



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGULATORY,
COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES)**

**MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL,
SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 22ND OCTOBER, 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor Bradshaw (in the Chair)
Councillor Byrom (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Doyle, Grace, Killen, Lewis, McCann and
McKinley

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Lappin

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brodie-Browne and Councillor Morris (and his Substitute Member Councillor Jones).

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

**20. STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN
LOCAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITIES**

Further to Minute No. 18 of 11 September 2018 the Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer on the guidance produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government relating to Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities following on from the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny.

The report indicated that the Government's Statutory Guidance was comprehensive and was set out in the following chapters:

- Culture
- Resourcing
- Selecting Committee Members
- Power to Access Information
- Planning Work
- Evidence Sessions

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and that Members' attention was drawn to "Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee" and "Communicating scrutiny's role to the public" where recommendations for change had been made.

The report concluded by detailing the up to date position regarding progress being made regarding the recent Local Government Association peer review in relation to Overview and Scrutiny receiving performance reports.

A copy of the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government was attached as an appendix to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- The potential to elect Overview and Scrutiny Chairs by secret ballot
- Quoracy issues at Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Working Groups

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the statutory guidance and the measures the Council takes in relation to the issues covered in the guidance be noted;
- (2) that Overview and Scrutiny Working Group Final Reports and recommendations be submitted to Cabinet and then Council for final approval;
- (3) that updates on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny be included in the Work Programme report considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting; and
- (4) that each Overview and Scrutiny Working Group consider if it is appropriate to seek the views of the general public on the matter under their consideration.

**21. "MANAGE MY REQUESTS" (ICASEWORK) SYSTEM –
STATISTICAL UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Strategic Support that updated on the adoption of the "Manage my Requests" iCasework system (the system) for capturing, managing and reporting all customer complaints, representations and feedback across the Council including the number and nature of complaints by Service.

The report indicated that the system had now been fully rolled-out across the Council, providing a simple web-based interface for front-line staff, case workers and responsible managers for capturing, recording and

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reporting information; detailed the new two stage complaints process; and detailed in tabular form complaints by service area.

The report concluded by detailing that there was still further work to be undertaken by individual services to ensure that the system was adopted in their performance management process and cycle, maximising the system functionality to streamline the complaints handling process and provide effective performance data; that the Strategic Support Service would continue to develop performance reporting to ensure that information and insight was shared with the Senior Leadership Board and Members; and that a number of staff had recently received complaints handling training from the Ombudsman and that the Council would continue to strive to learn from the feedback that it received.

RESOLVED:

That the report updating on the adoption of the “Manage my Requests” iCasework system be noted.

**22. MEMBERS WELFARE REFORM REFERENCE GROUP -
UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 14 of its meeting held on 10 September 2019 the Committee considered an update of the Head of Health and Wellbeing on the operation of the Members’ Welfare Reform Reference Group.

The update provided information on the purpose of the Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty (WRAP) Cabinet Member Reference Group and in particular on activities associated with:

- Holiday Food Programme
- Material Matters’ Programme
- Fuel Poverty Awareness
- Sefton Community Marketplace / Community Shop
- ELAS update summary performance data for the period 1 April 2019 – 30 September 2019

Members of the Committee asked questions/made comments on the following issues:

- The production of information, in tabular form, on the numbers of applications for Universal Credit (UC)
- Details were provided about a meeting held with the Sefton Customer Service Operations Manager at Department for Work and Pensions about how to escalate constituent casework with Job Centre Plus managers
- UC was a modern-day version of the Board of Guardians

RESOLVED:

That the update on the operation of the Members' Welfare Reform Reference Group be noted.

23. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2019/20

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Resources that provided information on the current forecast revenue outturn position for the Council for 2019/20; the current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2019/20; and the monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of August 2019, the forecast expenditure to year end, variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members. The report also updated on spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects.

In respect of the forecast outturn position as at the end of August 2019 the report indicated that significant pressures had been identified in several service areas, particularly Children's Social Care, Locality Services and Home to School Transport; that the latest forecast of service expenditure indicated an overspend of £2.663m; and a table was included within the report highlighting the variations. The report also set out the measures to close the residual gap in 2019/20 to ensure there was no year-end deficit.

In respect of the current forecast on Council Tax it was anticipated that a forecast surplus of £1.160m was declared of which Sefton's share was £0.996m (85.8%); whilst in respect of Business Rates collection for 2019/20 a forecast surplus of £1.768m was declared in with Sefton's share of this being £1.750m.

In respect of the Capital Programme the report detailed the current position of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of August 2019 and that indicated that it should be noted that budgets were profiled over the financial year which skewed expenditure to the final three quarters of the financial year; and a full list of the capital programme by capital scheme was attached to the report as Appendix A.

The report concluded that the Head of Corporate Resources would continue to manage the financing of the programme to ensure the final capital funding arrangements secured the maximum financial benefit to the Council.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- Consultations with Government regarding funding in the next spending round
- Winter pressure funding
- Adult and Children's Social Care funding

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- Increases in Sefton's population in comparison to other areas and the affect this has on Government funding levels
- Variances in the budget associated with the Crosby Flood and Coastal Scheme

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the current forecast revenue outturn position for 2019/20 and the current position relating to delivery of savings included in the 2019/20 revenue budget be noted;
- (2) the mitigating measures being used to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position be noted;
- (3) the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 August 2019 to date of £4.7m with the latest full year forecast being £26.7m be noted;
- (4) the explanations of variances to project budgets as detailed in the report be noted; and
- (5) it be noted that capital resources will be managed by the Head of Corporate Resources to ensure the Capital Programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council.

**24. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS
AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that updated on the on the Work Programme for 2018/19, topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee and seeking the identification any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan.

Regarding the selection of a scrutiny review Working Group topic, the report indicated that the Head of Corporate Resources was currently drawing up topics for consideration by Working Groups in relation to the Council Motion about Climate Change Emergency; and it was therefore recommended that no Working Groups be established until consideration has been given by Members to the proposed topics to be suggested by the Head of Corporate Resources.

The report also provided information on the up to date position on the Council's Ethical Business Practices Working Group; and sought the identification of items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issue:

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- In respect of air quality, the adverse impact on local communities associated with displaced traffic following the opening of Broom's Cross Road

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2019/20 be noted;
- (2) the up to date position in respect of Council's Ethical Business Practices Working Group be noted;
- (3) the establishment of Working Groups be deferred to enable the Head of Corporate Resources to submit potential topics for review in respect of the Council approved Motion on Climate Change Emergency; and
- (4) the Head of Highways and Public Protection be requested to include information in his Air Quality report to the meeting to be held on 14 January 2020 about the adverse air quality impact on local communities associated with displaced traffic following the opening of Broom's Cross Road.

25. CABINET MEMBER REPORT - AUGUST TO OCTOBER 2019

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent report from the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

Councillor Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services presented her report.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- Problems associated with the roll-out of ICT equipment for Members
- Problems associated with the Mod.gov system

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update report from the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be noted; and
- (2) Councillor Lappin be thanked for her attendance at the meeting.