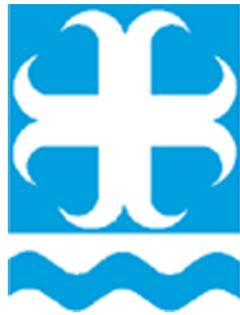


SEFTON COUNCIL



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

**(Council's Ethical Business Practices Working
Group)**

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors McKinley (Lead Member), Doyle, Killen, John Sayers and Yvonne Sayers

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OBJECTIVES

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) has agreed to establish a Working Group to review the topic of the Council's Ethical Business Practices. Dependent upon interpretation, the scope of such a review is potentially very wide, including areas such as the Council's role in: employment; investment; charging; debt collection; commercial practice; doing business with others; procuring the delivery of goods, works and services from others; regulation, trading activities etc. As such the Working Group and Committee will need to carefully consider and clearly define the specific scope it wishes the review to focus upon. This consideration may lead to a refining of the draft Terms of Reference below.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life, which is responsible for promoting the Seven Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership) to all those involved in the provision and delivery of public services, published a report in May 2018 "The Continuing Importance of Ethical Standards for Public Service Providers", which was a follow-up to their 2014 report on this issue.

The report identifies that the public want services to be delivered responsibly and ethically, regardless of provider and that high ethical standards need to be applied when managing public money. The report further states that, where this involves commercial arrangements, it is incumbent on government to design service delivery and manage the life cycle of the contract in such a way as to engender and reward high ethical standards. Clearly this is equally applicable to local government.

In last couple of years Sefton Council has agreed a number of motions and actions relating to ethical business, including: UNISON's Ethical Care Charter (February 2016) and Unite's Construction Charter (September 2018).

A number of other Councils have sought to address this, including: Birmingham (Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility); Dudley (Suppliers Code of Practice) and Preston (Fairness Charter) and the Working Group may wish to consider these approaches and others in order to both benchmark Sefton's position and identify appropriate and workable future approaches.

To review the topic of the Council's Ethical Business Practices, considering:

- Current Sefton practice

- Current good practice within other local authorities or similar organisations
- Areas of good practice within the Council's practices
- Areas for improvement within the Council's practices
- Recommendations for improving the Council's practices
- The provision of a policy for the ethical business practices of the Council in respect of investment, procurement and commissioning

METHODS OF ENQUIRY

Dependent upon the refined scope of the review, to include:

- Analysis of current Sefton practice
- Desktop research into practise elsewhere
- Witness interviews with officers, stakeholders, experts and other organisations
- Possible site visits / conference calls with experts and other organisations

TIMESCALES

To Commence in November 2018

To be Completed in May 2019

OFFICER SUPPORT

Lead Officer: Jan McMahon (Head of Strategic Support) (subject to review in light of refined scope of review)

Democratic Services Officer: Paul Fraser

OTHERS WHO WILL BE INVOLVED

Dependent upon the refined scope of the review, to include the following witnesses and sources of information/advice:

- Council officers
- Key Stakeholders
- Experts and representatives from other Councils or similar organisations

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REPORTING TO CABINET/COUNCIL

Timetable of committees, link into the planning chart, type of report/minute

PLANNING CHART

The Planning Chart is an example of the way reviews could/should be planned.

It is recommended that realistic time frames in which to carry out tasks should be considered including possible delays for public holidays and Council business. Effective planning suggests that more planning time be built into the chart.

| Activity | MONTH | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------|-------|------|
| | 2018 | 2018 | 2019 | 2019 | 2019 | 2019 | 2019 |
| Scoping | November | December | | | | | |
| Topic to consider | | December Investments | January Procurement | February Commissioning | | | |
| Consider Documents | | December | January | February | March | April | May |
| Witnesses | | December Stephan Van Arendsen | January Bill Esterson MP | February Jan McMahon and Peter Moore | | | |
| Site Visits | | | | February | March | | |
| Initial Findings | | | | | March | | |
| Draft Report | | | | | | April | |
| O&S Cttee Considers | | | | | | | May |
| Submit to Cabinet (if appropriate) | | | | | | | May |

Ten Step Process Flow Chart

Committee agrees Working Group membership and appoints Chair / Lead Member

Working Group complete scoping document determining terms of reference & timetable.

Working Group submit scoping paperwork to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.

Background research undertaken and evidence collected.

Working Group meet to determine questions they wish to ask witnesses.

Working Group make any necessary visits & additional evidence obtained.

Witness hearings take place & responses written up by support officer.

Working Group review headings for the final report.

Working Group and support officer draft final recommendations and approve final report.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives final report and recommendations and how they should be taken forward.

