



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS)

MEETING HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL, BOOTLE ON TUESDAY 5TH NOVEMBER, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor John Sayers (in the Chair)
Councillor Blackburne (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Brough, Dowd, Halsall, Marshall and Robinson

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lewis, Myers and Sathiy.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record.

22. STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN LOCAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITIES

Further to Minute No. 15 of 18 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

and that Members' attention was drawn to "Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee" and "Communicating

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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.

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.

23. FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Locality Services presenting formally the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Annual Report.

The report indicated that the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 required that arrangements had to be made to review and scrutinise the exercise by the Council as a Lead Local Flood Risk Authority of its flood risk management functions and coastal erosion risk management functions; and that this Annual Report satisfied that requirement. The report detailed key items of work in relation to:

- Duty to cooperate with other Risk Management Authorities
- Duty to have an up to date Local Flood Risk Strategy
- The undertaking of Sefton's duties as a Riparian owner
- Maintaining a public register on Flood Risk Management Assets
- Responding to major planning applications checking the sustainable drainage systems
- Flood and Coastal Erosion events

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- Sefton's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Strategy Update
- Green Sefton Service delivery
- Resilient Communities
- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment
- Working with the Planning Authority
- Asset inspections
- Capital schemes
- Partnership Working
- Merseyside Strategic and Flood Risk Partnership
- North West and North Wales Coastal Groups
- Priorities for the next year including service planning; supporting the delivery of the Local Plan; Crosby Coastal Scheme; Surface Water Management Plan level 2; Fouracres flood risk scheme; Pool watercourse; and the development of a new investment programme post 2021

Appendix 1 to the report provided information on the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Time and billing review 2018/2019.

The report concluded by seeking comments for submission to the Cabinet Member - Locality Services.

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

- The concerns expressed by local residents and elected Members arising from planning permission approvals for residential developments in areas of flood risk; and the responsibility for resolving flooding incidents if they arose
- The National Planning Policy Framework sets out government's planning policies for England, part of which requires local authorities to make a Local Plan and designate sites for housing development. Developers had to show that flooding issues are mitigated on their housing sites
- Concern was expressed at the privatisation of the building control services
- The work of the Merseyside Strategic and Flood Risk Partnership
- Differences between surface water, coastal and seasonal flooding

RESOLVED:

That the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Annual Report be approved.

24. GREEN SEFTON UPDATE REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Locality Services that provided an update on the Green Sefton service progress after its first 18 months of operation.

Prior to the consideration of the report the Committee received a presentation from Mark Shaw, Green Sefton Service Manager. Mr Shaw provided information on:

- Green Sefton: a one stop shop for all issues associated with our landscape –from design and development, to management and maintenance and user engagement and community development; and that the service managed about 6,500ha of the landscape of the borough, Sefton's beautiful coast with protected sites, to a range of parks, greenspaces, outdoor sports and recreational sites, allotments, street trees etc.
- What our communities valued about Sefton and the Sefton 2030 Vision
- Sustainable aspects of Green Sefton to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs
- Green Sefton values
- Positive aspects of the Green Sefton service in relation to staff working as one flexible team with a new service culture; and Innovative schemes such as insourcing cemeteries and crematoriums grounds maintenance, social investment proposals (e.g. Coronation Park)
- Income and growth issues associated with developing Sefton's golf offer; Making use of Sefton's assets; expansion of natural alternatives; and commercialisation and the approval of five growth proposals (£339k 19/20) with another 43 in the pipeline
- Key challenges affecting the Green Sefton service relating to reduced staffing levels, climate change and succession planning
- Looking forward to the future to deliver the service plan and vision which was directly linked to Sefton 2030; and to ultimately be a self-funding service by 2030,

The report indicated that Green Sefton brought together the former Coast and Countryside, Parks and Greenspaces, Flooding and Coastal Erosion and Risk Management services to ensure a joined-up approach to the vital management, development and oversight of Sefton's coastline, parks and green spaces; that the creation of Green Sefton was part of PSR 7, and its aim was to:

- Improve the way we manage Sefton's natural assets
- Provide a single point of contact and enable more efficient and effective use of resources and offer potential to create new opportunities for income generation

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- Enable more community cohesion
- Offer further opportunities for volunteers, residents and other organisations
- Create a more focussed collaborative approach to the management, development and oversight of our coastline, parks and green spaces.
- Manage all land assets (excluding highways) in one portfolio

and provided an update on the development of the service since its creation in April 2018 in relation to strategy and service planning; finance; staffing; risk management; asset management; community engagement; contractual and commissioning; policy and procedures; health and safety; ICT systems; and communications.

The report concluded by seeking comments for referral to the Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing and the Cabinet Member - Locality Services for consideration.

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

- Contractual arrangements for Green Sefton permanent and seasonal staff
- The potential to improve and develop the offer for other sports as well as golf
- The expansion of “Natural Alternatives” and the cooperation of volunteers in the scheme
- The potential to clean up allotments that are overgrown to ensure that they are re-let quickly
- Support given to community groups to help them increase the number of volunteers; and to obtain external funding
- The business model associated with the development of the golf offer

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report on the Green Sefton service progress after its first 18 months of operation be noted;
- (2) Green Sefton staff be congratulated for their dedication and performance since the inception of the new service;
- (3) Mark Shaw, be thanked for his informative presentation; and
- (4) the Head of Locality Services be requested to circulate a copy of the Green Sefton presentation to all Members of the Council.

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

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking the views of the Committee on the Work Programme for 2019/20, the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee and the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan.

The report also updated on issues associated with United Utilities and increases in their charges.

Members asked questions/raised issues on the following matter:

- How the Committee could help to progress matters with United Utilities

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and updated by the inclusion of a report on the Borough of Culture programme to the January 2020 meeting;
- (2) the Head of Economic Growth and Housing be requested to submit his report on the Shale Gas Working Group – Report on Government Position published and Good Practice and Expectations Document amended to the next meeting of the Committee on 21 January 2020;
- (3) It be noted that the Head of Corporate Resources would submit potential topics for review in respect of the Council approved Motion on Climate Change Emergency to a future meeting;
- (4) taking into account the work being undertaken by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Town Centre Commission a Working Group to investigate the factors associated with the decline of retail areas and shopping parades be not established;
- (5) the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer be requested to obtain a copy of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Town Centre Commission when published and include it on the agenda for a meeting of this Committee;
- (6) a Working group be established to review the topic of the housing support services provided to vulnerable clients by non-governmental organisations and charities and their links to statutory agencies;
- (7) Councillor Robinson be appointed Lead Member of the Working Group referred to in (7) above and the Chief Legal and Democratic

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Officer be requested to seek additional members to serve on the Working Group;

- (8) the update on issues associated with United Utilities and increases in their charges as referred to in paragraph 4 be noted; and
- (9) the Head of Corporate Resources be requested to contact United Utilities to seek their willingness to attend a meeting of the Committee to make a presentation to Members.

26. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS - SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 2019

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent reports from the Cabinet Members for Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton), Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills.

RESOLVED:

That the update report from the Cabinet Members for Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton), Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills be noted.