

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

At a meeting of this Commission held on  
20 July 2020

**(Present)**            **Councillor Clarke (Chairman)**  
**Councillors Gomez-Aspron, D Long, T Long, Maloney MBE,**  
**McDonnell, O'Keefe, Osundeko, C Preston, L Preston,**  
**Sweeney and Wiseman**

**(Not Present)**      **Councillors Greaves, Haw and Jones**

**Mr D Thorpe**            - **Church of England**  
**Mr C Williams**        - **Archdiocese**

**(Also Present)**    **Councillor Uddin**

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The Chair led tributes to Paul Sanderson, Former Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Place who had sadly died earlier in the week.

### **41      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Greaves, Haw and Jones, Mr D Thorpe and Mr C Williams.

### **42      MINUTES**

\*        **Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2020, be approved and signed.**

### **43      DECLARATION OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

No Declarations of Interest from Members were made.

### **44      COUNCIL'S USE OF PAPER AND PLASTICS TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT**

A report was submitted and outlined by Councillor Uddin, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group which informed the Overview and Scrutiny Commission of the Scrutiny Review of the Council's Use of Paper and Plastics which had been commissioned by the Environment, Regeneration, Housing, Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Ordinarily the Task Group's report would have been approved by the Environment, Regeneration, Housing, Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel prior to being presented to the Commission for final approval. However, due to the cancellation of meetings caused by the COVID-19 lockdown the Task Group Report had not been approved by Panel.

The report and presentation from Councillor Uddin detailed the background, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review.

As a result of the review undertaken by the Task and Finish Group, the submitted report 'A review of the Council's use of Paper and Plastics' proposed that fourteen recommendations be made to the Cabinet, these were detailed at appendix 1 of the

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report.

It was noted that the Council had already taken steps towards addressing some of the climate change issues highlighted within the report such as the appointment of an accountable officer to oversee and lead on climate change issues and a review of the Council vehicle fleet, but that work should continue to ensure that the Council continued to work towards its aim of becoming a zero carbon Council by 2040.

During discussion of the report, it was proposed that a recommendation in relation to the development of a plastic light policy be included to complement the recommendation that the Council develop a paper light policy.

\* **Resolved that:**

- (1) the report be noted; and**
- (2) the final report, as amended, be submitted to Cabinet.**

### **45 APPRENTICESHIPS FOR CHILDREN WE LOOK AFTER TASK AND FINISH GROUP INTERIM REPORT**

An interim report was submitted and outlined by Councillor T Long, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group which informed the Overview and Scrutiny Commission of the Scrutiny Review of the Apprenticeships for Children We Look After which had been commissioned by the Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Ordinarily the Task Group's report would have been approved by the Children and Young People Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel prior to being presented to the Commission for final approval. However, due to the cancellation of meetings caused by the COVID-19 lockdown the Interim Task Group Report had not been approved by Panel.

The report detailed the background, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review.

As a result of the review undertaken by the Task and Finish Group, the submitted report 'Apprenticeships for Children We Look After- Interim Report' proposed that eight recommendations be made to the Cabinet, these were detailed at paragraphs 6.1 to 6.8 of the report.

In presenting the interim report, Councillor T Long advised the Commission that an additional recommendation should be included in relation to making the post of Education, Employment and Training (EET) Co-ordinator a permanent post.

Following discussion on results and outcomes, it was agreed that there was a need to ensure that there was clear data on the outcomes and that progress and success was monitored. It was suggested that a review of the provision the Council offered, as a Corporate Parent, be considered.

It was noted by the Commission that the scrutiny of the Apprenticeship for Looked After Children had not been able to be completed due to the cessation of task force activities due to the COVID-19 Lockdown.

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The Commission noted that the Task Group had decided to produce an interim report to ensure some recommendations could be made before the end of the municipal year. The report also contained recommendations on how the task group could continue in future.

The value in the continuation of this review, particularly in relation to youth employment opportunities following the pandemic, the detail of support that the Education, Employment and Training (EET) Co-ordinator offered, the pilot programme of academic mentoring and data on access to schemes such as Princes Trust and groups such as Cadets to build skills for apprenticeships was discussed by the Commission.

\* **Resolved that:**

- (1) the report be noted; and**
- (2) the Apprenticeships for Children We Look After Task and Finish Group Interim Report, as amended be submitted to Cabinet.**

### **46 COUNTY LINES TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT**

A report was submitted and outlined by Councillor Sweeney, Chairman of the Task Group, which informed the Overview and Scrutiny Commission of the Spotlight Review of County Lines Issues within St Helens which had been commissioned by the Safer Communities Panel.

Ordinarily the Task Group's report would have been approved by the Safer Communities Panel prior to being presented to the Commission for final approval. However, due to the cancellation of meetings caused by the COVID-19 lockdown the Task Group Report has not been approved by Panel.

The report detailed the background, findings, conclusions and recommendations of the spotlight review.

As a result of the review undertaken by the Task and Finish Group, the submitted report 'County Lines Issues within St Helens' proposed that eight recommendations be made to the Cabinet, these were detailed at Appendix 1 of the report.

It was reported by Councillor Sweeney that recommendations 5.5 and 5.6 which proposed a site visit to the Violence Reduction Partnership and an invitation for the St Giles Trust: Junior Smart to attend a meeting of the Safer Communities Panel before May 2020 had been unable to be actioned due to the impact of the pandemic.

Councillor Sweeney also took the opportunity to advise and update the Commission on the work that had taken place across partners during lockdown in relation to County Lines and the impact that the pandemic was having on the work of the Violence Reduction Team.

\* **Resolved that:**

- (1) the report be noted; and**
- (2) the final report be submitted to Cabinet.**

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### 47 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES HANDOVER

The Scrutiny Manager presented the report on the Scrutiny Work Programme Handover.

A comprehensive work programme was fundamental to the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny Committees as it enabled them to plan and manage their workloads to make best use of the available time and resources, to add the most value to the performance of the Council and outcomes for residents.

The report and appendices provided information about the management of overview and scrutiny work programmes and requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission review current work programmes to be handed over to new scrutiny committees which were due to replace those in the existing structure.

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Prioritisation Aid, Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme and the five Panel Work Programmes' were appended to the report at Appendices 1 to 6 respectively.

The Chair of each respective Committee highlighted the elements of the work programme that they believed should be considered a priority going forward.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Council Modernisation Programme and reset recovery priorities; and</li> <li>• Council Policy for dealing with abuse of staff.</li> </ul>
Audit and Financial Monitoring Overview and Scrutiny Panel	<p>The Chair advised that the schedule presented in the hand over was the minimum engagement and timeline for audit and financial monitoring.</p> <p>It was noted that consideration would need to be given regarding the undertaking and format of the scrutiny of Internal Audit Reports.</p>
Children and Young Peoples Overview and Scrutiny Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apprenticeships for Looked After Children;</li> <li>• Children's Services Improvement Plan;</li> <li>• SEND Improvement Plan;</li> <li>• CAMHS; and</li> <li>• Good Childhood Enquiry.</li> </ul>
Environment, Regeneration, Housing Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Service Review;</li> <li>• Waste Collection including litter picking; and</li> <li>• Borough's Housing Need.</li> </ul>
Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the outstanding task groups outcomes: Independent Living and Waiting Times for GP appointments;</li> <li>• Suicide Prevention including the impact of 'Lockdown';</li> <li>• Eastern Sector Counter Hubs; and</li> <li>• Care Homes Handling of the Coronavirus Pandemic.</li> </ul>

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Safer Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Antisocial Behaviour;</li><li>• Domestic Abuse Strategy;</li><li>• County Lines; and</li><li>• Knife Crime.</li></ul>
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\* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the report on Scrutiny Work Programme Handover be noted; and**
- (2) **the recommendations, as made by the Chairs of the Commission and its Panels, regarding priority elements of the work programme be compiled by the Scrutiny Manager for submission to the new Committees for consideration for inclusion in their work programmes.**

### **48 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019–2020**

The Scrutiny Manager presented the report on the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-2020.

The report provided a comprehensive summary of the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Function at St Helens Council during the 2019-2020 municipal year.

\* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-2020 be approved; and**
- (2) **the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-2020 be submitted to Council for consideration.**

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