

Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Cllr Lappin	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services	October

## **CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Strategic Support**

Strategic Support main priority continues to be the support and project management of the Public Sector Reform projects. The wider project team has reached a number of key milestones including the appointment of a new leadership and management team for locality working, commencement of the consultation and engagement for the proposed Family Wellbeing Centres (the merging of children and family centres and approval for changes to the Personal Travel Budgets (effective January 2018) for Home to School Transport.

The Organisational Development work continues to make progress including leadership course in partnership with Edge Hill University, the Partnership Commissioning Academy and the development of the One Council Champion network.

As part of the drive to use social media more strategically and increase engagement community online, the Communications team has been testing out new approaches to promoting, listening and engaging with communities during consultations. Taking a new approach with the recent the traffic and highways survey on Facebook contributed to 950+ surveys being completed in comparison to just over 300 in the previous year. This new approach using Facebook in this way also enabled the team to capture qualitative data on opinions. This approach is being adopted for the Family Wellbeing Centres and the Bootle Town Hall Heritage Complex consultations.

The team has also been improving visual content on media channels and increasing the number of posts on the Instagram account to support the Council's work to instil pride in the borough. This has resulted in nearly 200 new followers since August and better engagement with our communities.

To support the move to agile working, the Communications team has produced some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the workforce so as to provide answers on the common themes that have been coming through following the unveiling of new floor plans for the Merton House to Magdalen move. The FAQs have been printed, available online internally and have been emailed to managers to aid team meetings. An internal communications plan has been developed to support this change.

As part of Sefton's Year of the Coast campaign, engagement continues to be high on social media. The team has also sent out invitations to schools and community groups as part of a wider competition asking them to send in their selfies of the coastline. The photographs will be used to form a huge collage to commemorate the end of the year and will be displayed across some Council buildings.

The recent campaign '30 Days of Sefton in Mind' was undertaken in collaboration with partners, to raise awareness of the mental health and wellbeing support available across Sefton. There has been great engagement with over 33,000 impressions made on Twitter.

A change in approach to engaging and communicating with young people as part of the 'Make Your Mark' campaign has resulted in a 20% increase in teenagers putting forward their themes and ideas to be debated by Sefton's MYP at UK Youth Parliament. The team also worked on an

advertising campaign for the Community Learning Centre's offering and as a result the majority of courses have been booked up.

### **Commissioning & Business Intelligence Service**

The Commissioning Support Team continues to lead a number of key projects, including:

*Adult Social Care Day Care Modernisation* – Both newly developed SND centres are now in full operation. Work continues around developing and embedding the new specification and phase 2 rolling this out to other commissioned provision.

*Pre-Paid Cards* - Work continues in rolling out the Pre-paid Card service for Social Care Direct Payment recipients by the end of March 2018, delivering a safer, more convenient and less bureaucratic service for recipients and the Council. Social Work staff are also assisting in reviewing any cases with outstanding paperwork so that these can be reconciled to the new cards.

*Adult Social Care Domiciliary Care Services* –plans are in place for the tripartite commissioned domiciliary services across Sefton, Knowsley and Liverpool. Procurement will commence in October 2017 with contracts to be in place for May 2018.

*Adult Social Care Market Oversight Exercise* –following completion of the Market oversight exercise, consultation has concluded with domiciliary providers, who will be paid agreed rates back dated to April. After Cabinet approved additional funding from the ASC grant to support fee increases consultation will commence with Care Home Providers and Supported Living providers, with the intention for fees to be agreed in Nov 2017.

The Performance & Intelligence Team has/is:

- Completed the production of the new Sefton Ward Profiles, which will be issued to Members and published early October 2017.
- Re-assumed responsibility for the operational delivery of the Council's Welfare Rights and ELAS provision. Working with key partner agencies, reviewed the existing Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty Action plan and has produced a revised action plan (2017-18), which has been shared with the Members reference group. This revised action plan serves to inform the Council and other partner organisations of their collective activity, now and to the end of the current financial year (31/03/2018), to support the potential impact of Welfare Reform, low or irregular income and potential poverty. The plan focusses in particular on those activities related the Universal Credit full service roll out in early October 2017).
- Undertaken a review of the Troubled Families claims process, including the data collection, data amalgamation, data analysis, reporting, record validation, information quality assurance and final audit. The team has developed, implemented and migrated its TF data to a Microsoft Access database. This new interim environment provides a stable Database Management System (DBMS) for importing and linking data from other applications and databases across the Council and key partner agencies, allowing for more effective and efficient, data collection, cleansing, validation, merging, analysis, profiling and reporting.
- Actively supporting the proposed Merton House to Magdalen House accommodation move, providing information, advice and guidance on the process for reviewing, categorising and processing existing paper records across the Council, with a view to achieving a paperless environment.
- Directing the implementation of the 'Manage My Requests' (iCaseWork) system for capturing, managing and reporting on customer complaints, representations and feedback across the Council is progressing to plan, with a 'go-live' date scheduled for the end of October 2017.
- Led on the reconfiguration of the Council's Social Care System (LCS), to ensure that the system workflow represents the new Children's Social Care organisational structure.
- Supporting 'In-Control' consultants with the developed of a Resource Allocation System (RAS) for Adult Social Care Assessments, by gathering, analysing and presenting a variety of data about existing client care and costs of care.

The Procurement Team continues to assist and advise on procurement activity across the whole Council and has over 75 procurement exercises at differing stages on the current work plan. Many of these are complex procurement exercises that exceed the OJEU procurement thresholds, examples of which include:

- Passenger Transport Framework Agreement
- Domiciliary Care Collaborative contract
- Occupational Health Services
- Transport Consultancy Services
- Street Lighting Maintenance
- Toxicology Testing
- Winter Service Contract
- Procurement of Fleet, Machinery & Equipment for Green Infrastructure Integrated Land Management
- ICT provision (replace Arvato contract)
- Integrated Sexual Health Collaborative contract
- Extra Care Collaborative contract
- IAG Carers information and guidance contract
- Park and Ride contract
- Parking and Environmental contract

The Review of Procurement Processes, Rules and Guidance, and associated Action Plan, has now been completed. Updated Contract Procedure Rules were agreed by Audit and Governance in June and approved by Council in July 2017 and roll-out of the CPR e-learning programme to all relevant staff is progressing well.

## **CORPORATE RESOURCES**

### **Finance**

#### **2016/17 Statement of Accounts**

The Council's Statement of Accounts was approved by Audit & Governance Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> September. Due to the length and complexity of the Statement of Accounts, Members were given a briefing on the main changes that had occurred since the draft version in July. Members had also been invited to submit questions in advance of the meeting and four questions had been submitted by a Councillor to which responses had been sent and circulated at the briefing session.

Ernst & Young also presented their report on the Accounts, which highlighted minimal issues and were comfortable to sign off the Accounts for 2016/17.

### **Budget Monitoring**

#### **2017/18 Financial Year**

The most recent forecast **revenue** outturn position is at the end of August 2017. The estimated deficit was £0.843m, which was a slight worsening on the previous estimate of £0.686m. The key pressures identified were due to children's and adult's social care services.

The Council's **capital** budget in 2017/18 is £26.610m. As at the end of August, expenditure of £5.039m has been incurred and a full year outturn of £24.135m is currently forecast.

## **School Budgets – Financial risk to Council**

The DfE has recently announced the indicative funding levels for all schools for 2018/19 and 2019/20 based on the proposed introduction of a new National Funding Formula which would come into effect from April 2020.

The DfE has stated that each school will receive a minimum of a 0.5% uplift in funding per pupil in each of the next two years – a 1% uplift overall. However it is up to local authorities as to whether they introduce the new funding factors straight away or phase them in over the next two years.

The local authority is consulting schools on the options and following the outcome of the consultation start work on the funding models for schools for 2018/19. The make-up of the new National Funding Formula is very different from the existing model used in Sefton and could create new “winners and losers” and so the financial landscape across Sefton Schools could change over the next two / three years.

Officers will keep Members informed of progress on changes in school funding along with the quarterly reports on the financial performance of all schools.

## **ICT**

### **Strategy**

The Council is finalising a new ICT Strategy, and is also defining new policies & standards for the ICT service; this activity will be completed in December 2017.

### **Transformation and Future Provision**

The Council has recently undertaken a procurement exercise for a Delivery Partner to assist the Council in the delivery of its proposed ICT Transformation programme. A winning bidder has been identified, and final negotiations are underway between the Council and its incumbent ICT service provider to arrange commencement. Subject to agreement, this programme will commence in October 2017.

### **Infrastructure**

ICT is supporting a number of the Framework for Change / Public Sector Reform projects, most notably Asset Maximisation (via agile working) and the Early Intervention & Prevention community base programme.

### **Agile Working**

Indicative costing has been completed for the Council’s agile working requirements, with the initial focus being on the Merton to Magdalen relocation, and the Locality Teams programme. In addition, a demo room has been set up to demonstrate the agile working concept to management and officers.

New end user devices have been identified to further enable agile working; rollout of these devices will be included in the abovementioned ICT Transformation programme.

## **Customer Service**

Online services available to customers continues to show a reduction in calls for the Call Centre. The table below shows the comparable calls for previous year:

	<b>August 2016</b>	<b>August 2017</b>	<b>Difference +/-</b>
SWITCHBOARD	10497	8405	<b>-2092</b>
Benefits	3752	3026	<b>-726</b>
Cleansing	10702	4822	<b>-5880</b>
Social Care	3197	3280	<b>+83</b>

Revenues	6623	5608	-1015
<b>Total including all services</b>	<b>42739</b>	<b>33366</b>	<b>-9373</b>

The One Stop Shops follow a very similar trend to the Contact Centre. Face-to-face visits have also been lower in comparison with August 2016. In August a total of 7,459 customers were interviewed compared to 8,072 customers in 2016, an overall reduction of **613** enquiries.

Enquiries for taxi's are up by over 50%, the new and easier Knowledge test recently introduced by Sefton has been the reason for the increase.

The table below shows the comparable calls for previous year relating to the One Stop Shops:

	<b>Enquiry volumes August 2016</b>	<b>Enquiry volumes August 2017</b>	<b>Difference (-/+)</b>
Benefits	2784	2334	<b>-450</b>
Taxis	808	1216	<b>+408</b>
ELAS	407	405	<b>-2</b>
Revenues	1085	1212	<b>+127</b>
<b>ONE STOP SHOPS</b>	<b>8072</b>	<b>7459</b>	<b>-613</b>

### **Self-serve promotion at Bootle One Stop Shop**

In response to the Council's agenda to push customers who wish to access Council services towards self-serving, customers visiting the One Shop Shops are advised about the digital access options available and encouraged to use the self-serve computers which are located in the One Stop Shops if they don't have internet access at home.

Between 1st August 2017 and 31st August 2017 a total of 132 customers received self-serve assistance at Bootle One Stop Shop. Of these, 93 customers (70%) required assistance with an ELAS application; 17 customers (13%) required assistance completing revenues forms; 17 customers required assistance completing electoral forms and 1 customer required assistance to complete a benefit form. A further 4 customers (3%) who received assistance using the self-serve PC's at Bootle One Stop Shop during August 2017 did so having been referred by the DWP for assistance completing a Universal Credit application or Jobseekers Allowance application.

### **Benefit Service:**

Universal Credit Full Digital Service is due to be launched in Sefton with effect from 11th October 2017 in 2 tranches. Aintree post codes will commence from the 24th January 2018. This means the gateway for all in and out of work legacy claims including Housing Benefit (HB) for most working age customers will be closed and New Claims will no longer be allowed. The front line service will be trained on Monday by DWP in order to provide digital support to claimants. There is an action plan in place to ensure all relevant activities are undertaken and claimants receive as advice and support for Universal credit and Council Tax Reduction.

### **Internal Audit**

The Internal Audit Plan is now 25% completed, with work having been completed in the period in the following areas:

<b>Audit</b>	<b>Audit Opinion</b>
M58 Junction 1	Assurance provided
Liverpool City Region - STEP Grant Q1 Assurance Provided	Assurance provided
Liverpool City Region - STEP Grant Q2 Assurance Provided	Assurance provided
Anti-Social Behaviour Unit	Moderate
Treasury Management	Negligible

Responsible officers have given assurance that the recommendations made in the reports will be implemented within reasonable timescales. Follow up audit work will be undertaken so as to substantiate this.

### **Health and Safety**

We have supported Heads of service with their H&S sub committees. We are updating the plans on Asbestos and Legionella management as well as general building safety. A number of free health and safety training courses have been opened up to senior managers. We continue to support schools through our SLA package and have offered a range of free H&S training to schools as well as senior officers. We are planning a schools H&S conference next month.

### **Insurance**

Renewal of the Authority's insurance cover took place with effect from 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017. Terms and conditions of all existing policies were retained however premiums for the Casualty and Motor policies increased due to projections made by Insurers for the proposed Claims Discount Rate change which has unfortunately not yet been determined by the Government.

Recent announcements in relation to potential new areas of exposure for the Authority (e.g. Selective & Additional (HMO) Licencing Schemes, Housing Development Company) have been outlined to Brokers and any requirements which may be put forward by Insurers are awaited.

### **Risk and Resilience**

A project plan has been developed to undertake a full review of Emergency Planning and Business Continuity arrangements for the council. Work is also underway to revise the Schools Emergency Guidance documentation.

## **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT**

### **Operational Issues**

Advice and support continues to be provided to various service areas where the impact of funding streams is affecting staff. Consultation is taking place with staff and the trade unions in this regard.

Various reviews and restructures across the organisation are continuing relative to budget savings/Public Sector Reform projects. These are the subject of trade union consultation. Preparatory briefings to the trade unions have taken place on the number of projects being formed to formulate the budget going forward.

The Department continues to have a full programme of work in respect of disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work issues. Support to service areas in respect of staffing reviews/restructures is being provided, together with advice and support in the management of sickness absence cases that are cause for concern and complex staffing matters.

A number of Senior Management posts are currently being recruited to and policy work continues on such matters as workforce reporting.

### **Pay & Grading Team**

Job evaluation continues relative to all Council and School posts for new or revised roles. Job evaluations are also conducted relative to any operational and service reviews to maximise efficiencies as part of restructuring exercises across the Council as a consequence of budgetary

pressures. Regrading applications and regrading appeals are processed in line with the Council protocol. The team also undertakes any review of HAY graded positions.

Management of the Matrix contract relative to the recruitment of all Agency workers continues. The current contract expires on 31.01.018 and work is ongoing with the procurement team and the members of the Merseyside group to secure the Agency workers contract agreement and specification going forward. Team members are involved in service reviews and work to support transformational issues associated with the budget proposals and potential changes to service delivery. Of the three team members one is involved with the EIP2 project and one on the EIP3 project.

Project work continues such as the management of sickness absence, including production of reports, analysis and management data and implementing training courses.

### **Establishment Control, Pensions, Payroll & HR Transactional Services**

Regular Client meetings are continuing with the objective of improving processes and data quality. The Council and Arvato are currently mapping all the recruitment processes to ensure consistency. These processes will be built into the upgraded ResourceLink, so all users can see where each individual record is up to, which should alleviate queries and phone calls.

A working Group has been set up with Arvato to introduce workflow to help recruitment, transactional HR, payroll and pension processes. The first process being reviewed is staff terminations and the voluntary resignation workflow process is now built in ResourceLink and associated guidance available for managers and a pilot of the new process is being undertaken by managers in Hawthorne Road Depot.

The Working Group is now looking at the best way to handle other reasons for leaving e.g. dismissal, redundancy etc. and how these will be managed.

There are 2 other processes which are being looked at, to be put into workflow and they are changes to hours and extensions to temporary arrangements.

The Pensions Officer is continuing to work closely with the Transformation team and Personnel Officers to provide redundancy/pension information when required.

The Establishment Control Panel is now embedded and occurs every 2 weeks, to consider requests to release vacancies and approve any changes to the Establishment held in ResourceLink. All changes to the Establishment are being mapped by the Council and arvato to ensure correct procedures are followed.

The Government have proposed and agreed changes to exit payments for public sector staff and further clarification is required as to how this will be implemented. Further guidance is still not available.

The Council had to apply Auto-enrolment legislation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and as part of this process applied transition arrangements to a certain group of staff. Transition is ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and affected staff have been written to and informed they will be put into their relevant pension scheme from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 (the Council's next reenrolment date) but can opt into the scheme at any time they so choose.

There are various TUPE transfers in process as follows:

- SMASH to Addaction – 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 – completed.
- South Sefton 6<sup>th</sup> Form College to Hugh Baird – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017 – did not happen 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017.
- Stanley High to an Academy – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 – completed.
- Various schools (possibly 3) transferring to a Multi Academy Trust, date(s) still to be agreed.

## **Occupational Health**

The number of referrals (100) to the HU from Sefton employees only between 01/08/17 and 30/09/17 is a decrease of 12% when compared with the same period last year.

The main reasons for referrals within this period are stress and mental health (41.0%) and musculoskeletal problems (37.0%). The majority of referrals are from Locality Services - Provision (37.0%), schools (21.0%) and Adult Social Care (16.0%).

The tender exercise for the renewal of Occupational Health contracts is now complete with the report just at the "call-in" stage. This should expire on 11 October 2017 at which stage work will commence for wind down of current contracts and commencement of those which will be new.

## **Workforce Learning and Development (CLC)**

### **Training / eLearning**

The Corporate Learning Centre continues to design, develop and deliver accredited training courses across the workforce. A further three courses were recently submitted for Badge of Excellence programme approval; these include ADHD, Autism Awareness (eLearning) and Private Fostering and Adoption. We should find out if these courses have been approved for delivery in the next 2-3 weeks.

### **First Aid Accreditation**

We continue to deliver accredited First Aid courses to both internal staff and organisations across the private, voluntary and VCF sector. We have recently entered into a partnership with the Adult Community Learning Centre who has agreed to fund First Aid training places and courses for unemployed individuals in Sefton.

### **Apprenticeships**

We are now promoting and accessing the Apprenticeship levy and have established a pool of lead training providers. We continue to raise awareness of the apprenticeship levy with schools and attended a recent Primary Heads/Bursars Meeting to discuss governance arrangements and apprenticeships for the workforce. We are currently attending departmental managers meetings to raise awareness of apprenticeships for existing staff. Sefton also hosted the LCR apprenticeship levy meeting where ideas and best practice was shared/discussed.

### **Website**

We are preparing to launch a new website late August 2017. The new website will act as an essential marketing tool and will streamline how customers, both internal and external, access services. The website was delayed due to technical issues however will be ready for launch mid-October.

### **Procurement**

We have initiated two procurement exercises to support the continued development and growth of the service. This includes the identification of Quallsafe approved trainers to deliver First Aid training and a Health and Safety Programme. Both exercises have now been concluded and contracts awarded.

## **Korn Ferry Hay**

The Corporate Learning Centre continues to work with Korn Ferry Hay, Strategic Support and SLB to develop the One Council champion's network to support the development and implementation of OD across the organisation.

## **Building and Property Services**

### **Disposals**

The Council undertakes a pro-active programme of property disposals to both rationalise the portfolio to remove unproductive assets and realise capital receipts. This process assists in the reduction of revenue costs and raises capital which contributes to the funding of the Council's capital Programme.

### **Cyclical Compliance & Maintenance Work**

- Statutory testing and inspection works continue to be carried out in accordance with the defined cyclic timescales, day to day responsive maintenance works also continue to be undertaken as necessary.
- Concerted efforts are being made to increase the level of planned preventative works in order to try and prolong the lifespan of building elements and reduce the overall building maintenance cost burden.
- Major planned work proposals are however in abeyance pending funding considerations.
- Proposals for major planned maintenance intervention requirements in 2018/19 are presently being identified and prioritised.

## **Energy and Environmental Management**

- Working with the Combined Authority (Energy & Renewables Portfolio) on the development of the new LCR Energy Strategy, set out to meet the new CA Mayor's Manifesto on Environment. The LEP have set up a task and finish group to develop a draft by end October, with officer input and then, via CA Governance, to the 6 LA's to sign off. The development of new LCR Strategy will be supported by Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) who are funding this and align with their new regionally located project delivery function (BEIS NW Local Energy Hub) from 2018.
- The local strategy response i.e. on Carbon Management, Affordable Warmth Strategy, HECA and Climate Change will now reflect the LCR priorities within them – but maintain the focus on delivery for Sefton local priorities also.
- The externally funded Affordable Warmth Worker post was approved to be re-filled by Vacancy Panel in Sept. The recruitment is now underway through due process to potential redeployees and then wider advert, if required. Intending to have new officer in place by December 17 as the service hits its most demanding caseload of vulnerable residents through wintertime.
- The 10<sup>th</sup> Liverpool City Region Collective Energy Switch finishes on the 16<sup>th</sup> October. To date over 10,290 residents across the region have registered. Previous campaigns have saved Sefton residents over £200K on their energy bills
- The team have won £4,850 to advise local residents (those over 65 and off-internet) about the New Smart Meter rollout and will be advising over 500 households before the end of the year.

- The team have been active in supporting Sefton Flu Clinics and a special 'Keep Warm Keep Well' event providing over 400 households with advice on lower energy bills and distributing low energy light bulbs.
- Sefton Council, in co-operation with the wider city region, have developed a joint Statement of Intent so that local residents can become eligible for Energy Company energy efficiency funding (known as ECO Flex). Sefton is working with Liverpool City Council to secure a partnership from those energy companies to deliver insulation to local residents.
- Sefton Council has also led on a bid to National Grid Affordable Warmth Solutions to provide funding and aid residents with first time Central heating and connection to the gas grid.
- Preparing for Electricity Price renewal for April 2018 final year under current contract (see below on procurement reviews).
- LCR Procurement review (all utilities) – joint meeting 12 October, will bring a further report on options and recommendations for Sefton and/or LCR to be implemented from 2018.
- Successfully increased booking levels at Eco Centre (current 2017/2018 output at 2,313 and increase in income generated – surpassed previous year's figure halfway through year) due to team-led promotion and communication strategy. Working on delivery of funded projects for United Utilities to offer free sessions for schools and to develop both physical and digital resources and new community SUDs resource to be installed in Eco Garden. Working with Sefton schools in AQAs to develop school/home resources and in-house designed website. Continue to develop community strategy with output of 1,055 thus far for 2017/18.
- Eco Centre wind turbine repair/renewal – options with indication of costs due w/c 16 October from specialist contractor
- Salix (Invest to Save) team are developing payback compliant projects for 17/18 spend target, a proposal being put forward via Head of Service in October.
- Continued work under O&S (Regeneration and Skills) – joint meeting in November with United Utilities Ofwat and Defra to address remaining overall imbalance with other UK areas and seeking partnership funding support to reduce water charges further over next 5 years.

### **Regeneration**

The Building and Property Services are supporting the Head of Regeneration and Housing in the identification and development of regeneration initiatives providing input on Valuation, feasibility and cost across a number of potential projects.

## **REGULATION & COMPLIANCE**

### **Democratic Services**

The **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health)** has established a Working Group to consider Residential and Care Homes. The Working Group has met on nine occasions to date and Councillor Linda Cluskey is the Lead Member. Witness interviews have taken place with the Care Quality Commission, Sefton Pensioners Advocacy Centre, Age Concern, the Care Homes Association and a Provider who has achieved an "Outstanding" rating from the Care Quality Commission. A briefing report from Healthwatch Sefton and a written submission from the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups have also been considered by the Working Group. Site visits to various residential and care homes to gather information have been carried out. The Working Group has recently considered the outcome of the independent consultant's report that resulted in a report on care home fees to the Cabinet on 7 September 2017. Recommendations

from the Working Group have been drawn up and are anticipated to be reported to the Cabinet at its meeting on 2 November 2017.

A Joint Meeting of the Committee, together with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), will be held on 12 October 2017 to consider the question of substantial variation with regard to the Review of Services Provided by Liverpool Women's Hospital and to make a recommendation to the Council on the matter.

The **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding)** has agreed to establish one Working Group to review Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The Working Group met on 8 September 2016 and Councillor Hands was appointed Lead Member of the Working Group. The Working Group agreed the scope for the review and have reviewed the service specification and drafted questions to ask of the Clinical Commissioning Groups as the Commissioner of CAMHS. Various representatives from the groups identified in the scope have been interviewed. An advert was also published in the free Newspapers across the Borough inviting service users to share views and experiences. The Working Group has two outstanding witnesses to interview. The Working Group is still deliberating and it is the intention that an interim report will be submitted to the Committee in September/November 2017.

The Committee had received a request from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulation, Compliance and Corporate Services) to establish a Joint Working Group to consider Child Sexual Exploitation and the Committee nominated Members to serve on the Working Group. Please see the update under O&S Committee (Regulation, Compliance and Corporate Services) below.

The **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)** had last year agreed to establish three Working Groups to consider the following issues:-

- Peer Review Working Group - The Working Group's Final Report was approved by the Committee and Cabinet at their meetings held on 4 and 27 July 2017 respectively
- Parks and Greenspaces – It is anticipated that the Working Group's Final Report will be considered by Committee and Cabinet at their meetings to be held on 7 November and 7 December 2017 respectively.
- VCF Review – Deliberations are on-going into the feasibility of commencing a review on this topic

The Committee met on 4 July 2017 and approved its Work Programme for 2017/18 and approved Economic Strategy as a potential Working Group review topic. However, following investigation into this matter it was found that the Economic Strategy for Growth was about to be the subject of the Consultation and Engagement process and accordingly, this topic did not meet the criteria for selecting topics for review as it would shortly be looked at by another internal body; and therefore the Committee agreed to not select the topic of "Economic Growth" for review by a Working Group; and that as an alternative, Sefton's Housing Development Company was selected as a topic for review.

A special meeting of the Committee was held on 7 September 2017 to consider a called-in item relating to the proposed temporary closure of Lord Street, Southport. At the meeting Members discussed the call-in procedure and resolved that the procedure note be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Board be requested to consider the following options:-

- (a) Do nothing, meaning that the current procedure would continue to be the preferred procedure to be used when considering a call in at Committee;
- (b) Take action considered to be appropriate; or
- (c) Refer the matter to the Audit and Governance, with a view to the Procedure Note being formally included within the Council's Constitution.

The Management Board considered this matter on 26 September 2017 and made suggestions to amend the procedure note; and recommended that the 4 Overview and Scrutiny Committees consider the amended note during the October/November cycle of meetings.

The **Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services)** had last year agreed to establish Working Groups to look at the following issues:-

- Licensing/Child Sexual Exploitation (a joint Working Group with Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding));
- an examination of the operation of Area Committees – The Working Group's Final Reports on the above two issues were approved by the by Committee and Cabinet at their meetings held on 12 September and 5 October 2017 respectively.

The Committee met on 13 June 2017 and approved its Work Programme for 2017/18 and approved Digital Inclusion as a Working Group review topic.

The **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board** held its first meeting of the Municipal Year on 26 September 2017. The Board has previously established an Early Intervention and Prevention Working Group, comprised of four Chairs / Vice-Chairs from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Councillor Page is the Lead Member. The Working Group has met on ten occasions to date, including receiving information and discussing the scope for the review. Working Group Members have attended a meeting of the Multi-Agency Working Group to sit in on a presentation on Transforming Public Services in Wigan and to meet with potential witnesses for the review. Members have visited the Light for Life Premises, Southport and the recently opened Life Rooms, Southport. Members have also attended a meeting of the Early Intervention and Prevention Overarching Programme Board to meet with potential witnesses for the review. The final meeting of the Working Group was held recently to produce recommendations and the final report is anticipated to be submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting on 2 November 2017.

The Management Board has considered amendments to the call-in procedure and full details of the Board's deliberations on this matter are set out above in the section relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills).

### **Admission Appeals**

In addition to the provision of administrative support for meetings of the Council, Cabinet, and Committees, the Section has also organised and clerked **school admission appeal hearings** involving 15 applications for 7 Secondary schools and 21 applications for 15 Primary schools during the period from 4 September to 10 October 2017.

In addition arrangements were made for a further 22 appeals to be heard during this period, which were subsequently withdrawn.

Arrangements were also made for 2 Exclusion Reviews to be heard during this period.

### **Civic and Mayoral Services**

#### **Mayor of Sefton's Charity Entertainment Night**

On Friday 20th October, The Mayor of Sefton will be hosting a Charity Entertainment Night at Bootle Town Hall to raise money for the Mayor of Sefton's Charity Fund, they will be plenty of entertainment, as well as a buffet and disco, it promises to be a great night of fundraising

#### **VC Paving Stone**

On Friday 27th October, Sefton will be unveiling the 3rd VC Paving Stone for Alexander Lafone at a special ceremony to be held at the Five Lamps War Memorial at 11.00am, the Mayor of Sefton will be in attendance as well as members of Alexander Lafone's Family.

## **Environmental Health & Trading Standards**

We are asking residents to give 'Paws for Thought' to ensure they don't buy illegally imported puppies, following the culmination of a high profile case in Southport.

The "Paws for Thought" campaign has launched 3/10/17 in a bid to educate people about the financial and emotional dangers of buying illegally imported puppies, especially in the run up to Christmas.

Often illegally imported puppies, which are not vaccinated against rabies, are only ever discovered when a family take their new four legged friend for their first vet visit.

At this point the puppy has to be seized and put in quarantine, with any costs incurred falling on the dog's owners.

Not only is there a significant financial implication, with fees in excess of £1,000, but the act of removing your cute new four legged friend can be extremely distressing and stressful.

Under legislation, any dogs entering the UK must have been vaccinated against rabies – however the vaccine will not work if given to puppies younger than 12 weeks.

As a result Sefton Council's Trading Standards team are urging those considering buying a puppy to make sure they know who they are buying from, to check the pup's vaccination history and always ask to see documentation.

The campaign launches after five people were prosecuted after the Trading Standards team uncovered an illegal puppy smuggling operation on Skipton Avenue, Southport.

The Paws for Thought campaign advises people to be suspicious if the seller cannot show you the puppy with its mother and litter mates, as well as:

- If the puppy has been vaccinated ask to see the documentation. This must clearly state the veterinary practice where this was carried out.
- Be suspicious if the address of the veterinary practice is outside the UK.
- If the puppy has been brought in from outside the UK, it must be at least 15 weeks old and have a pet passport or a veterinary certificate.
- Never agree to have the puppy delivered to your home address or to meet the seller to collect the puppy.
- Never pay for a puppy in advance.
- Report any concerns using the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06

## **Corporate Legal Services**

Over the last 12 months or so colleagues in Legal have been involved in discussions with the National Trust to transfer the freehold interest in Formby Point to the National Trust which will result in increased investment and development of user facilities. The transfer was completed on 14 September 2017.

Stanley High School converted to an Academy on 31 August 2017 to the Southport Learning Academy Trust. Legal are currently working on a further 7 academy transfers before the end of the year.

The Team continue to be very busy advising on a number of procurement issues and many contracts, for example:

- Advising Business Intelligence on the procurement exercise around domiciliary care in conjunction with the LCR
- Parking and Environmental Enforcement Contract.
- Advising Leisure and Tourism in relation to Southport Theatre
- A Joint Traffic Signal Maintenance Contract in conjunction with the LCR
- Advising on a contract for repainting of Southport Pier,
- A contract for consultancy support for the new Junction 1 M58, and
- The contract for construction of new synthetic sports pitches at Dunes Splashworld

In addition the Team are advising on 15 current Section 278 /38 Highway agreements ongoing for works undertaken at developments to improve highway access at the developer's expense.

In terms of employment law the team are assisting Regenrus on a complex Employment Tribunal claim and advising various schools with settlement agreements.

We have had a successful prosecution of 2 defendants who were prosecuted on behalf of Trading Standards colleagues for smuggling pug puppies into the UK. The couple received a conditional discharge and order to pay £450 costs each.

We had the successful trial of a couple for breach of planning control - they built a large extension to their property without planning approval. Mr Kelly received fine of £1,000 for the breach of condition, £1,500 enforcement fine and £1,982 in costs, and victim surcharge £170; totalling £4,652. Mrs Kelly received a fine of £380 for the breach of condition and £400 for the enforcement and costs £1,982.00 plus £78 victim surcharge, totalling £2,840.

We successfully obtained an order for sale at Liverpool County Court for a property on Scarisbrick New Road, in order to realise the debt owed to the Council (circa. £14,000) and also to ensure that the property is sold and redeveloped.

In August and September we were successful in the following prosecutions;

- 32 litter offences - fines totalling £8,846
- 18 education offences – fines totalling £6,454
- 6 fly tipping offences – fines totalling £458.98
- 1 taxi ply for hire without insurance offence – fine £724

Legal have been heavily involved with the project to develop a business case for a Council wholly owned housing development company. Approval to establish the company was granted by Cabinet on 5 October 2017 and over the next few months the company will be formally established and will then begin to bring forward detailed designs and proposals for priority sites across the borough.

The Children and Social Care Team continue to be very busy and are dealing with a number of multi-day finding of fact hearings in complex child protection cases. The Team have also provided training for adult social care social workers on Court of Protection practice and procedures.

The service is due to move offices in November 2017 and then again in early 2018 when they will move to a full agile working environment and in preparation for the same, we have started to trial a light touch working environment in order to assess the practicality of agile working for the service.

### **Civic and Mayoral Services**

## Electoral Services

The annual canvass for the 2018 Register of Electors is progressing well with 80% of properties responding to date. This is the position we would expect to be in at this stage of the annual canvass. A second reminder will go out towards the end of October together with targeted personal canvassing of poor responding areas. The response figures, by property, breakdown as follows

• Received by post	38,211
• Received via Telephone	19,295
• Received Online	21,674
• Received via SMS Text	8,170
• Updated by canvas	15,668
• Total	103,018
• Outstanding	25,074

The 2018 register of electors will be published on the 1 December 2017, following which will be an audit and refresh of all those persons who have been registered postal voters since 2013.

Following the resignation of Councillor Pat Ball, a by-election to fill the vacancy on Dukes ward will be held on Thursday 2 November 2017. Nominations closed on Friday 6 October 2017 and the following candidates were validly nominated:

Terry John Durrance - UK Independence Party  
Frank Hanley - Labour Party  
Ann Blanche Pearmain - Conservative Party Candidate  
John David Pugh - Liberal Democrats  
Nick Senior - Green Party

Preparations are now well under way for the Local Government Elections on the 3 May 2018.