

Overview & Scrutiny



SEFTON COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

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 2016/17.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has met five times during 2016/17.

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 Council had appointed Councillor Paula Murphy (Scrutiny Link) and Councillor Dan T. Lewis onto the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel; and Councillor Murphy submitted regular progress reports in relation to the operation of the LCR Scrutiny Panel throughout the year.

The Management Board supports Overview and Scrutiny Training being offered to all Members of the Council, Co-opted Members and Advisory Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. As such and as in previous years, a training event was held on 4 October 2016 facilitated by Councillor John Lamb, (Trafford M.B.C.) an Associate of North West Employers. Seven Members attended the training session which meant that to date 49 Members of the Council had attended



Overview and Scrutiny Committee training. Positive feedback had been received in respect of the training event.

The Management Board had considered the following issues during 2016/17:-

- Regular progress reports on the position of Working Groups established by the Council's four Overview and Scrutiny Committees; and the establishment of two cross-cutting Scrutiny Reviews by the Management Board relating to Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy/Marmott Indicators and the Council's Performance Framework. Work on the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy remains on-going and at present it is anticipated that any recommendations will be reported to the Management Board in September 2017
- the Liverpool City Region Scrutiny Panel relating to:-
 - its Work Programme for 2016/17
 - the establishment of a Working Group to investigate the theme of Employment, Learning and Skills
- the Overview and Scrutiny Training event held on 4 October 2016 as referred to above
- the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government
- the methods for the selection of Working Group review topics for 2017/18

The Year Ahead

Given the scale of the financial and service challenges facing the Council the year ahead will be extremely busy for Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Management Board to scrutinise such challenges and how they impact on the Council's statutory requirement to remain financially sustainable and the desire to deliver the Sefton 2030 Vision and the Council's Core Purpose.

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
July 2017



During 2016/17 the following Members served on the Committees indicated-

Overview & Scrutiny Management Board

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

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health)

Chair: Cllr. Page
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Dams
Cllr. Burns
Cllr. Carr
Cllr. Linda Cluskey
Cllr. Dawson
Cllr. Dutton (subsequently replaced by Cllr Jones. Cllr Jones subsequently replaced by Cllr Bliss)
Cllr. McGuire
Cllr. Owens
Cllr. Lynne Thompson

Mr. B. Clark and Mr. R Hutchings – Healthwatch Representatives

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

Chair: Cllr. Murphy
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Webster
Cllr. Bennett
Cllr. Bradshaw
Cllr. Carragher
Cllr. Hands
Cllr. Keith
Cllr. Brenda O'Brien
Cllr. Pitt
Cllr. Spencer

Mr. S. Harrison – Church Diocesan Representative
Father D. Seddon - Church Diocesan Representative
Mrs. C. Palmer - Parent Governor Representative
Mrs. S. Cain - Advisory Member
Ms. L. Kitt - Healthwatch Representative



Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)

Chair: Cllr. Sayers
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Michael O'Brien
Cllr. Bliss
Cllr. Carragher
Cllr. Dan T. Lewis
Cllr. Pullin
Cllr. Roche
Cllr. Weavers
Cllr. Webster
Cllr. Bill Welsh

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

Chair: Cllr. Robinson
Vice-Chair: Cllr. Byrom
Cllr. Booth
Cllr. Linda Cluskey
Cllr. Grace
Cllr. Jamieson
Cllr. Daniel Lewis
Cllr. McCann
Cllr. McKinley
Cllr. Owens



Adult Social Care and Health



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

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2016/17 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health).

Introduction

This is my fifth Annual Report as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health). 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. 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.

The Committee met formally on six occasions during 2015/16, including a Special Meeting primarily to consider the Orthopaedic case for change. Two informal meetings were also held, one to receive a presentation from Healthwatch on GP data and the other to consider draft Quality Accounts, details of which are outlined below.

NHS Trust Quality Accounts

As usual, the Committee commenced 2016/17 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 April/May 2016 and it is always a challenge to provide adequate time to consider all the draft Quality Accounts in sufficient detail. I attended a separate event hosted by Knowsley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), to receive a briefing on all the draft Quality Accounts and an informal meeting of the Committee was held during May 2016, dedicated to considering the four draft Quality Accounts from the following Providers:-

- Access Sefton / Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT);
- Liverpool Community Health Trust;
- Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust; and



- North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

The Providers concerned sent representatives to respond to our questioning and the Committee sought input from a representative of the two Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups, together with Healthwatch Sefton representatives. This proved to be an effective approach in scrutinising the four of the draft Quality Accounts concerned.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

Throughout 2016/17 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 fourth year of full operation for the CCGs and I attended a number of their “Big Chat” and “Shaping Sefton” events which are designed to engage with local communities.

The CCGs 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.

Updates submitted by the CCGs have included details of CCG Board meetings, to which members of the public are invited; representatives and elections for CCG governing bodies; quality, innovation, productivity and prevention (QIPP); Sustainability and Transformation Planning (STP) for Cheshire and Merseyside; strategic planning for the CCGs; “Big Chat” events used to shape services; plus details of the following:-

- Schemes shortlisted for national awards;
- NHS diabetes prevention programme to be piloted in Sefton;
- Celebrating nursing in Sefton and beyond;
- NHS England CCG assurance results – 2015/16;
- Improving financial performance;
- Repeat prescription ordering pilot;
- Sefton residents give views in review of Liverpool Women’s Hospital Review;
- CCGs shortlisted for prestigious Health Service Journal award;
- Day on the shop floor for CCG Chief Officer;
- Community health services update – in respect of South Sefton and Southport and Formby;
- Improving financial performance – savings achieved;
- Joint Health - new musculoskeletal clinical assessment service for Southport and Formby;
- Repeat prescription ordering pilot;
- Sefton residents asked to “Examine their Options” for treatment;
- Working in partnership to promote flu vaccinations;
- Recognition for cancer recovery programme in Southport and Formby;
- CCGs named finalists in prestigious health awards – apprenticeship scheme;



- Young Advisors “takeover” EPEG;
- Getting healthy on the airwaves;
- Innovation award for Care Home Innovation Programme (CHIP);
- Joint working with Liverpool CCG;
- More practices sign up to repeat prescription medicines scheme;
- Improving financial performance against targets;
- Transfer of Community Services update;
- Trinity Practice, Southport;
- Healthier You: National Diabetes Prevention Programme;
- CCGs support new antibiotics campaign; and
- CCGs Chief Officer celebrates 35 years with new roles.

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

As we finish the year, I am conscious of the proposals to merge Liverpool, Southport and Formby, and South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups and I await the outcome with interest to see what the year ahead will bring.

Review of Services

Throughout 2016/17 the Committee received a number of reports and presentations on important services undergoing reviews, most notably the review of Women's and Neonatal Services at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust. This review will continue into 2017/18 and I anticipate the outcome to be reported back to the Committee at some stage.

A review also took place on Orthopaedic Services and towards the end of 2016/17 the Committee was asked to determine whether the case for change constituted a substantial variation. The Committee agreed that it did and the Council subsequently endorsed our decision. As we move forward into 2017/18 I am aware that a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee will now be established with our colleagues at Liverpool and Knowsley Councils, to consider the proposals for Orthopaedic Services in greater depth and I await the outcome of that review with interest.

NHS Trusts / Partners

Throughout 2016/17 the Committee received a number of reports and presentations on work and activities undertaken by various NHS Trusts and other bodies. I also attended separate NHS England briefings on GP surgeries within the Freshfield and Hightown areas. Attendance at meetings by NHS representatives has enabled Committee Members to scrutinise NHS performance in the following areas:-

- Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust - update reports in respect of performance and management arrangements;
- Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust – in relation to an update regarding the proposed Medium Secure Unit in Maghull;
- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – in relation to actions being undertaken to improve performance by the Sefton Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Service; and



- NHS England – in respect of the relocation of primary medical services from premises at Parkhaven Trust to Maghull Health Centre.

Adult Social Care and Public Health

During the year the Committee received reports on Adult Social Care and Public Health Complaints Annual Report for both 2014/15 and 2015/16, informing Members of actions being undertaken in responding to complaints. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to scrutinise the areas where complaints are received for these Council activities and to understand how learning from complaints will take place, to inform improvements for the future. I am grateful to Tina Wilkins, the Council's Head of Adult Social Care, for being so candid in her reporting of these matters to the Committee.

The Sefton 2030 Vision

During 2016/17 the Committee was invited to contribute towards developing the aspirational 2030 Vision for the future of Sefton and its communities, by providing comments back to the Council's Cabinet on the Vision. I am much obliged to Jan McMahon, the Council's Head of Strategic Support, for including the Committee in this piece of work and would like to think there may be other opportunities for the Committee to contribute towards future planning for the Borough.

Scrutiny Review Working Groups

During 2016/17 the Committee established a Residential and Care Homes Working Group, comprised of certain Members of the Committee, which undertook a review on the current care home market within Sefton. This particularly took into account current and future population needs, demand and market supply, together with the Council's "market shaping" duties arising from the Care Act. Although the review has over-run slightly, I am confident that the Final Report to be produced by the Working Group will be well worth waiting for and I look forward to receiving it.

The Committee also established a Working Group to consider complaints regarding GP Practices. Despite the best efforts of my Vice-Chair and our Senior Democratic Services Officer, it proved to be impossible to convene an initial meeting to suit the range of partners who we hoped to engage in this important piece of work. I am grateful though, to my Vice-Chair for raising the issue in the first place, as he hoped to emulate our Adult Social Care and Public Health colleagues by facing up to complaints and learning from them, with a forward thinking approach.

Site Visits

During 2016/17 Members of the Committee decided to visit some residential and care homes within the Borough. We subsequently delegated this task to Members of our Residential and Care Homes Working Group and I understand that successful visits were undertaken, providing ideal opportunities for those Members to ask questions and to view and scrutinise the services provided at the homes concerned. Looking ahead to 2017/18, I look forward to considering aspects of health and care provision that Committee Members may wish to consider visiting.



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:-

- Day Care Modernisation;
- Supported Living, including Tenancies and Shared Lives;
- Personalisation - roll-out plan and communications information;
- Mental Health, including Service Team Restructure;
- Reassessment Activity;
- Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Updates;
- Sensory Services;
- Fee Consultation with Care Home Providers;
- Quality and Monitoring of Services;
- Transforming Care: Implementation of National Plans across Cheshire and Merseyside;
- Domiciliary Care Contract Extension;
- Adult Forum;
- Care Home Closure, Southport;
- Annual Christmas Shutdown 2016/7 – impact on winter-related pressures within the NHS; and
- Adult Social Care Service Refresh.

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

- Briefing on Well North and Well Sefton:
 - What is 'Well North'?
 - What is 'Well Sefton'?



- How are we managing 'Well Sefton'?
- Our Activities and Learning So Far on Well North and Well Sefton; and
- Next Steps – Well Sefton / Well North Workshop 18/19 July 2016;
- Integrated Wellness Service – June Update;
- Substance Misuse - Commissioned Services for Adults;
- Central Southport Involvement in Research;
- 0-19 Integrated Healthy Child Programme Procurement and Commissioning Progress Report – background, outcome of procurement and mobilisation;
 - Parents;
 - Children Transitioning into Year 6;
 - Young People;
- Provision of the Influenza Immunisation for Sefton Council Staff Covering the 2016/17 Seasonal Flu Season – background, staff take-up and next steps;
- Air Quality and Health Update;
- Updates on the Sexual Health Service Clinic, including Locations in South Sefton – background and next steps;
- Formby Pool - Contract;
- High Ropes Course;
- Obesity Update;
- Soft Drinks Industry Levy;
- Public Health Annual Report (PHAR);
- Stop Smoking Service;
- Domestic Abuse;
- Key Statistics and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Shared Learning Awards 2016;
- Declaration on Healthy Weight;
- NHS England funding for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for prevention of HIV;
- Recruitment of a Public Health Apprentice in Public Health;
- Suicide Prevention; and
- Sefton Swim Local Pilot.

Sefton Healthwatch

Back in 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 2016/17.

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 proved to be very useful, enabling 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 Taylor, Chief Officer for both the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Dwayne



Johnson, the Council's Director of Social Care and Health, Tina Wilkins, Head of Adult Social Care and Matt Ashton, Director of Public Health during 2016/17.

I am 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 those members of the public who attended the Committee during 2016/17. 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 on-going 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 2017/18. The proposed merger of Liverpool, Southport and Formby, and South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups is an interesting development I want to watch closely. The outcome of the Review of Services at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust is anticipated at some stage. A Joint Health Scrutiny Committee will also be established with fellow Members from Liverpool and Knowsley Councils, to consider the proposals for Orthopaedic Services in greater detail. Despite all of these challenges, I am confident that the Committee will rise to meet the expectations upon it.

Councillor Catie Page
July 2017



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 2016/17 to the Council.

During 2016/17 the Committee met on 7 occasions, two of those Meetings were Special Meetings and were arranged so that the Committee could scrutinise in detail two specific issues.

At its meeting on 12 July 2016, the Committee received a report in relation to the findings of an OFSTED Inspection relating to Children's Social Care. The Inspection had resulted in 11 recommendations for the Local Authority. I must highlight that although the judgement was "requires improvement to become good" there were good practices of Social Work in the Borough. The Committee requested that a Special Meeting be arranged once Officers had drafted the Improvement Plan in order that the Committee could scrutinise the Plan before being submitted to OFSTED. That Meeting took place on 5 September 2017 and the Committee raised many issues, it is fair to say that full and frank scrutiny was undertaken. The Committee will continue to be updated on the progress of implementation of the Improvement Plan relating to Children's Social Care.

The Committee also set its' programme of work for the coming Municipal Year 2016/17 and agreed to establish Scrutiny Review Working Group to investigate the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service. The Working Group has made excellent progress. However the complexities of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service have delayed the completion date of the review. It is anticipated that the Final Report of the Working Group will be submitted to the Committee on 26 September 2017.

The Council set out on an exciting journey of "Imagine Sefton 2030" which has led to the Sefton 2030 Vision. This piece of work began its' journey approximately 18 months ago, the Council worked closely with partners, businesses, private sector organisations, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the community to help it understand what mattered and to be ambitious for the Borough and its communities in the future.



A detailed report was submitted to all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) welcomed two of Sefton's Young Advisors who attended Committee to present the innovative ways they had engaged with Schools across the Borough in undertaking the consultation and engagement process. I think it is fair to say that all Committee Members were enlightened by the enthusiastic energy and the professional conduct of Sefton's Young Advisors. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in this ambitious piece of work and look forward to being involved further.

On 27 September 2016, the Committee welcomed Carole Hill, Healthy Liverpool Integrated Programme Director and Dr. Chris Grant, Healthy Liverpool Hospitals Programme Director who were in attendance regarding Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust, and presenting the case for change for women's and neonatal services for the North Mersey population. Members of the Committee raised various issues. This issue will continue to be on the Scrutiny radar with a view to inviting a representative to a future Meeting of the Committee to report on conclusions.

At the same Meeting the Committee scrutinised the draft Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the draft Strategy had been produced in consultation with Children and Young People across the Borough. Sefton's Young Advisors facilitated the consultation process and the Committee paid its tribute to the excellent work undertaken by Sefton's Young Advisors and congratulated them on their valuable input in developing the draft Strategy.

It was a pleasure to invite the newly appointed Independent Chair of the Sefton Safeguarding Children's Board to provide an overview about the Safeguarding Board and its statutory functions.

The Committee, after receiving the outcome of the Joint Inspection undertaken by OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Service, requested that a Special Meeting be arranged for the Committee to scrutinise the draft Statement of Action.

The Committee met on 4 April 2017 and key points were raised. The Committee will continue to receive updates in relation to the progress of the five areas of concern detailed in the Statement of Action.

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

- Signposting to Sefton's Local Offer for Children with Disabilities;
- Update relating to Academies;
- Sefton Corporate Parenting Board Annual Activities 2016;
- Children and Young People's Action Plan – Performance Dashboard;
- Update on the Work of the Fostering Service;
- Outreach Support Services for Mainstream Education;
- Response to Bullying in Schools;
- Annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2015/16;
- Breastfeeding in Sefton; and



- Update on School Performance.

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 3 of the 7 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:-

- Children's Social Care – Inspection by Ofsted;
- The Government White Paper – “Education Excellence Everywhere”;
- The Introduction of a National Funding Formula for Schools;
- Primary School Admissions for September 2016;
- Education Green Paper – “Schools that Work for Everyone” a School Seminar;
- Early Years National Formulae 3-4 Year Old Entitlement to Child Care Funding;
- Putting Children First – Children's Social Care;
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board OFSTED Improvement Plan;
- Academisation;
- South Sefton College; and
- SEND Inspection.

The Year Ahead – 2017/18

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 the Core Purposes of the Council and in light of the recent Ofsted inspections, 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 2016/17, Ruth Harrison, for her 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
July 2017



Regeneration and Skills



Councillor John Sayers
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 2016/17.

As the new Chair, it has been a pleasure and privilege to chair the Committee during the year. The Committee met on five 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 considered one Cabinet decision that had been "called-in" during the year 2016/17 in relation to the Southport Development Framework.

The Committee resolved that it was not concerned about the decision made by the Cabinet and so the decision was 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.

The Committee will continue to monitor compliance with the Act.

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 (RSPB) on Marshside Road, Southport. The Committee received a report addressing those concerns in July 2016 and were satisfied that there was no evidence that the site management work undertaken by RSPB was increasing the risk of flooding or was outside the site management plan.

Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Annual Report

The Committee welcomed the Chief Executive, Mr Carl Beer, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority to the Committee. Mr Carl Beer presented the Service Plan for the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority. The presentation detailed Sefton's progress in relation to meeting household recycling targets compared with its counterparts across Merseyside. It was pleasing to learn that Sefton are the leading Authority in terms of household recycling rates across Merseyside. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the residents of Sefton for all their efforts in recycling their household waste.

The Committee will continue to scrutinise the service plan on an annual basis and 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 2016/17.

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.

The Committee received an invitation to attend a detailed briefing session in relation to the winter gritting processes and the forecasting and computer systems the Council uses in making decisions regarding the gritting of roads.

I personally found the session informative and was enlightened to understand the various factors that have to be considered when making decisions on the forecasting and making decisions on the gritting of roads throughout Sefton.

United Utilities – Surface Water and the Increase of Charges

The former Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) Councillor Kelly reported on the deliberations that had taken place on a regional basis regarding the increase of surface water charges to Schools.

It was reported that 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.

With this in mind a network officer group including North West schools finance officers forum was established with a view to securing a reduction in surface water charges to schools across the North West.

The Committee invited representatives from United Utilities and OFWAT to attend its Meeting. Members of the Committee held the representatives to account and set out the reasons why it thought the charging scheme was unfair and discriminated against Schools across the North West.

United Utilities undertook to investigate a “schools solution” for all Schools across the North West.

As Chair of the Committee, I have been invited to attend a meeting with United Utilities in relation to introducing a concession for schools, which at this stage is looking promising.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the network group for all their hard work and special thanks to Members of the Committee and the Leader of the Council who were in attendance when the Committee met with representatives of United Utilities and OFWAT.

The Council set out on an exciting journey of “Imagine Sefton 2030” which has led to the Sefton 2030 Vision. This piece of work began its’ journey approximately 18 months ago, the Council worked closely with partners, businesses, private sector organisations, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the community to help it understand what mattered and to be ambitious for the Borough and its communities in the future.

A detailed report was submitted to all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) submitted comments to be included within the Performance Framework, ensuring that progress in achieving the Sefton 2030 Vision is monitored.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in this ambitious piece of work and we look forward to being involved further.

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

- Adoption of Sefton Playing Pitch Strategy;



- Update on the process of Developing a Neighbourhood Plan;
- Pre-scrutiny of the Selective and Additional (HMO) Licensing Schemes – Introduction of the Business Case;
- Action Plan for Employment;
- Street Cleansing, Fly Tipping and Litter Bins;
- Pre-scrutiny of the Flood and Defence Policies; and
- Update on the Carbon Footprint and Energy Efficiency of the Borough and the way it is aligned to the 2030 Vision.

CURRENT WORKING GROUPS

Peer Review Working Group - In July 2016 the Committee established the Peer Review Working Group, Working Group Members met on numerous occasions to ensure that the recommendations of the Home Office Peer review had been implemented, that Members were satisfied that the findings of the report were accurate and sought assurances that those leading on the agenda in Sefton had a sound approach.

The Final Report of the Working Group has been completed and is scheduled to be submitted to the Committee at its first Meeting on 4 July 2017.

Parks and Greenspaces Working Group – At the same Meeting in July 2016 the Committee established the Parks and Greenspaces Working Group, Working Group Members have met on several occasions and this work is ongoing. We anticipate that the Final Report will be submitted to the Meeting of the Committee in September 2017.

The Committee received update reports in relation to the implementation of recommendations of the following review work undertaken by Working Groups of this Committee:-

- Shale Gas (Fracking) Working Group;
- NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Working Group (*Joint Review with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services)*)
- Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group; and
- Port Master Plan Working Group

The Committee will continue to receive those update reports on an annual basis.

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 2016/17, subject to the following reports being carried forward into the Committees Programme of Work for the Municipal Year 2017/18:-



- Refuse Collection;
- New Houses being sold as Leasehold; and
- Peer Review Working Group – Final Report.

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 am particularly appreciative of our Democratic Services Officers for their commitment, advice and support during 2016/17.

I would also like to thank my Vice-Chair, Councillor O'Brien for all of his help and assistance through the Year.

Councillor John Sayers
July 2017



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 2016/17 Annual Report.

During the year the Committee has met six times and considered matters relating to financial issues and updates associated with the 2016/17 revenue budget, financial management across the Council, the 2017/18 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/20; the Sefton 2030 Vision; the Code of Practice for Enforcement Agent Services; Local Air Quality Management; Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land; the Commissioning and Procurement Policy; Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance and Sickness; Service Standards; Council Tax and Business Rates Collection; the Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme; Customer Experience of Claiming Council Administered Benefits and Financial Support; and the arvato Contract;

The Committee also received regular Work Programme and Cabinet Member update reports; and established two Working Groups to review the topics of:-

- (1) Accommodation Strategy/Agile Working; and
- (2) Licensing/Child Sexual Exploitation (this was a joint Working Group with Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding))

At the request of Cabinet at its meeting held on 23 June 2016 the Committee also established a Working Group to review the operation of Area Committees.

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



Vision – Sefton 2030

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) requesting the Committee to review the draft Sefton 2030 Vision and Outcomes Framework and engagement feedback and provide any comments thereon to Cabinet.

The report indicated that through Imagine Sefton 2030 the Council had been leading on developing a new vision for the borough, working closely with partners, businesses, private sector organisations, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the community to help it understand what mattered and to be ambitious for the Borough and its communities in the future; that following various consultation exercises (including views from consultations associated with Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Carers and Dementia Strategies, Town Centre Investment, Local Plan and other engagement activity) feedback gathered had been reviewed and analysed during the development of the draft Vision and Outcomes Framework; and that extensive engagement had taken place with the Council workforce, the majority of whom lived in Sefton, and that a number of themes began to emerge. The themes were then tested out with partners and although both groups expressed what they wanted to see in 2030 differently, the report detailed comments/views on what the following recurring themes should look like:-

- Resilient people and places
- Growing, living and ageing well
- A great place to live, work and play
- Activities, sociability and hosting
- Image and Environment
- Accessible and linked
- Right for business
- Digital, Science and Technology

Attached as Annex A to the report was a copy of the Vision and Outcomes Framework.

Attached as [Annex B](#) to the report was a copy of the Imagine Sefton 2030 Vision Consultation Report - August 2016

2016/17 and 2017/18 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/20

A major part of the Committee's work involved scrutinising the proposed budget for 2016/17 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/20; and the Committee was presented with a [report](#) which provided details of the development of a 3 year financial strategy for the period 2017/18 – 2019/20 which reflected the current financial challenges facing the Council during the period, the proposed approach to meeting those challenges and how they reflected the Council's statutory requirement to remain financially sustainable and the desire to deliver the Sefton 2030 Vision and the Council's Core Purpose.



The Committee was advised that due to central government policy, the Council will have lost 51% of Government funding between 2011 and 2020 and that given the scale of the financial and service challenges facing the Council, it would have to make some difficult decisions on how it delivers its services, the level at which it continues to deliver them and also develop an appropriate Council Tax Strategy.

The report set out the detailed approach to the delivery of the three year financial strategy, which included:

- The Sefton 2030 Vision and the approved Core Purpose
- The national and local financial context within which the Council is operating;
- The funding gap facing the Council for the 3 year period 2017/18 to 2019/20;
- The approach to delivering both the aspirations of the Sefton 2030 Vision and a financially sustainable Council;
- The financial, service and community impact of the Budget including the reserves position of the Council; and
- The draft capital programme for the 3 year period.

The report also indicated that in order to support the above approach the Council had developed a [Framework for Change](#) which comprised of the following four pillars:

- Economic Growth
- Public Sector Reform
- Service delivery options and
- Strategic Investment

The Committee will continue to monitor and scrutinise the Revenue Budget during the course of 2017/18.

Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) on the review of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTR) 2016/17; and which indicated that LCTR replaced Council Tax Benefit with effect from the 1 April 2013; that the local scheme rules only applied to working age customers; that pensioners were protected by legislation and must be provided with the level of council tax support specified by the Government; and that the total grant of £24.2m transferred to the Council, Police and Crime Commissioner, and Fire Service in 2013/14 to fund the local scheme was £3.0m (11%) lower than had previously been provided to fund council tax benefit in 2012/13. As a result the Council had to introduce changes to the national default council tax support scheme in order to ensure that the local council tax support scheme was cost neutral; and that the Council was unable to alter the pensioner scheme rules so the saving requirement had to be met by reducing the level of



support provided to working age claimants and through technical changes to empty property discounts.

The report also indicated that the Council was required by law to review the scheme each year irrespective of whether it was being amended; and that In order to satisfy the requirement to review the Council Tax Reduction Scheme the following key areas were evaluated:

- Claimant caseload
- Scheme expenditure
- Impact on the most vulnerable claimants
- Welfare reform changes
- Council Tax collection
- Attachment of Benefits
- Review of scheme principles
- Council Tax Exceptional Hardship fund

The report concluded that from its inception in April 2013, the LCTR scheme had delivered financial support to a significant number of vulnerable residents; that a full equality impact assessment was published as part of the design and implementation of LCTR for 2013/14; and that this assessment had been reviewed in the context of the proposed options for 2016/17 and it was found that there was no disproportionate impacts as the mitigating actions put in place for the 2013/14 scheme remained.

Update On Listed Budget Savings Performance and Forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates Collection

Code of Practice for Enforcement Agent Services

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that reviewed how well the Enforcement Agent's Code of Practice was meeting its objectives particularly with regard to the requirements to deal with and assess vulnerability.

Regarding the identification of mental health issues and vulnerability the report described how enforcement agent staff, both office based and field agents, underwent extensive training on vulnerability and that they all received welfare training and were issued with guidelines from organisations such as MIND and the Royal College of Psychiatrists on how to identify potential mental health issues. Staff were also taught questions and techniques with trigger words that may identify a person with mental health issues. Cases were referred to in-house specialist welfare advisors who would undertake further sensitive enquiries, liaise with the Council and where appropriate would signpost to specialist advice agencies.

The report also indicated that during the period 1 August 2015 and 31 July 2016 Sefton Council sent 8,633 cases to the Enforcement Agent companies; that 493 potentially vulnerable cases were identified; and that the Revenue Service would put a marker on those cases which had been returned to the Council relating to

vulnerability issues, and would review the vulnerability status on a regular basis and check if the status had changed.

The report also detailed that Sefton Council's Revenues service had recently introduced a new process whereby a customer identified as having a vulnerability that merited prevention or cessation of enforcement had an indicator placed against their account; that such cases were individually monitored where there were arrears and a collection strategy commenced appropriate to the type of vulnerability and the information available; that for example, markers were placed on Care Leavers accounts to ensure that intervention took place by the Council before cases were referred for enforcement action; and that residents in receipt of council tax support were first referred for debt collection activity rather than enforcement action to avoid statutory charges being added to their account.

The report concluded by requesting the Committee's comments about the Sefton Council Code of Practice for Enforcement Agent Services for submission to the Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

Attached as [Appendix A](#) to the report was a copy of the Code of Practice for Enforcement Agent Services and the Committee recommended that the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be requested to amend the Code of Conduct Enforcement Agency Procedures as follows:-

- (A) In the Compliance Stage section, remove the words “and there are no other adults available in the household” from Part 4 relating to heavily pregnant women; and
- (B) In the Enforcement Stage section add the words “and refused” to the penultimate paragraph on page 9 relating to gifts and bribes to Enforcement Agents.

Local Air Quality Management

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that updated on Air Quality Management in Sefton and indicated that the concept of Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) was introduced under the Environment Act 1995 (the Act); that evidence had shown that certain atmospheric pollutants were linked to poor health; that the Act placed a statutory duty on all Local Authorities to review and assess air quality in their areas at regular intervals; that the Air Quality Regulations, made under the Act, specified the pollutants that must be considered and set standards and objectives for each of the pollutants, which were referred to as National Air Quality Standard (NAQS) Objectives; and that real time monitoring stations were located at:-

- Waterloo Primary School, Crosby Road North, Waterloo
- Hawthorne Road opposite KFC, Litherland
- Lathom Close, Seaforth
- Millers Bridge, Bootle
- A565, Crosby Road South (previously located at St Joan of Arc School)



The report also indicated that as part of the ongoing air quality assessment process the boundaries of 5 AQMAs have been identified across the Borough where NAQS objectives had not been met and these were located at:-

- A565 Crosby Road North, Waterloo
- A5036 Princess Way, Seaforth
- A5058 Millers Bridge, Bootle
- A565 Crosby Road North and South Road Junction, Waterloo
- B5422 Hawthorne Road and Church Road Junction, Litherland.

Disposal of Surplus Council Owned Land

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that advised of the current position in respect of the Asset Disposal Policy (the Policy) and process; and that provided an overview of best value and an analysis of prior years' outcomes in terms of capital receipts.

The report indicated that the Policy set out the principles, methodology and procedural aspects of how the Council selected assets for disposal and proceeded to dispose of them; that a key element of the process was the identification and approval of a shortlist of assets to be disposed of in any particular period; that the disposal short list identified the assets that could be brought forward for disposal within the next 12 to 24 months to form a pipeline of transactions which would aim to realise the identified receipts target; that an appropriate disposal method was selected for each asset in consultation with Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services; and that the disposal terms for each asset would be reported in accordance with the Council's Policy.

Commissioning and Procurement Policy

The Committee received a [presentation](#) that updated on the Commissioning and Procurement Policy and information was provided on:-

- The Strategic Support Unit that comprised of Performance and Intelligence, Commissioning Support and Procurement teams
- Key activities undertaken in 2015/16 relating to Strategic Support Unit staffing restructure, Framework for Change, LCR Procurement Hub Project, Review of Contract Procedure Rules and processes, Social Value Task and Finish Group and Imagine Sefton - Vision 2030
- Commissioning Support activities relating to Remodelled Adult Social Care Reablement Service, Remodelling Adult Social Community Day Care Services, Remodelling Supported Living Services, Completed Pre-Paid Cards Pilot, Fee Negotiations – National Living/Minimum Wage, Adult Social Care Market Management, Integrated Wellness Service, Redesign 0-19 Service and Dynamic Purchasing System for Children's Placements
- Procurement activity for the period 2013/14 to date
- The next steps which included a complete review of Contract Procedure Rules and Processes, a complete refresh of the Commissioning Framework,



Implementation of the Performance Framework, LCR Procurement Hub – LCR and local approaches, Workforce Development and support for commissioning and procurement activity

Levels of Disciplinary, Grievance and Sickness

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that provided information on the levels of discipline, grievance and sickness absence within the Council (excluding schools). The report indicated that based on current records the total number of 'available days', from 1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016, was 147,215 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) days; that the total sickness absence, both long and short term, was 7,471 FTE days which equated to 5.07%; that this comprised 1.99% short term and 3.08% long term absences; and that the overall Corporate target was 4% (short term 2.2%; long term 1.8%), and that the targets were currently being exceeded.

[Annex 1](#) attached to the report illustrated departmental performance for the Quarter 1 period; whilst [Annex 2](#) provided data across a period of 12 months to 30 June 2016 and therefore provided a wider analysis of absence levels across departments; and [Annex 3](#) provided a breakdown of formal cases for January 2016 to October 2016.

Service Standards

The Committee was advised that Heads of Service were responsible for updating their Service Standards to reflect any changes to standards arising from approved savings or for operational reasons; and a copy of the latest [Service Standards document](#) published on the Council's website was attached to the agenda for the information of Members.

Council Tax and Business Rates Collection

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that indicated that Council Tax income was shared between the billing authority (Sefton Council) and the two major precepting authorities (the Fire and Rescue Authority, and the Police and Crime Commissioner) pro-rata to their demand on the Collection Fund; that the Council's Budget included a Council Tax Requirement of £111.644m for 2016/17 (including Parish Precepts), which represented 85.4% of the net Council Tax income of £130.689m; that the forecast outturn at the end of September 2016 was a surplus of -£1.583m on Council Tax income. This was due to the surplus on the fund at the end of 2015/16 being higher than estimated at -£0.462m; the gross Council Tax Charges in 2016/17 being higher than estimated at -£0.636m, a change of -£0.024m from July; and Council Tax Reduction Scheme discounts being lower than estimated at -£0.327m, a change of +£0.032m from July.

Concerning Business Rates the forecast outturn at the end of August 2016 was a deficit of £1.950m (£2.246m to the end of July) on Business Rates income. This was due to the surplus on the fund at the end of 2015/16 being lower than estimated £2.438m; and the in-year budget variations to date in 2016/17 of -£0.488m which



were largely due to the rateable value of properties increasing since December 2015 rather than reducing as forecast.

Customer Experience of Claiming Council Administered Benefits and Financial Support

The Committee was presented with a [report](#) that updated on the implementation of the recommendations and actions contained in the Customer Experience of Claiming Council Administered Benefits and Financial Support Working Group's Final report that would support Sefton residents to receive improved customer services, not only in their engagement with Sefton Council but with partner agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions and One Vision Housing; that particular regard was given to the interaction between centrally administered benefits, such as Universal Credit, Job Seekers allowance and the locally administered Housing Benefit and Council Tax support; that the increasing demands on customer services had been highlighted by the Government's Welfare Reform Agenda; and that Sefton Council with Partners had established a One-Sefton approach to the action plan and were encouraging all partners, the community and organisations to play their part by not only making our services more accessible to those most in need; but by joining up with partners from voluntary and advice organisations to make sure that the support the Council provided could lift people out of poverty and mitigate, where possible, the impacts of the welfare reform programme.

The report concluded that a programme of work was also being considered in the context of other major change agendas that were being implemented in the Council including:

- Public Sector Reform Programme
- Digital Inclusion Agenda
- Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Agenda

arvato Contract

The Committee received a [presentation](#) on the arvato contract and in particular which updated on ICT and Transactional Services that related to:-

- the current contract with arvato, the provider of ICT and transactional services, ending in September 2018
- the Cabinet, in January 2017, agreeing future delivery models and that work was now commencing on implementing the appropriate project and exit plans
- the proposed operating models relating to ICT, Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits, Transactional Human Resources and Payroll and Accounts Payable
- the evaluation methodology used to determine the delivery models
- the recommendation to bring the Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits, Transactional Human Resources and Payroll and Accounts Payable service in house and to procure a new prime contractor in relation to ICT
- the implications and key issues/ risks arising from the recommendations
- the work being undertaken to secure the implementation of the recommendations which centred on agreeing an exit plan with arvato to



October 2018; agreeing joint and internal governance arrangements; the establishment of an Internal Project Board, work streams and project plans; the identification of what was required regarding the transformation of ICT and how quickly could this be done; staff engagement; and the requirement to utilise external expertise

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.

Working Groups

The Committee had established three Working Groups and information is provided below on each:-

Accommodation Strategy/Agile Working

The Working Group was established to agree and confirm the approach to the delivery of the Council's Accommodation Strategy for the period 2016/17 to 2020; to investigate and confirm the principles in relation to 'Agile working' that should be adopted to support the delivery of the Accommodation Strategy; to confirm the key deliverables that should be considered from adopting an agile working strategy including staff and Member engagement and training; and to evaluate the resource impact of the proposals made.

The Working Group's [Final Report](#) was approved by Cabinet on 22 June 2017.

Licensing/Child Sexual Exploitation

The Working Group was established to review the Council's legal and safeguarding position in relation to the issue of any licence following allegations of child sexual exploitation; to consider whether all relevant pathways, methods of referral are sound with respect to escalation of CSE referrals; to ensure that key sectors are informed and aware of how to raise concerns concerning CSE; and to liaise with the Home Office and lobby for legislative change should the need arise.



The Working Group's Final Report will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet at their meetings to be held on 12 September and 5 October 2017 respectively.

Area Committees

The Working Group was established to review the findings of the public consultation exercise undertaken on the role of Area Committees, and the other issues set out in the report submitted to the Cabinet on 23 June 2016; review modern methods of engagement between councils and their councillors and councillors and their communities, including the operation of community forums by other local authorities, the use of social media and guidance on its use; to consider whether a programme of communication training for members should be developed with particular emphasis on the social media aspects of modern communication in their role as 'Community Champions'; to review ways of communicating information about councillors' expenditure in their wards and associated decision making processes; to consider whether a system of escalation for the public where a councillor cannot be contacted, does not respond to contact or does not make themselves available for surgeries etc. can be developed; to consider whether methods for citizens to formally engage with its Council are made as simple and effective as possible through the provisions within the Council Constitution for petitions, questions attendance at meetings etc.; to consider how section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funding would be spent in a revised Area Committee structure; and to consider the remit of Area Committees.

The Working Group's Final Report will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet at their meetings to be held on 12 September and 5 October 2017 respectively.

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 fifth year of operation
- Monitoring the operation of the Procurement Strategy
- Update on the disposal of surplus council owned land
- Monitoring reports on the implementation of recommendations arising from Overview and Scrutiny Working Group reviews
- Other service operational reports as deemed appropriate by the Committee

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.

I would also like to send my best wishes to my colleague Councillor Sue Bradshaw who succeeds me as the Chair of the Committee.

Councillor Dave Robinson
July 2017

