

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	Date of Meeting:	10 March 2020
Subject:	Work Programme 2019/20, Scrutiny Review Topics and Key Decision Forward Plan		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Communities and Housing; Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton element) Locality Services; Planning and Building Control; and Regeneration and Skills		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To review the Work Programme for 2019/20; to identify potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by a Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; to identify any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; to receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and to update Members on the progress of items that have previously been considered by the Committee

Recommendation: That:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted; and consideration be given to any additional items to be included and thereon be agreed;
- (2) The report on Leasehold House Sales be included on the Work Programme in the next Municipal Year;
- (3) the Committee considers items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the work programme referred to in (1) above; and
- (4) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To determine the Work Programme of items to be considered during the Municipal Year 2019/20 and identify scrutiny review topics which would demonstrate that the work of the Overview and Scrutiny ‘adds value’ to the Council. To comply with a decision of the Committee to update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The pre-scrutiny process assists Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues before making formal decisions.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

No alternative options have been considered as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to approve its Work Programme and identify scrutiny review topics.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications arising from the consideration of a key decision or relating to a recommendation arising from a Working Group review will be reported to Members at the appropriate time.

(A) Revenue Costs – see above

(B) Capital Costs – see above

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None
Legal Implications: None
Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: None directly applicable to this report.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None directly applicable to this report.
Commission, broker and provide core services: None directly applicable to this report but the Committee would be made aware of such issues via the receipt of reports, as referenced in the Work Programme, relating to the review of Winter Service and Operational Plan; the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2018/19; the Update on Operational Activities delivered via Locality Services; and Green Sefton 2018/19 Annual Report, Service Vision 2030, and Service Plan 2019/20.
Place – leadership and influencer: None directly applicable to this report.
Drivers of change and reform: None directly applicable to this report but reports would be submitted to the Committee detailing how the Council is leading on beneficial changes to be made with reference to United Utilities charging policies and new houses being sold as leasehold.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: None directly applicable to this report but the Committee would be made aware of such issues via the receipt of a report in the Work Programme relating to the Sefton Economic Strategy for Growth

Greater income for social investment: None directly applicable to this report.
Cleaner Greener: None directly applicable to this report but the Committee would be made aware of such issues via the receipt of reports, as referenced in the Work Programme, relating to the review of Winter Service and Operational Plan; the Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority – Service Delivery Plan 2018/19; the Update on Operational Activities delivered via Locality Services; Green Sefton 2018/19 Annual Report, Service Vision 2030, and Service Plan 2019/20 together with the implementation of recommendations arising from the Shale Gas Working Group.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Work Programme Report is not subject to FD/LD consultation. Any specific financial and legal implications associated with any subsequent reports arising from the report will be included in those reports as appropriate.

Head of Locality Services

Head of Economic Growth and Housing

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2019/2020
- Criteria Checklist for Selecting Topics for Review
- Latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

Introduction/Background

1. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme of items to be submitted to the Committee for consideration during the Municipal Year 2019/20 is set out in Appendix 1 to the

report. The programme has been produced in liaison with the appropriate Heads of Service, whose roles fall under the remit of the Committee.

- 1.2 Members are requested to consider whether there are any other items that they wish the Committee to consider, that fall within the terms of reference of the Committee. The Work Programme will be submitted to each meeting of the Committee during 2019/20 and updated, as appropriate.

1.3 **Leasehold House Sales**

The request for a report on Leasehold House sales dates back to the submission of a report to this Committee in 2017. The recommendation was for the Head of Regeneration and Housing to report back to the Committee on the outcome of the Government's consultation on measures to tackle unfair practices in the leasehold market.

The 'outcome' of the Government's consultation will be the publication of proposed legislation. Government have previously promised the introduction of new legislation, but it has never been forthcoming or published yet.

The reason it was indicated that another report would be provided at the March meeting was because that was the last one in the current municipal year, and the earliest it was expected new legislation might come forward; and there was the need to not lose sight of the need for a further report.

In reality however the O&S report will probably be one provided in the next municipal year, but it still not certain when. It is therefore recommended that he report be submitted in the next municipal year.

2. **SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS 2019/20**

- 2.1 It is usual practise for the Committee to appoint a Working Group(s) to undertake a scrutiny review of services during the Municipal Year.
- 2.2 Last year the Committee agreed to establish a Working Group to review the topic of the Effectiveness of the Council's Enforcement Activity. This review is on-going and it is anticipated that the Working Group's Final Report will be completed before the end of the Municipal Year.
- 2.3 The Committee, at its last meeting held on 5 November 2019 agreed to establish a Working Group to review the topic of housing support services provided to vulnerable clients by non-governmental organisations and charities and their links to statutory agencies. Councillors Blackburne, Marshall, Michael O'Brien, Robinson and Anne Thompson have agreed to be members of the Working Group; and it is anticipated that the first meeting will be held in March, 2020 to approve the scoping document.
- 2.4 For the information of Members a criteria checklist for selecting and rejecting potential topics to review is attached at **Appendix 2**. This is used to assist the Committee in selecting topics and appointing Working Group(s) for the Municipal Year.
- 2.5 Bearing in mind that the Committee currently has two Working Groups running it

is recommended that no new Working Groups be established.

3. PRE-SCRUTINY OF ITEMS IN THE KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

- 3.1 Members may request to pre-scrutinise items from the Key Decision Forward Plan which fall under the remit (terms of reference) of this Committee. The Forward Plan which is updated each month, sets out the list of items to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration during the next four-month period.
- 3.2 The pre-scrutiny process assists the Cabinet Members to make effective decisions by examining issues beforehand and making recommendations prior to a determination being made.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has requested that only those key decisions that fall under the remit of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be included on the agenda for consideration.
- 3.4 The latest Forward Plan published on 28 February 2020 is attached at **Appendix 3** for this purpose. For ease of identification, items listed on the Forward Plan for the first time appear as shaded.
- 3.5 Should Members require further information in relation to any item on the Key Decision Forward Plan, would they please contact the relevant Officer named against the item in the Plan, prior to the Meeting.
- 3.6 **The Committee is invited to consider items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, which fall under the remit of the Committee and any agreed items be included in the Work Programme referred to in (1) above.**

4. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 4.1 During the last cycle of meetings, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered a report 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. This Committee considered the matter at its meeting held on 22 October 2019 (Minute No. 20).
- 4.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees all agreed the recommendations contained in the report, one of which being that updates on Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee (LCRCAO&S) be included in the Work Programme report considered at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- 4.3 In accordance with the above decision, information on the LCRCAO&S is set out below.
- 4.4 **Role**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was established by the Combined Authority in May 2017 in accordance with the Combined Authorities Order 2017.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Scrutinise the decision and actions taken by the Combined Authority or the Metro Mayor;
- Provide a 'critical friend to policy and strategy development;
- Undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region; and
- Monitor the delivery of the Combined Authority's strategic plan.

4.5 **Membership**

The Committee is made up of 3 elected Members from each of the constituent Local Authorities of the LCR Combined Authority, along with one elected Member from both the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

Sefton's appointed Members are Councillors Dowd, Howard and Marshall. Councillor Dowd is Sefton's Scrutiny Link.

Councillors Pugh and Sir Ron Watson are the respective representatives of the Liverpool City Region Liberal Democrat Group and the Liverpool City Region Conservative Group.

4.6 **Chair**

The Chair of the LCRCAO&S cannot be a Member of the majority group. Councillor Thomas Crone, a Green Party Councillor serving on Liverpool City Council has been appointed Chair for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

4.7 **Quoracy Issues**

A high number of meetings of the LCRCAO&S have been inquorate.

The quorum for meetings of the LCRCAO&S is 14, two-thirds of the total number of members, 20. This high threshold is not set by the Combined Authority but is set out in legislation.

The Combined Authority's Monitoring Officer will be looking to work with the Monitoring Officers from the other Combined Authorities to identify what problems they are experiencing with Scrutiny and how/if they had overcome them. Representations to Government would also be considered once all options locally to resolve the quorum issue had been exhausted. The CA Monitoring Officer would then be able to provide evidence to Government that the quorum level was obstructing the work of scrutiny within the CA.

4.8 **Meetings**

Information on all meetings and membership of the LCRCAO&S can be obtained

using the following link

<https://moderngov.merseytravel.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=365&Year=0>

15 January 2020 – Budget Meeting

The budget meeting of LCRCAO&S was scheduled to held on 15 January 2020. However, as the meeting was inquorate it did not proceed and was subsequently re-scheduled. A private session was then held to discuss the following items and to canvass O&S Councillors' opinions:

- Mayoral Combined Authority Budget Setting Report 2020/21; and
- Review of Actions to Improve Poor Air Quality Across the Liverpool City Region.

12 February 2020 – Re-Scheduled Budget Meeting

The meeting was quorate, and the LCRCAO&S was asked to consider the business outstanding from the inquorate budget meeting scheduled to be held on 15 January 2020, namely:

- Appointment of Vice-Chair;
- Appointment to the Audit and Governance Committee 2019/20; and
- Review into the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Task and Finish Review – Next Steps.

The Minutes of the meeting will be available in due course, using the link referred to above.

4 March 2020 - Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the LCRCAO&S is scheduled to be held on 4 March 2020.

Details of all the meetings can be obtained using the link referred to above.

4.9 The Committee is requested to note the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5. UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF ITEMS THAT HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

5.1 United Utilities

United Utilities are progressing their site selection and investigations toward deploying sustainable drainage systems measures at schools. This has led to an initial meeting between UU and Churchtown Primary School which will determine what next steps can be carried out. The project had been envisaged to be completed by the end of March 2019, but will now be extended in to the following year. Energy & Environmental Management Officers will seek further updates on progress to inform Committee when they become available.