

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19



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FOREWORD



Chair, Councillor Carl Cashman



Welcome to the 2018-19 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report highlights the work carried out by the Committee over the last year.

Our work programme has been focussed and challenging at times where we have focussed on the scrutiny remit of the Committee and understood better the decisions of the Metro Mayor and the Combined Authority as we felt these were important to the residents of the City Region and we could add value, while fulfilling our role.

We have met five times this year and the Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram was invited and attended each meeting. We have completed four Scrutiny Workshop sessions which were focussed on the Housing Strategy, Tourism, Culture and Marketing the Region, The Effectiveness of the Careers Services and EU Funding/Brexit.

For the first time we scrutinised the LCR Combined Authority's Budget for 2019/20, which proved to be a welcome experience to the Committee. The Committee will learn from this process and move forward to enable enhanced scrutiny of the budget in the future.

As Chair, I have been grateful for the support of the two Vice Chairs, Councillor Kevan Wainwright and Councillor Paula Murphy along with the hard work and commitment from the elected members of the Committee. Despite our political differences, the committee has worked in tandem to look closely at areas of concern and represent the six Local Authority interests. Members have all made a significant contribution to the work of the Committee, the Workshop Sessions and the Scrutiny of the Combined Authorities budget for 2019/20.

I appreciate that it is difficult for Members to balance their numerous commitments, but I do appreciate the members who made every effort to attend, hold to account, question and support the scrutiny process.

I'd like to say a special thank you to the members of the public who attend our meetings and to the invited guests for providing the information to contribute to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. I am also grateful to all of the officers from within the Combined Authority, Merseytravel, constituent Local Authorities and partner organisations who provided support and ensured that we delivered a successful work programme.

I look forward to the progression of the devolution project and the evolution of scrutiny in the coming years.

Carl Cashman

Chair, Councillor Carl Cashman

MESSAGE

Vice Chair, Councillor Kevan Wainwright



It has been an honour to serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee again this this year, as a Vice Chairperson. I look forward to next year with enthusiasm.

The Liverpool City Region (LCR) is still in its fledgling state, but with its new administration it is evolving into an authority with a clear strategy on the environment, transport, employment & skills and the development & regeneration for the City Region area.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been involved in these strategies by ensuring that they are robust and meet the needs of the city region. It is important that we act on the public's behalf to scrutinise emerging policies, ensuring that they are transparent in their meanings and recommending changes if they are not. We act as an impartial non-political body that challenges the Metro Mayor and the Combined Authority without party distinction or bias.

I'd like to thank the other Vice Chairperson, Councillor Paula Murphy for her help and support, and the Members of the Committee who have been able to attend. They have provided much insight and experience from their own authorities to help move the committee and working groups forward.

I would also like to thank those officers and invited professional witnesses for their time and specialist expertise in their respected fields.

Kevan Wainwright

Vice Chair, Councillor Kevan Wainwright

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2018/19



Chairperson: Councillor Cashman, Carl
Liberal Democrat, Prescot North Ward
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council



Vice Chairperson: Councillor Murphy, Paula
Labour, Molyneux Ward
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council



Vice Chairperson: Councillor Wainwright, Kevan
Labour, Hough Green Ward
Halton Borough Council



Councillor Anderson, Tom
Conservative, Greasby, Frankby & Irby Ward
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Banks, Jeanette
Labour, Haydock Ward
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Burns, June
Labour, Park Ward
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor De' Asha, Joe
Labour, Rainhill Ward
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Finneran, Edna
Labour, Halewood South Ward
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Hurley, Patrick
Labour, Mossley Hill Ward
Liverpool City Council



Councillor Jackson, Jimmy
Labour, Sutton Ward
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Jones, Adrian
Labour, Seacombe Ward
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Marshall, Samantha
Labour, Blundellsands Ward
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor McGlashan, Ken
Labour & Co-operative, Page Moss Ward
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor O'Brien, Tricia
Labour, Cressington Ward
Liverpool City Council



Councillor Pugh, Dr John
Liberal Democrat, Dukes Ward
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Rasmussen, Mary
Labour, Speke-Garston Ward
Liverpool City Council



Councillor Stapleton, Jean
Labour, Birkenhead & Tranmere Ward
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council



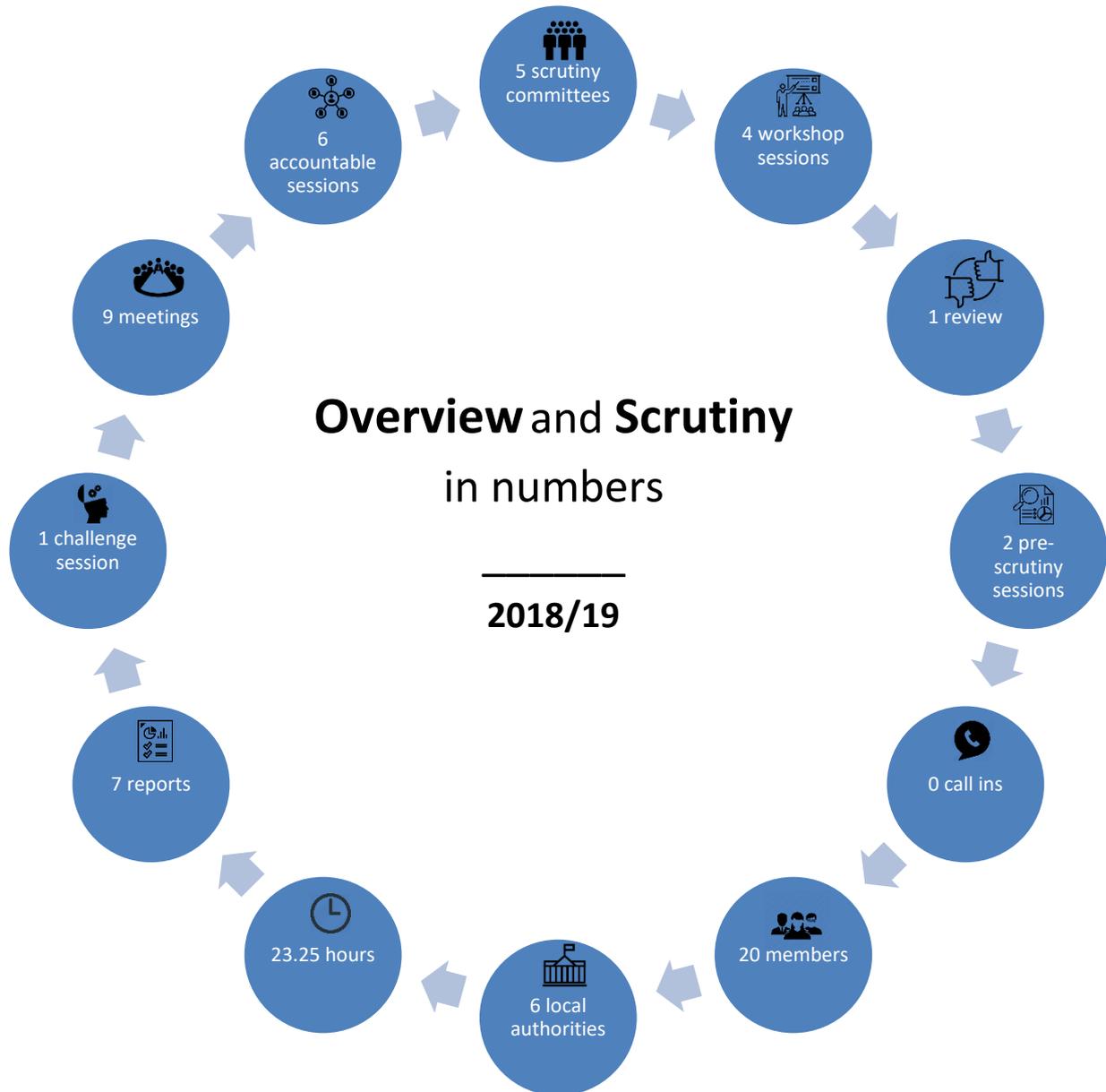
Councillor Watson, Sir Ron
Conservative, Dukes Ward
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council



Councillor Whitley, Louise
Labour, Halton View Ward
Halton Borough Council



Councillor Woolfall, Bill
Labour, Birchfield Ward
Halton Borough Council



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At each of our five Committee meetings this year we received an update from the Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram on the progress of his activities and the key milestones of the Combined Authority (CA). The Metro Mayor provided an in-depth update to Members and facilitated questions relating to the previous quarter at each meeting. This provided the Committee with a better understanding of the Metro Mayor's ongoing commitments and an opportunity to challenge and scrutinise the activities he had been involved in.



The Committee considered a number of reports during the course of the year including an update on the Air Quality Action Plan which was one of the Task and Finish Group's completed last year by the Committee. The six recommendations within the Action Plan were adopted by the CA including establishing an Air Quality Task Force to progress the Air Quality Action Plan. Regular updates on the Air Quality Task Force would be provided to the meeting for monitoring and scrutiny purposes.

Other reports and updates which the Committee have considered include the One Front Door, Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme, Combined Authority Budget and an update from Councillor Phil Davies, the Portfolio Lead for Inclusive Growth, Economic Development, Digital and Innovation.

One area of particular interest to the Committee this year has been the opportunity to be involved in scrutinising the Combined Authority Budget for 2019/20. This was the first time in which the Committee had the opportunity to scrutinise the budget and it was very welcomed.

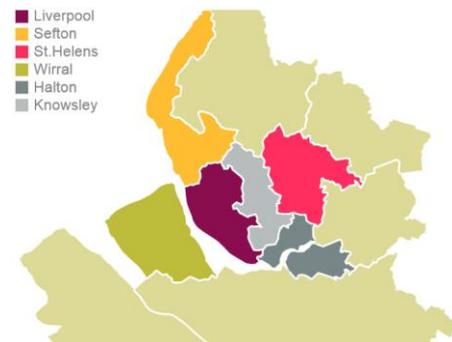


WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Housing Strategy - 28th November 2018 Presented by Tim Jago & Adrian Nolan

The workshop began by outlining some of the key strategic issues across the city region that the emerging Housing Strategy would look to take account of based on evidence and data. The conversation and feedback from Members centred on a number of points including: -

- Private landlords
- Brownfield sites
- Future housing needs
- Disability/accessibility
- Adaptations within existing stock;
- Building housing for the whole 'life-course'
- Devolved funding streams
- Management of stock
- Leasehold Housing
- Tenure mix
- Density levels
- Environmental sustainability



During the workshop, Members were appraised on Combined Authority strategic housing objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.

Homelessness was also discussed in the workshop. Although there was a lack of meaningful data to share, the Liverpool City Region is a Housing First national pilot and so is a priority for the Combined Authority and as such would be a key theme within the emerging Housing Strategy.

The workshop concluded with a summation of the key points discussed and some overarching areas to explore in future.

At the meeting held on 6th March 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided with an update relating to the input from the workshop and how their views and comments were being taken into consideration when drafting the Housing Strategy. The Committee members were able to see how their questions, challenges and contributions would be valuable to the production of a key Combined Authority document.

The Effectiveness of the Careers Service - 12th December 2018
Presented by Rob Tabb



The workshop was advised that there was a consistent and widespread feedback from employers and stakeholders that the way in which careers services were currently organised and operated was not effective and the Combined Authority shared this view.



There was no overall careers service in place with a range of different organisations given responsibilities for certain ages. In addition, Government departments each commission different elements of the overall careers, education and guidance landscape, which made it difficult to provide coherent and consistent advice and support.

The proposed focus for the workshop was to understand the outline in its context, identify a number of initiatives which were deemed to be effective and to consider a number of options for improvement.

The workshop received presentations from a number of external organisations including: -

- National Careers Service
- Shaping Futures
- Jobcentre Plus
- LCR Schools Career Hubs
- University of Liverpool Careers Team

The workshop felt that though the information provided was detailed and informative, the absence of school representatives created an information gap and as such has recommended that Careers be included in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2019/20. There was a clear realisation that there lacked planning and co-ordinated efforts despite the programmes, opportunities and funding available within the careers community.

It was recognised that this was a limitation of the way in which services were operated rather than being a comment on any individuals or organisations involved in this essential work.

**Tourism, Culture and Marketing the Region - 17th
December 2018**

Presented by Sarah Lovell, Pete Sandman & Paula Williams



An introduction and overview on the importance of the Culture, Creative and Visitor Economy sectors and their joint strategic approach to enhance the Liverpool City Region was given to members attending the Workshop. Evidence of the collaboration, integration and governance structures of both sectors were detailed and exemplified across a number of key case studies outlining the social and economic impacts of a joined up approach. Details of both the Liverpool City Region's Visitor Economy Strategy and Cultural & Creativity Strategies were described, and key statistics provided on the impact of progress to date.



The workshop explored in some detail the following case studies relating to the visitor economy, business tourism and Cultural content: -

- Atlantic Interreg Project
- Lost Castles
- Business Events SIF Project
- Boroughs of Culture
- Terracotta Warriors
- Shakespeare North
- Eureka!

Conversation focused on several of these and other key projects (capital and revenue) that will be transformational for the sectors, including the impact on place making, attraction, training and skills development opportunities, recognising the need for sustainability and ongoing investment.

The group discussed a broad definition of culture as an all-encompassing term –public consultation had commonly defined culture as ‘everything’ covering a multitude of events, activities and initiatives. It also identified the important role Culture can play in supporting and achieving positive outcomes for health wellbeing, education, cohesion, the future world of work and inclusivity in engagement across all ages and backgrounds. Similarly, the meeting discussed the inter relationship between both the Cultural and Visitor Economy Sectors is generating products and experiences that make the City Region distinctive and help it generate wealth and jobs through visitor spend. It stressed the importance of taking a market lead approach to promotion that involved leading with our best-known brands to raise the visibility and profile of the assets and experiences that make the City Region special.

The group heard of some of the challenges the arts and cultural sector faced when attempting to evidence its impact on the city region. Although there was a wealth of anecdotal and qualitative data suggesting the arts benefited those who participated it was suggested that a more robust framework was needed to showcase evidence particularly with regards to increasing social mobility and sustaining growth. Similarly, the issues around core funding for marketing and promoting the city region's visitor offer, investment and skill and training and product development were also considered.

EU Funding/Brexit - 23rd January 2019 **Presented by & Pernille Kousgaard & Rob Tabb**

The workshop provided a brief overview of EU funding in the City Region over the last 5-10 years, noting that the latest tranche of funding would end in 2020. It was estimated that about 23,000 EU Citizens live and work within the City Region. The workshop was informed that there were a number of projects being appraised at the moment and that further relevant calls were being prepared for publication. It was explained that some staff had been funded in a Local Growth Hub to look at customs, exporting, replacement staff, workforce planning etc. in relation to Brexit in the interim.



Concerns were raised during the workshop relating to: -

- level of funding post Brexit
- the 'fair funding review'
- the rules set by the EU on funding

It was proposed by the workshop that the Combined Authority should seek to co-design the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to ensure it is aligned to our ambitions as set out in the Strategic Investment Fund.

The workshop discussed European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund funding and it was noted that to date few applications had been rejected; projects have been approved with conditions to ensure they benefitted the whole City Region.

The workshop also considered the ramifications of a 'no deal Brexit' including impact on trade deals, participation in EU programmes for universities, Research & Development projects and schools. It was explained that all deals other than staying within the EU would have a negative impact on the economy with potentially around 15,000 job losses estimated by Sussex University, higher inflation, VISA requirements, funding gap for languages in secondary schools and a hard border with Northern Ireland. Furthermore, anecdotally EU residents in the UK are leaving whether high or low skilled and that employers are experiencing recruitment and retention problems.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Looking Ahead – Proposed Work Programme for 2019/20

Overview and Scrutiny plays an important role in challenging performance and driving improvement and needs to be as effective as possible.

The Committee would like to propose the following proposed work programme for 2019/20: -

Meeting: *21 June 2019
<i>Items covered: Transport & Air Quality</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Presentation: Chair of the Transport Committee</i>• <i>Transforming Cities Fund</i>• <i>Air Quality Action Plan Update</i>• <i>Year of Environment 2019</i>
Meeting: *24 July 2019
<i>Items covered: Energy & Renewables</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mersey Tidal Power Project</i>• <i>SIF update</i>• <i>Welfare Reform Update</i>
Meeting: *16 October 2019
<i>Items covered: Housing and Spatial Planning</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Housing Strategy Update</i>• <i>Housing First Update</i>
Meeting: *8 January 2020
<i>Items covered: Policy, Resources, Strategy & Delivery</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>LCRCA Financial Performance Report 2018/19, 2019/20</i>• <i>Liverpool City Region Budget for 2020/21</i>
Meeting: *11 March 2020
<i>Items covered: Education, Employment, Apprenticeships & Skills</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Careers</i>• <i>Apprenticeships</i>• <i>Digital Connectivity Update</i>• <i>Skills Investment Strategy</i>

**Dates are subject to approval by the Combined Authority*

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



How to get involved

There is one main way you can get involved with the LCR Overview and Scrutiny Committee process and that is by attending Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings. These are all public meetings and therefore open to any local resident who wishes to attend. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be live cast at future meetings in the new municipal year through the Combined Authority website. See link below:

<https://moderngov.merseytravel.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=365>

