/OFWAT consultations as the water market opens up and the government considers it's guidelines on charging policies
- Holding a second meeting for schools to determine what could be done to achieve a similar outcome as with the parks and cemeteries.



At the time of writing my report, I understand that this work is still ongoing and the Committee have requested that a representative from United Utilities and OFWAT be invited to attend a future Meeting of the Committee to discuss the matter further.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the network group for all their hard work that has resulted in the proposed increase in charges, in the main, being dropped in relation to parks and cemeteries and I hope for a similar result for the Schools.

The Committee also received reports/presentations in relation to:-

- Air Quality Monitoring;
- Dog Fouling;
- Pre-scrutiny of the Adoption of House Extensions and New Housing Supplementary Planning Documents;
- Government Housing Policy Changes; and
- Presentation from Mr. Steven Howell, representative from United Utilities in relation to flooding across the Borough of Sefton.

Shale Gas (Fracking) Working Group

The Council, at its meeting held on 24 July 2014, received a Motion and an Amendment to the Motion in relation to Shale Gas (Fracking) in Sefton. The Council agreed that the issue should be the subject of a review and requested the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) to investigate the issues raised in the Motion.

The Committee established a Working Group at its meeting held on 16 September 2014 and began to scope the review in November 2014. The Working Group produced its Final Report which was accepted by the Cabinet on 3 December 2015.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Members, Officers and those organisations who have given up their time to come and speak with the Group. This Committee will monitor the action taken against all the agreed recommendations.

PREVIOUS REVIEW WORK UNDERTAKEN BY WORKING GROUPS OF THE COMMITTEE – UPDATES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Working Group

In September 2012, the Committee embarked on a Joint Review with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services) to investigate NEET. The review took a focused approach to the investigation, which involved interviewing various organisations and their honesty in answering the Group's questions was welcomed.

The Committee has been updated on statistical information regarding NEET in Sefton and reducing the numbers of young people over the age of 16 who are not in Education, Employment or Training. The Committee will continue to monitor the



progress made against each of the recommendations and as such the Committee welcomes briefings upon the latest position with regard to NEET on an annual basis.

Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group

The Employment Development element of the review was completed and the Final Report was submitted to Cabinet in November 2013. All recommendations were agreed by the Cabinet. The Committee has monitored progress made against each recommendation and this has been facilitated by an Action Plan developed by the former Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism. The Committee will continue to monitor progress on an annual basis.

The Working Group continued its brief in investigating Local Town Centres and interviewed many key witnesses. The Working Group completed its investigations and the Final Report was considered by the Committee and the Cabinet in January and February 2015. The Cabinet referred the Final Report to the former Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism for his response, which was considered by the Cabinet in June 2015. The Committee considered an update from the Head of Inward Investment and Employment and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills was also in attendance at the Meeting and she indicated that a number of recommendations within the report had been completed. The Cabinet Member also suggested that future update reports in relation to the progress of recommendations should clearly identify those recommendations which have been implemented.

Port Master Plan

In September 2011, at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, the Committee established a Cross-Cutting Working Group/Joint Review with Members from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Health and Social Care) to investigate the Port Master Plan.

The report was agreed by the Cabinet in September 2012. This Committee has continued to receive updates in relation to progress made against 15 of the recommendations and the Committee will continue to monitor progress.

The Year Ahead

The Committee will continue to keep abreast of the various matters as listed throughout my report.

The Committee completed its Programme of Work for the Municipal Year 2015/16, subject to the following reports being carried forward into the Committees Programme of Work for the Municipal Year 2016/17:-

- Street Cleansing, Fly Tipping and Litter Bins;
- Parks Transformation Project – Presentation; and
- Alleged increased risk of flooding as a consequence of the work being undertaken by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) on Marshside Road, Southport.



The Committee also requested that a representative from United Utilities be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss surface water and the increase of charges that had been proposed by United Utilities regarding Schools. United Utilities have confirmed attendance at the Meeting of the Committee scheduled to take place on 5 July 2016.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Committee Members, Officers and Partner Organisations for all their hard work, dedication and support throughout the year. I would also like to thank my Vice-Chair, Councillor O'Brien for all of his help and assistance through the Year.

Councillor John Kelly
April 2016



Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services



Councillor Dave Robinson
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
(Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)

On behalf of the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) it gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2015/16 Annual Report.

During the year the Committee has met seven times and considered matters relating to financial issues associated with updates on the 2015/16 revenue budget, financial management across the Council, the 2016/17 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/20; Air Quality Monitoring; the Enforcement Agent's Code of Practice; Revised Customer Service Standards; Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land; Commissioning and Procurement; the arvato Contract; Asset Management and the Accommodation Strategy; the Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme; and Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance and Sickness.

The Committee also met on two separate occasions to consider called-in items relating to the former Birkdale Library and the former Maghull Library and Youth Centre. Upon consideration of the called-in item relating to the former Maghull Library and Youth Centre the Committee resolved that the Head of Regulation and Compliance be requested to undertake a review of the reasons for the requisitions for call-in as set out in Chapter 6 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules of the Constitution. This request culminated in the adoption, by Council at its meeting held on 28 January 2016, of improved arrangements for dealing with called-in items.

The Committee also received regular Work Programme and Cabinet Member update reports; and established a Working Group to review the Customer Experience of Claiming Council Administered Benefits and Financial Support. The Working Group met on numerous occasions and considered case studies, interviewed witnesses and undertook visits to the Council's One Stop Shops and the Wigan Life Centre. The Working Group's Final Report was approved by Cabinet on 23 June 2016 and can be found [here](#)

The Committee received many presentations and this enabled Members to engage with colleagues from within and outside of the Council on topics identified below.

Revenue Budget 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/20

A major part of the Committee's work involved scrutinising the proposed budget for 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/20. Since 2011 the Council had faced unprecedented reductions in its funding which had led to £146m of savings being identified, implemented or in the process of being implemented for the five years to 2015/16; and the Government Settlement announced on 19 December 2015 meant that the Council would face a range of other financial challenges over the coming years to 2020 and an overview of the current estimates of the likely impact on future levels of income indicated that the total budget shortfall for the period 2017/2020 was anticipated to be £64.4million. The Committee was well aware of the continuing and significant impact this level of reductions would have on Council services and outcomes for Sefton's communities and that in order to inform the allocation of a significantly reduced resource, the Core Purpose of the Council was assumed to be to: -

- protect the most vulnerable i.e. those people who had complex care needs with no capacity to care for themselves and no other networks to support them
- commission and provide core services which met the defined needs of communities and which were not and could not be duplicated elsewhere
- enable/facilitate economic prosperity i.e. maximise the potential for people within Sefton to be financially sustainable through employment/ benefit entitlement
- facilitate confident and resilient communities which were less reliant on public sector support and which had well developed and effective social support networks

The Committee will continue to monitor and scrutinise the Revenue Budget during the course of 2016/17.

Financial Management across the Council

The Committee received a presentation on financial management across the Council. This was set against the context of the austerity agenda and the significant challenges ahead which included National Audit Office survey results that showed that 56% of metropolitan and unitary local authorities were not meeting mid-term financial plans (although Sefton was not included as one such authority); that with greater devolution there were expectations of taking on greater risk and the encouragement of greater financial freedoms; and that by 2019 local authorities would be self-financing. The components of good financial management including strategic financial planning, financial governance, financial control and the key indicators of financial performance were detailed; and that Cabinet had been advised that to improve financial management further it would be necessary to move to a three year financial planning model rather than the current two year model.

Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) on feedback on the recent consultation exercise regarding proposed amendments to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for



2016/17; options for the recommendation to Council for a 2016/17 Scheme; and an updated Council Tax Base for 2016/17. Each financial year the Council must consider whether to revise or replace its Scheme and the Council, on 28 January 2016, approved and adopted the 2016/17 to take effect from 1 April 2016. The decision to revise the Scheme was taken in compliance with statutory provisions in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act; and that the proposed revision to the Scheme would assist in making the Council Tax more affordable and would help alleviate some of the financial difficulties being faced by Sefton's residents on very low incomes. Additionally, it would align the minimum weekly Council Tax payment with the amount that could be taken by way of regular deductions from certain benefits (for example Income Support or Job Seeker's Allowance) which in turn would reduce the Council's collection and recovery costs

Air Quality Monitoring

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that detailed the location of air quality monitoring equipment and the five Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in the Borough. The Council had a statutory duty to review and assess air quality in Sefton at regular intervals; and it was noted with concern that Port expansion and the associated increase in HGVs would lead to an increase in emissions that would affect air quality in the AQMA and other areas around the A5036, A565 and A5058; and that a study was underway to determine the impacts of these increases in emissions and to suggest possible emissions reductions measures.

Enforcement Agent's Code of Practice

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that provided an update on the Enforcement Agent Companies relating to the collection of debts owed to the Council and how Enforcement Agents dealt with vulnerability issues. A procurement exercise had recently been undertaken by the Council for its Enforcement Agent Services and senior officers of three of the successful tendering companies attended the meeting to answer questions from Members. The Committee made recommendations to amend the Code of Conduct by making changes to the Enforcement Agency Procedures Compliance Stage.

Customer Service Standards

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that provided information, in light of the approved budget savings for 2015-2017, on the service standards that had been reviewed and either amended, deleted or been added to; and on the Trading Standards Charter that had been amended to replace the previous charter published in 2003 that was made redundant by national changes to the consumer landscape.

Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) on the current position in respect of the Asset Disposal Policy and process and that provided an overview of best value and an analysis of prior years' outcomes in terms of capital receipts and how this supported the Council's Capital Programme. For 2015/16 a target had been set of £2,000,000 of which £574,000 was actually received in the financial year; however there were sufficient assets in the disposal pipeline to deliver the target for 2015/16, but slippage in terms of Council decision making and satisfaction of conditions of



disposal such as planning, caused a substantial receipt to fall into the following financial year. The target was finally achieved at the end of April 2016.

Commissioning and Procurement

The Committee received a presentation on the Commissioning and Procurement process that advised, amongst other things, on the success story that the Council had won a Local Government Chronicle award for Pioneering Commissioning in relation to the Community Meals Service; and the reasons for the achievement which included the process being outcome focused and the realisation of outcomes without money. A copy of the presentation can be viewed [here](#)

arvato Contract

The Committee received a presentation on the arvato contract that had a financial value of £16.5 million per year; and was for a period of 10 years (from October 2008) with an option to extend for a further 5 years. Governance arrangements are in place, via the Finance and Information Services Operational Board, to hold key personnel of arvato and the Council to account for performance and delivery. The Committee was keen to be kept abreast of matters in this sphere and had requested the Chief Finance Officer to submit a report to the Committee in November 2016 on the future sourcing of services currently commissioned through arvato. A copy of the presentation can be viewed [here](#)

Asset Management and the Accommodation Strategy

The Committee received a presentation on the Asset Management and Accommodation Strategy that aimed to provide a coherent framework to enable management of assets across the Council. Phase 3 of the Strategy, whose vision was to optimise the use of the Council's accommodation assets to maximise service benefits, support community cohesions and minimise financial costs, had the aim of ensuring the economic and efficient use of assets, to align to corporate aims and priorities, to meet customer needs and co-location when practicable. Details were also provided the introduction of an Agile Working model. A copy of the presentation can be viewed [here](#)

Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance and Sickness

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) on providing a statistical analysis of the levels of discipline, grievance and sickness absence across the Authority. The Committee noted that that short term absence had come under target and that further effort should reap benefits in terms of long term absence figures; and that in respect of disciplinary and grievance the figures did not cause concern for the organisation against benchmarked figures.

Cabinet Member Reports

In keeping with previous years and in order to keep Members informed, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board agreed for relevant Cabinet Member Reports to be submitted to appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee covered the portfolio of the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

Pre-Scrutiny – The Key Decision Forward Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also been given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise items from the Council's Key Decision Forward Plan. The Forward Plan is submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Work Programme update. The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet to make effective decisions by giving the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to examine issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.

The Year Ahead

The Committee will continue to make progress on the following priorities over the coming year:

- The consideration of budget proposals and savings and the Medium Term Financial Plan
- Review the Council Tax Reduction Scheme during the fourth year of operation
- In accordance with a decision of the Management Board held on 7 January 2014, to undertake an annual review of the service standards for individual Cabinet Members
- Monitoring the operation of the Procurement Strategy
- Update on the disposal of surplus council owned land
- Updates required following approval of Work Programme

I envisage the forthcoming year to be extremely busy and challenging for the Committee given the difficult budgetary challenges and financial savings that have to be met in Sefton.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our work over the past year. I would personally like to thank all Members of the Committee, Councillor Paulette Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services and officers who have attended meetings for their support to me over the past year and provided the Committee with valuable information.

Councillor Dave Robinson
July 2016



During 2015/16, the following Members served on the Committees indicated:-

Overview & Scrutiny Management Board

Councillor Robinson (Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Dams
Councillor J. Kelly
Councillor O'Brien
Councillor Murphy
Councillor Page
Councillor Webster

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)

Councillor Murphy (Chair)
Councillor Webster (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ball
Councillor Booth
Councillor Bradshaw
Councillor Carragher
Councillor Gatherer
Councillor Hands
Councillor Keith
Councillor Spencer

Canon R. Driver – Church Diocesan Representative
Father D. Seddon - Church Diocesan Representative
Mr. D. McCaughrean and Mrs. C. Palmer - Parent Governor
Representatives
Mrs. S. Cain - Advisory Member
Ms. L. Kitt and Ms. J. Southern – Healthwatch
Representatives



Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care)

Councillor Page (Chair)
Councillor Dams (Vice-Chair)
Councillor David Barton
Councillor Brodie-Browne subsequently replaced by Councillor Welsh
Councillor Burns
Councillor Dawson
Councillor Gatherer
Councillor Grace
Councillor Hale
Councillor Thompson
Mr. B. Clark and Mr. R Hutchings – Healthwatch Representatives

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)

Councillor Robinson (Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Veronica Bennett subsequently replaced by Councillor Spencer
Councillor Cluskey
Councillor Dawson
Councillor Jamieson
Councillor Daniel Lewis
Councillor McKinley
Councillor Owens
Councillor Weavers

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)

Councillor J. Kelly (Chair)
Councillor O'Brien (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jo Barton
Councillor Bliss
Councillor Carragher
Councillor Daniel Terence Lewis
Councillor Owens
Councillor S. McGuire
Councillor Sayers
Councillor Webster
Councillor Weavers



