



COUNCIL SUMMONS

To Members of the Metropolitan Borough Council

Dear Councillor

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council to be held on **Thursday 21st April, 2022 at 6.30 pm at the Town Hall, Southport** to transact the business set out on the agenda overleaf.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwayne D.", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Chief Executive

Town Hall,
Southport

Monday 11 April 2022

Please contact Paul Fraser, Senior Democratic Services Officer
on 0151 934 2068 or e-mail paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

We endeavour to provide a reasonable number of full agendas, including reports at the meeting. If you wish to ensure that you have a copy to refer to at the meeting, please can you print off your own copy of the agenda pack prior to the meeting.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested at a meeting where a disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest arises, which is not already included in their Register of Members' Interests, to declare any interests that relate to an item on the agenda.

Where a Member discloses a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, he/she must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest, except where he/she is permitted to remain as a result of a grant of a dispensation.

Where a Member discloses a personal interest he/she must seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or staff member representing the Monitoring Officer to determine whether the Member should withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest or whether the Member can remain in the meeting or remain in the meeting and vote on the relevant decision.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

(Pages 5 - 32)

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022

4. Mayor's Communications

Public Session

5. Matters Raised by the Public

(Pages 33 -
34)

To deal with matters raised by members of the public resident within the Borough, of which notice has been given in accordance with the procedures relating to public questions, motions or petitions set out in Paragraph 36 to 47 of the Council and Committee Procedure Rules in Chapter 4 of the Council Constitution.

(A) Public Petition - Save the Promenade in Crosby Coastal Park

(Details of any further petitions notified or questions submitted by members of the public will be circulated at the meeting).

Council Business Session

6. Questions Raised by Members of the Council

To receive and consider questions to Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Spokespersons for any of the Joint Authorities upon any matter within their portfolio/area of responsibility, of which notice has been given by Members of the Council in accordance with Paragraph 49 to 51 of the Council and Committee Procedure Rules, set out in Chapter 4 of the Council Constitution.

- 7. New Realities 2022** (Pages 35 - 52)
Report of the Executive Director - People
- 8. Review of the 2021-2022 Member Development Programme and Proposed Strategy for the 2022-2023 Programme** (Pages 53 - 70)
Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services
- 9. ICT Acceptable Usage Policy** (Pages 71 - 88)
Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services
- 10. Sefton Council Policy on Dealing with the On-Line Abuse and Intimidation of Councillors** (Pages 89 - 118)
Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer
- 11. Membership of Committees 2021/22**
To consider any changes to the Membership of any Committees etc.
- 12. Matters dealt with in accordance with Rule 46 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Call-In and Urgency) of the Constitution** (Pages 119 - 120)
Report of the Leader of the Council
- 13. Matters dealt with in accordance with Rule 29 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (Special Urgency) of the Constitution** (Pages 121 - 122)
Report of the Leader of Council
- 14. Motion Submitted by Councillor Wilson - A Fair Deal for Lydiate, Maghull and Aintree - Return the Double Rating Rebate to the Town and Parish Councils** (Pages 123 - 124)

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| 15. Motion Submitted by Councillor Prendergast - Local Authority Publicity | (Pages 125 - 128) |
| 16. Motion Submitted by Councillor Ian Maher - Cost of Living Crisis | (Pages 129 - 130) |
| 17. Motion Submitted by Councillor Carlin - Sefton Council Race Equality Declaration of Intent | (Pages 131 - 134) |
| 18. Motion Submitted by Councillor Halsall - Work of Trade Unions | (Pages 135 - 136) |

COUNCIL

MEETING HELD AT THE GOLDEN MILLER SUITE, AINTREE RACECOURSE ON THURSDAY 3RD MARCH, 2022

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Carragher) in the Chair
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Burns) Vice Chair

Councillors Atkinson, Bennett, Blackburne, Bradshaw, Brodie - Browne, Brough, Byrom, Carlin, Carr, Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, Dodd, Dowd, Doyle, Dutton, Evans, Fairclough, Friel, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardy, Howard, Irving, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Lewis, Ian Maher, Chris Maher, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, Sathiy, John Sayers, Yvonne Sayers, Shaw, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Lynne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield and Webster

93. WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed Members, Officers and Members of the Public to the Council Meeting at Aintree Racecourse; and indicated that following discussions with the Director of Public Health it was considered that the current scale of Covid-19 infection in Sefton justified the need to meet in a larger, easier to distance venue such as Aintree Racecourse.

Furthermore, many Councillors had also expressed concern about their own personal safety and this had contributed to the decision to hold the meeting at Aintree Racecourse. The Director of Public Health had advised that:

- There still remained a high rate of infection in Sefton at circa 400/100,000 and over 1000 still contracting Covid in the last 7 days
- There were approximately 129 Council and School staff absent from work because they had Covid
- Cases were slowly coming down, but we were not yet at a level where we could drop the protective measures that helped to prevent the spread of the virus
- Thankfully our vaccines were protecting us from severe Covid-19 disease. However, even vaccinated individuals could catch and transmit Covid-19.

The Mayor appreciated that there had been some criticism about meetings being held at Aintree, but again we would be utilising Government funding for Covid-19 to pay for the room hire. On balance it was believed that we were protecting Councillors, staff and supporting the NHS and our

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communities by limiting the risks of spreading Covid-19; and she hoped that this decision was understood.

The Mayor also indicated that in the usual way she would be obliged if Members would observe social distancing measures and should any Member or officer need to move away from their designated area she kindly requested that a face covering was worn.

Finally, the Mayor advised that hand sanitizers were provided for use by attendees; and that she hoped that all attendees had taken a lateral flow test prior to their attendance at the Council Meeting and which had produced a negative result.

94. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brennan, D'Albuquerque, Jones, McGinnity, Morris and Sir Ron Watson.

95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

96. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

97. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Death of Lord Ronnie Fearn of Southport OBE

The Mayor reported with great sadness on the loss of former Councillor and Member of Parliament for Southport Lord Ronnie Fearn OBE, who passed away on 24 January 2022; and that on behalf of the Council she had attended Lord Fearn's funeral at St Simon and St Jude with All Souls Church, Old Park Lane, on Friday 18 February 2022.

The Mayor advised that Lord Fearn had a long and distinguished local and parliamentary political career which included:

- Membership of the Southport County Borough Council, representing Craven Ward, from 1963 to 1974
- Membership of Sefton Council, representing Norward Ward, from 1974 to 2016
- Membership of Merseyside County Council, representing Craven-Sussex-Talbot Ward, from 1974 to 1984
- Member of Parliament for Southport from 1987 to 1992 and from 1997 to 2001

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- Member of the House of Lords from 2001 to 2018

and that in the 1985 Birthday Honours, Ronnie Fearn was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE).

The Mayor concluded that outside of politics, Lord Fearn was involved in numerous local organisations, none more so than the All Souls Dramatic Club where he maintained a lifelong involvement in amateur dramatics.

Councillors Pugh, Brough and Maher paid tribute to Lord Fearn.

The Council then observed a one-minute silence as a mark of respect for Lord Fearn.

Merchant Taylor's Boys School Council Debate

The Mayor advised that on Friday 11 February she welcomed a group of pupils from Merchant Taylor's Boys School to take part in a mock Council Debate titled 'The House would prevent MPs from holding any other paid employment'. The pupils represented their school brilliantly and had some solid for and against arguments on the subject. The Mayor concluded that if any Members would like to take this opportunity to invite some of their local schools in their wards for similar debates that she would be more than happy to accommodate them.

St. Giles Church, Aintree

The Mayor advised that she visited St Giles Church, Aintree on Wednesday 23 February 2022 to present an award to the Church for being the first Church in Sefton to be awarded breastfeeding friendly status.

Birkdale Food Pantry

The Mayor reported that she was invited by Compassion Acts Birkdale to the Birkdale Food Pantry on Tuesday 1 March 2022, to officially open the Pantry at Birkdale Methodist Church.

Mayor of Sefton's Gala Charity Ball 2022

The Mayor indicated that as Members may have been aware on their arrival at the meeting, tickets were now available from her office for her Charity Ball that would be held on Saturday 26 March at the Bliss Hotel, Southport. The Mayor's charities this year were the Plaza Cinema, Sefton Children's Trust and Home Start (Southport & Formby). The Mayor commended the charities as worthwhile causes to their communities and indicated that Members could help the charities by attending her Ball. The Mayor advised that there would be some fantastic entertainment at the Ball, along with a raffle, auction and tombola; and that tickets were £50.00 and could be obtained by emailing her office mayorsoffice@sefton.gov.uk to purchase them. Currently 182 tickets had been sold and ideally the Mayor was hoping to reach a target of 200.

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Mayor's Lottery

The Mayor reported that at each Council meeting she took the opportunity to remind Members to sign up for the Mayor's Lottery; that the Lottery cost £2 per month to enter and would be deducted directly from Members' allowances; and that half of the proceeds from the lottery would go to her Charity Fund.

Ukraine

The Mayor reported that it had now been a week since Russian forces invaded Ukraine, which had resulted in the largest conventional warfare operation in Europe since World War II; and that it had led to lives lost, families broken and displaced, and the heartbreak of a nation, indeed the world.

The Mayor advised that on 22 February 2022 she attended The Western Approaches Museum in Liverpool for the opening of the Arctic Convoys, a Shared History exhibition. The Arctic Convoys were Merchant Navy ships that were escorted by Royal Navy, Canadian Royal Navy and US Navy and Air cover that transported millions of tons of supplies and munitions from the UK to Arkhangelsk and Murmansk in the Soviet Union through the Arctic waters to aid their defence of the Eastern Front from 1941 to 1945 during the second World War. This operation saved many civilian lives from starvation, cold and Nazi attack and was a vital part of the fight against Nazi Germany. The Mayor indicated that she had spoken with 3 of the veterans who were there to open the exhibition; that they had told her of the friendship and unbreakable bond that they had with their Russian comrades; stated that they worked together with the Russia troops to ensure cargo got to the people; and that without this union WW2 may well have had a very different outcome. The Mayor concluded that their stories showed that the Russian people were our friends, that they were good people, they they were not their leader, that we must remember our history during this time, and live in the hope that the unbreakable bond and friendship that veterans spoke to her about could shine a light through this dark time.

The Council then observed a one-minute silence to reflect on the freedoms we had in our own lives and the peace that we lived in; and to offer its thoughts to the people of Ukraine in the hope for a peaceful, safe end to the conflict and for a return to normal life for them, their children and their families.

98. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

The Mayor reported that no matters had been raised by the Public.

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99. QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council considered a schedule setting out the written questions submitted by:

- (1) Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Maher)
- (2) Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Cabinet Member – Education (Councillor Roscoe)
- (3) Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing (Councillor Hardy)
- (4) Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Cabinet Member – Planning and Building Control (Councillor Veidman)
- (5) Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing (Councillor Hardy)

together with the responses given. Due to the absence of Councillor Sir Ron Watson at the meeting no supplementary questions were raised.

100. ANNUAL REVIEW OF ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ASSET DISPOSAL POLICY

Further to Minute No. 104 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services advising that the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy set out the vision and aspirations for the effective management of the Council's corporate asset portfolio and the role it played in supporting and shaping the Council's agenda for the 2030 vision; that aside from its staff the Council's next biggest resource was its land and property and therefore, it was vital that this resource was managed and used effectively and efficiently to ensure that the Council derived maximum benefit from its assets in support of its strategic aims and priorities; that the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy would provide a framework for the planning, prioritisation, management and funding of the Council's asset base and that this was a statutory document that the Council was required to have in place and would be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Asset Management Strategy and Asset Disposal Policy were attached as appendices to the report.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That the updated

- (1) Asset Management Strategy be approved; and

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- (2) Asset Disposal Policy be approved.

101. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2022/23

Further to Minute No. 105 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which explained that the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities was introduced following the Local Government Act 2003; and detailed measures / limits / parameters (Prudential Indicators) that were required to be set each financial year; and that the approval of these limits would provide a benchmark to measure actual performance against, to help ensure that the Council complied with relevant legislation, was acting prudently and that its capital expenditure proposals were affordable.

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Prudential Indicators, as detailed in the report, be approved as the basis for compliance with The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
- (2) it be noted that the relevant Prudential Indicators will be revised as required and that any changes will be brought to Cabinet and then to Council for approval;
- (3) it be noted that the estimates of capital expenditure may change as grant allocations are received; and
- (4) authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services to manage the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt as detailed in Section 5 of the report.

102. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2022/23

Further to Minute No. 106 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that set out the following proposed policy and strategy documents:

- a) Treasury Management Policy (Annex A);
- b) Treasury Management Strategy (Annex B); and
- c) Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement (Annex C)

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

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RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Treasury Management Policy Document for 2022/23 be approved;
- (2) the Treasury Management Strategy Document for 2022/23 be approved; and
- (3) the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2022/23 be approved.

103. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23 TO 2026/27

Further to Minute No. 107 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that advised that the Capital Strategy set out the long-term context in which capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions were made and considered the impact of these decisions on the priorities within the Council's Core Purpose and Framework for Change Programme and the promises made in the 2030 Vision for Sefton; that at the heart of the Capital Strategy was the Council's core objective to continue to deliver financial sustainability; and that as such a flexible capital investment programme was more important than ever as a method to stimulate and enable economic growth and strategic investment, ensuring best use of existing assets and of generating future income streams to pay for and deliver day to day services.

Attached as Appendix 1 to the report was the Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2026/27

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2026/27 be approved.

104. ROBUSTNESS OF THE 2022/23 BUDGET ESTIMATES AND THE ADEQUACY OF RESERVES – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003 - SECTION 25

Further to Minute No. 108 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that advised that to comply with statute, the Chief Financial Officer was required to report to Council prior to the approval of the budget and the setting of the Council Tax, to give assurance that the budget was robust and that there were adequate reserves and balances.

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It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED: That

- (1) it be noted that the Local Government Act 2003, (section 25 as amended) requires the Chief Financial Officer to report formally the issues of an opinion as to the robustness of the estimates made and the tax setting calculations; and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves; and
- (2) the Council be recommended to have regard to the matters raised in this report during the final stages of determining the budget for 2022/23.

105. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PLAN 2022/23 – 2024/25 AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23

Further to Minute No. 109 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that provided:

- An assessment of the Council's current financial position and approach to the 2022/23 Budget Plan and preparation for the additional two-year budget period 2023/24 to 2024/25.
- An update on the Government's announcement of resources that are available to the Council for 2022/23.
- The Council's current financial position and the assumptions built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- The proposed Budget for 2022/23; and
- The proposed Capital Programme for 2022/23.

The report set out the financial strategy of the Council and the national and local financial context within which it is operating; indicated that the Council had a statutory requirement to remain financially sustainable and to balance its budget every year; and that the Council's Framework for Change Programme was a comprehensive and ambitious programme that sought to support the delivery of the Council's core purpose. As would be expected with a programme of this size and complexity that spanned a number of financial years, the detailed proposals had been and would continue to be the subject of change as they were developed and ultimately implemented.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix A Individual School Budgets 2022/23
- Appendix B Draft Council Budget Summary 2022/23
- Appendix C Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough

That in respect of:

- (A) the Budget 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan from 2023/24 to 2024/25:
- (1) the update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 be noted;
 - (2) the Revenue Budget for 2022/23 be approved and officers be authorised to undertake all of the necessary actions to implement the budget changes and proposals as detailed within the report;
 - (3) the continuation of the Framework for Change 2020 Programme (as described in Section 3 of the report) and the agreement to the commencement of all appropriate activity as detailed, including for example, consultation with employees and engagement with partners and contractual changes as the programme develops be approved;
 - (4) it be noted that officers will comply with agreed HR policies and procedures including relevant consultation with Trade Unions and that reports will be submitted to the Cabinet Member - (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) as required;
 - (5) the Schools' Forum decisions on the Dedicated Schools Grant and Individual School Budgets, as detailed in Section 11 of the report be noted;
 - (6) the allocation of specific grants as detailed in the report, including a fully funded supplementary revenue estimate of up to £3.030m for the Leeds Family Valued Programme across 2021/22 to 2023/24 (Section 12 of the report) be approved; and
 - (7) subject to the recommendations above the overall Council Tax resolution for 2022/23 including Police, Fire, Mayoral and Parish Precepts be approved;
- (B) the Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25:
- (1) the full list of projects in Appendix C of the report be approved for inclusion within the Capital Programme; and
 - (2) a supplementary capital estimate of £29,378 for 2021/22, funded from earmarked reserves (Paragraph 16.2 of the report) be approved; and
- (C) the Procurement of External Audit Services approval be granted for

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the Council to procure external audit services through the Public Sector Audit Appointments body for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 (Section 17 of the report).

Councillors Pugh, Brough, Irving and Ian Maher each gave a statement expressing the views of their political groups on the content of the report and the budget proposals.

Following debate on the report, an **amendment** was moved by Councillor Brough, seconded by Councillor Prendergast:

That the budget proposals set out in the report be amended by the addition of the following words:

PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Recognising that as the pandemic comes to an end there will be an increased importance and demand for Council owned parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

The Council allocates an additional £639,000, in 2022/23 only, to fund additional investment in Council owned parks, open spaces and recreational facilities, to be funded from the Earmarked Reserve created from additional New Homes Bonus receipts in 2022/23 (as referred to in paragraph 6.13).

In addition, it has previously been reported that elements of the scheme to introduce cycle lanes in Southport involved the removal of pay and display bays, and there would likely be a net loss of parking income as a result of the scheme. However, quantifying this was always going to be difficult as it is likely that some users will use other pay and display bays and Council car parks. It should however be noted that the bays in question generated £137,000 in income in 2019/20.

It is therefore proposed that, as soon as is feasible, the Council reintroduce pay and display car parking spaces previously impacted by the introduction of cycle lanes in Southport. Officers will analyse the net financial impact this measure would have on the Council's overall car parking receipts in 2022/23 compared to the current budget, acknowledging the volatility that has been experienced in this budget in the last two years. Any additional net income will also be reinvested in Council owned parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

Following debate and in accordance with Rule 97 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution, the voting on the Amendment was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE AMENDMENT: Councillors Brodie - Browne, Brough, Dodd, Dutton, Evans, Lewis, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Sathiy, Shaw and Lynne Thompson.

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AGAINST THE AMENDMENT: Councillors Atkinson, Bennett, Blackburne, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carlin, Carr, Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, Dowd, Doyle, Fairclough, Friel, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardy, Howard, Irving, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Chris Maher, Ian Maher, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, John Sayers, Yvonne Sayers, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield and the Mayor.

The Mayor declared that the Amendment was lost by 12 votes to 46.

Following the vote on the amendment, a further **amendment** was moved by Councillor Pugh, seconded by Councillor Shaw:

That the budget proposals set out in the report be amended by the addition of the following words:

ROAD SAFETY MEASURES

Recognising

- (1) that there are a significant number of locations within the Borough that would benefit from new or enhanced road safety measures; and
- (2) that external funding for implementing road safety measures is not sufficient to cover all of these locations

The Council allocates an additional £200,000, in 2022/23 only, to fund additional road safety measures in locations across the Borough, to be funded from the Earmarked Reserve created from additional New Homes Bonus receipts in 2022/23 (as referred to in paragraph 6.13).

Following debate and in accordance with Rule 97 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution, the voting on the Further Amendment was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE FURTHER AMENDMENT: Councillors Brodie - Browne, Brough, Dodd, Dutton, Evans, Lewis, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Sathiy, Shaw and Lynne Thompson.

AGAINST THE FURTHER AMENDMENT: Councillors Atkinson, Bennett, Blackburne, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carlin, Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, Dowd, Doyle, Fairclough, Friel, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardy, Howard, Irving, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Chris Maher, Ian Maher, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, John Sayers, Yvonne Sayers, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield, Webster and the Mayor.

The Mayor declared that the Further Amendment was lost by 12 votes to 46.

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Following the vote on the further amendment, a Third **amendment** was moved by Councillor Pugh, seconded by Councillor Shaw:

That the budget proposals set out in the report be amended by the addition of the following words:

REPLACEMENT PLAY EQUIPMENT

Recognising

- (1) the additional investment included in the draft revenue budget for 2022/23 and future years for the replacement of play equipment across the Borough (£200,000); and
- (2) that this may not be sufficient to replace all damaged play equipment during 2022/23

The Council allocates an additional £50,000, in 2022/23 only, to fund the replacement of additional play equipment to ensure as many items of damaged equipment can be replaced in the next 12 months, to be funded from the Earmarked Reserve created from additional New Homes Bonus receipts in 2022/23 (as referred to in paragraph 6.13).

Following debate and in accordance with Rule 97 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution, the voting on the Third Amendment was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE THIRD AMENDMENT: Councillors Brodie - Browne, Brough, Dodd, Dutton, Evans, Lewis, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Sathiy, Shaw and Lynne Thompson.

AGAINST THE THIRD AMENDMENT: Councillors Atkinson, Bennett, Blackburne, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carlin, Carr, Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, Dowd, Doyle, Fairclough, Friel, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardy, Howard, Irving, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Chris Maher, Ian Maher, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, John Sayers, Yvonne Sayers, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield, Webster and the Mayor

The Mayor declared that the Third Amendment was lost by 12 votes to 47.

Following the vote on the third amendment, a Fourth **amendment** was moved by Councillor Pugh, seconded by Councillor Lewis:

That the budget proposals set out in the report be amended by the addition of the following words:

GULLY CLEANSING

Recognising

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- (1) the increasing risks of flooding caused by Climate Change; and
- (2) that in excess of 95% of the borough's gullies are only cleared once a year

The Council allocates an additional £50,000, in 2022/23 only, to fund additional gully cleansing in areas that have proved particularly susceptible to surface flooding, to be funded from the Earmarked Reserve created from additional New Homes Bonus receipts in 2022/23 (as referred to in paragraph 6.13).

Following debate and in accordance with Rule 97 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution, the voting on the Fourth Amendment was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE FOURTH AMENDMENT: Councillors Brodie - Browne, Brough, Dodd, Dutton, Evans, Lewis, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Sathiy, Shaw and Lynne Thompson.

AGAINST THE FOURTH AMENDMENT: Councillors Atkinson, Blackburne, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carlin, Carr, Cluskey, Corcoran, Cummins, Dowd, Doyle, Fairclough, Friel, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardy, Howard, Irving, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Chris Maher, Ian Maher, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, John Sayers, Yvonne Sayers, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield, Webster and the Mayor

The Mayor declared that the Fourth Amendment was lost by 12 votes to 46.

Following further debate and in accordance with Rule 97 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution, the voting on the Motion was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE MOTION Councillors Atkinson, Blackburne, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carlin, Corcoran, Cummins, Dowd, Doyle, Fairclough, Friel, Grace, Halsall, Hansen, Hardy, Howard, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Killen, Lappin, Chris Maher, Ian Maher, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Myers, O'Brien, Page, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, John Sayers, Yvonne Sayers, Spencer, Thomas, Anne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Waterfield, Webster and the Mayor

AGAINST THE MOTION Councillors Bennett, Brodie - Browne, Brough, Carr, Dodd, Dutton, Evans, Irving, Lewis, Prendergast, Pugh, Riley, Sathiy, Shaw and Lynne Thompson.

The Mayor declared that the Motion was carried by 43 votes to 15 and it was

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RESOLVED: That

- (A) In respect of the Budget 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan from 2023/24 to 2024/25:
- (1) the update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 be noted;
 - (2) the Revenue Budget for 2022/23 be approved and officers be authorised to undertake all of the necessary actions to implement the budget changes and proposals as detailed within the report;
 - (3) the continuation of the Framework for Change 2020 Programme (as described in Section 3 of the report) and the agreement to the commencement of all appropriate activity as detailed, including for example, consultation with employees and engagement with partners and contractual changes as the programme develops be approved;
 - (4) it be noted that officers will comply with agreed HR policies and procedures including relevant consultation with Trade Unions and that reports will be submitted to the Cabinet Member - (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) as required;
 - (5) the Schools' Forum decisions on the Dedicated Schools Grant and Individual School Budgets, as detailed in Section 11 of the report be noted;
 - (6) the allocation of specific grants as detailed in the report, including a fully funded supplementary revenue estimate of up to £3.030m for the Leeds Family Valued Programme across 2021/22 to 2023/24 (Section 12 of the report) be approved;
 - (7) subject to the recommendations above the overall Council Tax resolution for 2022/23 including Police, Fire, Mayoral and Parish Precepts be approved;
 - (8) It be noted that at its meeting on 20th January 2022, the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2022/2023 in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 1992 (as amended):
 - (a) 84,170.40 Band D equivalent properties, for the whole area [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended]; and

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- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as shown in the table below:

Parish	Council Tax Base (Band D Equivalent Properties)
Aintree Village	2,029.60
Formby	9,071.90
Hightown	859.30
Ince Blundell	165.90
Little Altcar	336.60
Lydiate	2,085.20
Maghull	6,798.90
Melling	1,092.00
Sefton	278.20
Thornton	777.00

- (9) the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/2023 (excluding Parish Precepts) is £148,626,409;
- (10) the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2022/2023 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

(a)	£652,948,941	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
(b)	-£502,941,005	Being the aggregate amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
(c)	£150,007,936	Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
(d)	£1,782.19	Being the amount at 3(c) above (item R), divided by the amount at 1(a) above (item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31E of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts).
(e)	£1,381,527	Being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
(f)	£1,765.78	Being the amount at 3(d) above, less the amount given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount at 1(a) above (item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

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(g)	<p>The amounts below, being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act as basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which special items relate.</p>									
	<u>Parish</u>								£	
	Aintree Village								1,844.86	
	Formby								1,777.28	
	Hightown								1,794.87	
	Ince Blundell								1,781.24	
	Little Altcar								1,777.28	
	Lydiate								1,859.15	
	Maghull								1,887.99	
	Melling								1,802.09	
	Sefton								1,808.91	
	Thornton								1,776.08	
(h)	<p>The amounts below being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(f) and 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.</p>									
		Property Valuation Band								
	Proportion of Band D	A 6/9	B 7/9	C 8/9	D 9/9	E 11/9	F 13/9	G 15/9	H 18/9	
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
	<u>Parish</u>									
	Aintree Village	1,229.91	1,434.89	1,639.88	1,844.86	2,254.83	2,664.80	3,074.77	3,689.72	
	Formby	1,184.85	1,382.33	1,579.80	1,777.28	2,172.23	2,567.18	2,962.13	3,554.56	
	Hightown	1,196.58	1,396.01	1,595.44	1,794.87	2,193.73	2,592.59	2,991.45	3,589.74	
	Ince Blundell	1,187.49	1,385.41	1,583.32	1,781.24	2,177.07	2,572.90	2,968.73	3,562.48	
	Little Altcar	1,184.85	1,382.33	1,579.80	1,777.28	2,172.23	2,567.18	2,962.13	3,554.56	
	Lydiate	1,239.43	1,446.01	1,652.58	1,859.15	2,272.29	2,685.44	3,098.58	3,718.30	
	Maghull	1,258.66	1,468.44	1,678.21	1,887.99	2,307.54	2,727.10	3,146.65	3,775.98	
	Melling	1,201.39	1,401.63	1,601.86	1,802.09	2,202.55	2,603.02	3,003.48	3,604.18	
	Sefton	1,205.94	1,406.93	1,607.92	1,808.91	2,210.89	2,612.87	3,014.85	3,617.82	
	Thornton	1,184.05	1,381.40	1,578.74	1,776.08	2,170.76	2,565.45	2,960.13	3,552.16	

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	<u>All Other Parts of the Council's Area</u>	1,177.19	1,373.38	1,569.58	1,765.78	2,158.18	2,550.57	2,942.97	3,531.56

- (11) Note that for the year 2022/2023 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Proportion of Band D	Property Valuation Band							
	A 6/9	B 7/9	C 8/9	D 9/9	E 11/9	F 13/9	G 15/9	H 18/9
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Precepting Authority</u>								
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority	55.74	65.03	74.32	83.61	102.19	120.77	139.35	167.22
Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner	157.98	184.31	210.64	236.97	289.63	342.29	394.95	473.94
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	12.67	14.78	16.89	19.00	23.22	27.44	31.67	38.00

- (12) the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/2023 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:

Proportion of Band D	Property Valuation Band							
	A 6/9	B 7/9	C 8/9	D 9/9	E 11/9	F 13/9	G 15/9	H 18/9
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Parish</u>								
Aintree Village	1,456.30	1,699.01	1,941.73	2,184.44	2,669.87	3,155.30	3,640.74	4,368.88
Formby	1,411.24	1,646.45	1,881.65	2,116.86	2,587.27	3,057.68	3,528.10	4,233.72
Hightown	1,422.97	1,660.13	1,897.29	2,134.45	2,608.77	3,083.09	3,557.42	4,268.90
Ince Blundell	1,413.88	1,649.53	1,885.17	2,120.82	2,592.11	3,063.40	3,534.70	4,241.64
Little Altcar	1,411.24	1,646.45	1,881.65	2,116.86	2,587.27	3,057.68	3,528.10	4,233.72
Lydiate	1,465.82	1,710.13	1,954.43	2,198.73	2,687.33	3,175.94	3,664.55	4,397.46
Maghull	1,485.05	1,732.56	1,980.06	2,227.57	2,722.58	3,217.60	3,712.62	4,455.14

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Melling	1,427.78	1,665.75	1,903.71	2,141.67	2,617.59	3,093.52	3,569.45	4,283.34
Sefton	1,432.33	1,671.05	1,909.77	2,148.49	2,625.93	3,103.37	3,580.82	4,296.98
Thornton	1,410.44	1,645.52	1,880.59	2,115.66	2,585.80	3,055.95	3,526.10	4,231.32
<u>All Other Parts of the Council's Area</u>	1,403.58	1,637.50	1,871.43	2,105.36	2,573.22	3,041.07	3,508.94	4,210.72

- (13) the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/2023 is not deemed to be excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; and
- (B) In respect of the Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25:
- (1) the full list of projects in Appendix C of the report be approved for inclusion within the Capital Programme; and
 - (2) a supplementary capital estimate of £29,378 for 2021/22, funded from earmarked reserves (Paragraph 16.2 of the report) be approved; and
- (C) the Procurement of External Audit Services approval be granted for the Council to procure external audit services through the Public Sector Audit Appointments body for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 (Section 17 of the report).

106. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The Meeting adjourned at 9.05 p.m. for a comfort break for a period of 15 minutes.

107. ADOPTION OF THE FLOOD AND COASTAL EROSION RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND BUSINESS PLAN

Further to Minute No. 98 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3 February 2022 the Council considered the report of the Head of Operational In-House Services that advised that the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 established Sefton Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) making it responsible for the management of local flood risk; that under Section 9 of the FWMA, a LLFA had a duty to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy; and that the previous strategy expired at the end of 2021 and the new strategy, once approved, would be in place from 2022 to 2030.

The report also advised that the strategy was also supported by a Business Plan which set out the actions the Council would undertake as LLFA over the next 12 months and would be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, whilst also forming the basis for the FCERM team's annual report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills).

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A copy of the Final Draft Sefton's Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy 2022-2030; and the Final Draft Sefton's Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Business Plan 2022 were attached to the report.

It was moved by Councillor Moncur, seconded by Councillor Fairclough and

RESOLVED:

That the Local Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy and supporting Business Plan be approved.

108. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2021/22

No changes to memberships of Committees were made.

109. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR IRVING - TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS - REMOVAL OF TREES FOR FINANCIAL GAIN

It was moved by Councillor Irving, seconded by Councillor Bennett:

In May 2021 Sefton Council amended the constitution for dealing with applications for works under Tree Preservation Orders or for tree works in Conservation Areas. This means that all applications are excluded from the Planning Committee irrespective of any member's written request. We agree up to a point with this ruling, however, when an application is received which could be considered as a reason for financial gain, we believe that for transparency any such application should be considered by the Planning Committee at the request of the ward councillor.

This anomaly was highlighted recently when a Planning Application was received from a Golf Club in Formby requesting to remove eleven healthy mature trees all with tree preservation orders. This was to make one of the fair-ways longer on the course by forty yards. The applicant claimed it would create a new championship tee for members and visitors to enjoy. In light of the current concern over climate change and the detrimental effect that the removal of so many mature trees would have on the environment we believe such applications that appear to be for financial gain to be inappropriate. We believe that the application should have been heard by the Planning Committee in order for them to make the ultimate decision as it was obvious that the application was for financial reasons. I therefore ask this council to support this motion,

Council Resolution:

That Planning Applications received for the removal of Trees, which have tree preservation orders on them for financial gain should be heard by a Planning Committee if requested by the Ward Councillor.

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Following a debate on the **Motion** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **Motion was lost** by 43 votes to 3 with 6 abstentions.

110. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR IAN MAHER - MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

It was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough:

This Council puts on record its thanks and congratulations to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority and all the dedicated staff of the service for, yet again, achieving the highest national marking, being awarded three levels of outstanding, from HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services.

In the face of Government financial cuts and indifference, they have kept Merseyside, and Sefton in particular, safer than any other part of the Country.

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor Prendergast, seconded by Councillor Brough that the Motion be amended by the deletion of the words:

“In the face of Government Financial Cuts and indifference”

Following a debate on the **amendment** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **amendment was lost** by 52 votes to 4.

Following a debate on the **Motion** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **Motion was carried** by 52 votes to 0 with 4 abstentions and it was

RESOLVED: That

This Council puts on record its thanks and congratulations to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority and all the dedicated staff of the service for, yet again, achieving the highest national marking, being awarded three levels of outstanding, from HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services.

In the face of Government financial cuts and indifference, they have kept Merseyside, and Sefton in particular, safer than any other part of the Country.

111. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR THOMAS - POLICY OF MANDATORY DISABILITY PAY GAP REPORTING

It was moved by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Halsall and after a debate it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: That

Council notes:

1. the Trade Union Congress (TUC) has declared 31 October 2021 to be Disability Pay Gap Day. The TUC used data from the Office of National Statistics Labour Force Survey to show disabled workers effectively work for free for the last 60 days (around 8 and a half weeks) of the year and stop getting paid on 1 November. The study found that the pay gap for disabled workers was £3,800 per year with median hourly pay for a disabled worker £11.55, whilst for non-disabled workers it was £13.45. This shows a Disability Pay Gap of 16.5%. Disabled women face a bigger gap being paid on average 36% (£3.68 an hour, or around £6,700 a year) less than non-disabled men.
2. factors contributing to low pay are that disabled workers are over-represented in lower paid jobs like caring, leisure and other services and sales and customer services, and under-represented in senior and managerial roles. Disabled workers have an increased likelihood of being in part time work, which is generally paid less than full-time jobs. Some disabled people leave education earlier than non-disabled people, but even when disabled workers have the same or equivalent skill set as a non-disabled person they are still paid less.
3. the TUC has asked government to make disability pay gap reporting mandatory for all employers with more than 50 employees, with a duty to produce targeted action plans identifying the stops they will take to address any gaps.

This Council believes:

1. disabled workers should have equal parity with non-disabled workers and the disability pay gap must be reduced as far as possible; and
2. the TUC are right to ask central government to make mandatory disability pay gap reporting mandatory and that Sefton Council should set a good example by reporting on any disability pay gap and produce targeted action plans to address identified gaps.

Council, therefore, is asked to:

- (a) request the Chief Executive of Sefton Council to commence disability pay gap reporting and to produce targeted action plans identifying the steps to be taken to address any gaps that may be identified as soon as possible, whilst recognising that the Council is a Disability Confident Employer and provides support for disabled employees through providing reasonable adjustments and Occupational Health support where necessary. The issues around

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reporting, support and the overall agenda should be taken to the Council's Corporate Equalities Group; and

- (b) write to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Metro Mayor asking that the rest of the Liverpool City Region Authorities be encouraged to implement a policy of disability pay gap reporting.

112. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PUGH - OUTCOME OF LEVELLING UP BIDS

It was moved by Councillor Pugh, seconded by Councillor Lewis:

That this Council expresses its regret and bewilderment at the outcome of the Levelling up bids for Bootle and Crosby.

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor Ian Maher, seconded by Councillor Fairclough that the Motion be amended by the addition of the following words:

“This Council further expresses its concern that our Borough is somehow placed in Category 3 for levelling up bids. It would appear that this Government do not recognise or understand the issues the Borough is facing. As per the Cabinet decision at its meeting of 6 January 2022, we continue to promote to government departments the importance of such funding opportunities to areas of Sefton that have not yet had any such support and to continue to challenge Government's categorisation of Sefton for levelling up funding at the foresaid lowest level of priority.

As such, this Council calls on the Secretary of State to review our prioritisation for levelling up and invites the Secretary of State to visit Sefton in order to enable him to gain a greater understanding of the issues that we face”.

Following a debate on the **amendment** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **amendment was carried** by 56 votes to 0 and on the **Substantive Motion** it was carried by 56 votes to 0 and it was:

RESOLVED: That

This Council expresses its regret and bewilderment at the outcome of the Levelling up bids for Bootle and Crosby.

This Council further expresses its concern that our Borough is somehow placed in Category 3 for levelling up bids. It would appear that this Government do not recognise or understand the issues the Borough is facing. As per the Cabinet decision at its meeting of 6 January 2022, we continue to promote to government departments the importance of such funding opportunities to areas of Sefton that have not yet had any such support and to continue to challenge Government's categorisation of Sefton for levelling up funding at the foresaid lowest level of priority.

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As such, this Council calls on the Secretary of State to review our prioritisation for levelling up and invites the Secretary of State to visit Sefton in order to enable him to gain a greater understanding of the issues that we face.

113. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR HARDY - ELECTIONS BILL

It was moved by Councillor Hardy, seconded by Councillor Moncur:

That:

Sefton Council recognises the importance of ensuring that elections are fair and accessible for all voters.

Sefton Council notes that the Elections Bill is set to bring in major changes to national elections, including the introduction of compulsory photographic ID to vote.

Council believes that this change will act a barrier to people voting and increase inequality in the electoral process.

Council notes with concern that currently 3.5 million people in the UK do not have any form of expensive photographic ID.

Council notes that these changes are estimated to cost the taxpayer £180 million and will create unnecessary bureaucracy to Councils.

Council believes that at a time when voter turnout is declining, we should be doing all we can to make it easier not harder for people to vote.

Sefton Council doesn't want to see people being turned away at the ballot box because of these changes and resolves to support the #HandsOffOurVote campaign by:

- (1) writing to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to highlight our opposition to these changes; and
- (2) writing to Sefton's local MPs asking them to raise these concerns in Parliament.

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor Pugh, seconded by Councillor Evans that the Motion be amended by the addition of the following words:

"Sefton Council applauds the support shown for a fairer and more proportional voting system by Peter Dowd (Member of Parliament for Bootle)"

after the word "voters" and before the words "Sefton Council notes" in the first sentence of the Motion.

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Following a debate on the **amendment** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **amendment was lost** by 51 votes to 6.

Following a debate on the **Motion** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **Motion was carried** by 53 votes to 4 and it was and it was:

RESOLVED: That

Sefton Council recognises the importance of ensuring that elections are fair and accessible for all voters.

Sefton Council notes that the Elections Bill is set to bring in major changes to national elections, including the introduction of compulsory photographic ID to vote.

Council believes that this change will act a barrier to people voting and increase inequality in the electoral process.

Council notes with concern that currently 3.5 million people in the UK do not have any form of expensive photographic ID.

Council notes that these changes are estimated to cost the taxpayer £180 million and will create unnecessary bureaucracy to Councils.

Council believes that at a time when voter turnout is declining, we should be doing all we can to make it easier not harder for people to vote.

Sefton Council doesn't want to see people being turned away at the ballot box because of these changes and resolves to support the #HandsOffOurVote campaign by:

- (1) writing to Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to highlight our opposition to these changes; and
- (2) writing to Sefton's local MPs asking them to raise these concerns in Parliament.

114. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ROSCOE - THE REAL TRUTH LEGACY PROJECT AND HILLSBOROUGH DAY

It was moved by Councillor Roscoe, seconded by Councillor Friel and after a debate it was unanimously:

RESOLVED: That

Sefton Council commends survivors and the families of the ninety-seven fans who lost their lives as a result of the Hillsborough disaster for their three-decade campaign for justice.

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Council also notes that Kevin Sampson's recent drama for ITV, *Anne* - considered a masterpiece by many - has highlighted once again the fact that, despite the ninety-seven having been unlawfully killed, to date no individuals or organisations have been held accountable for their deaths.

Council further notes that the impact of the campaign of lies, smears and propaganda orchestrated by South Yorkshire Police in 1989 and promoted by willing politicians and media continues to this day, with far too many members of the public even now parroting discredited lies about the behaviour of Liverpool fans in attendance at Hillsborough on 15 April 1989.

It is not surprising to Council that many families of the ninety-seven and Hillsborough survivors have expressed despair at this continuation of lies about Hillsborough.

Sefton Council therefore undertakes to support the 'Real Truth Legacy Project' led by Ian Byrne in conjunction with many Hillsborough families and survivors. This is a campaign which seeks to ensure that current and future generations learn the truth about Hillsborough, and to ensure that schoolchildren in Liverpool City Region initially have access to a definitive account of the disaster and the subsequent cover-up.

Council hereby notes its support for a key element of The Real Truth Legacy Project which is to have education about Hillsborough added to the National Curriculum, including a dedicated "Hillsborough Day" in the Liverpool City Region, to take place on the nearest Friday to the anniversary of the tragedy on 15 April each year.

The Hillsborough Day would see every Liverpool City Region primary and secondary school taking part in a special assembly to mark the anniversary and to learn more about the disaster, the cover-up and the fight for justice through dedicated teaching resource packs made available to every school in the city region by local education leads.

For the sake of past and future generations, this is something Sefton Council feels it must get behind and calls on all Councils in the Liverpool City Region and beyond to add their support to the Real Truth Legacy Project.

115. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR WILSON - A FAIR DEAL FOR LYDIATE, MAGHULL AND AINTREE - RETURN THE DOUBLE RATING REBATE TO THE TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

The Mayor reported that she had received notice that due to the non-attendance of Councillor Wilson, the proposer of the Motion, the Motion would be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

116. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR CARR - WORKER'S RIGHTS - LICENSED PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR UBER

It was moved by Councillor Carr, seconded by Councillor Evans:

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That:

We bring this motion to Council to highlight the recent Supreme Court ruling identifying workers' rights within the gig economy brought by the GMB union against the licensed private hire operator UBER. We recognise and accept the ruling that drivers operating on this and similar operating platforms can be said to hold worker rights. As such it is the responsibility of operators who engage drivers as workers to ensure they provide written terms which reference the entitlement to social protections including the national minimum wage, holiday pay, sick pay and national insurance, PAYE and right to a pension contribution, to those drivers who fall in to the category of workers. These rights should be enforced by way of attaching requirements as a condition of the Operators' Licence granted under S.55 of the Local Government and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976.

The condition would simply require relevant operators to ensure all drivers who fall in to the category of a worker are aware of their legal rights as a worker.

This Supreme Court judgement has shown once again that trade unions are a force for good in society. We congratulate GMB on bringing the case on behalf of its members and call on all workers in Sefton to join a union.

An **amendment** was moved by Councillor John Kelly, seconded by Councillor Waterfield that the Motion be amended by:

(1) the deletion of the words:

"We bring this motion to Council to highlight the recent Supreme Court ruling identifying workers' rights within the gig economy brought by the GMB union against the licensed private hire operator UBER. We recognise and accept the ruling that drivers operating on this and similar operating platforms can be said to hold worker rights. As such"

at the beginning of the Motion;

(2) the addition of the words:

"without these workers needing to take legal proceedings)."

after the words "category of workers" and before the words "These rights should" in the first paragraph of the Motion;

(3) the addition of the following paragraph after the second paragraph of the Motion:

"The Council's Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Omnibus Licensing Scheme Handbook is currently being reviewed and this motion will be considered during the consultation process before a

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final decision by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee is made later in 2022”; and

(4) The deletion of the words:

“This Supreme Court judgement has shown once again that trade unions are a force for good in society. We congratulate GMB on bringing the case on behalf of its members and call on all workers in Sefton to join a union.”

Following a debate on the **Amendment** the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer officiated a vote and the Mayor declared that the **Amendment was carried** by 43 votes to 9 with 4 abstentions and on the **Substantive Motion it was carried** by 43 votes to 3 with 10 abstentions and it was:

RESOLVED: That

It is the responsibility of operators who engage drivers as workers to ensure they provide written terms which reference the entitlement to social protections including the national minimum wage, holiday pay, sick pay, and national insurance, PAYE and right to a pension contribution, (to those drivers who fall into the category of ‘workers’ without these workers needing to take legal proceedings). These rights should be enforced by way of attaching requirements as a condition of the Operators’ Licence granted under S.55 of the Local Government and Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976.

The condition could require relevant operators to ensure all drivers who fall into the category of a ‘worker’ are aware of their legal rights as a worker.

The Council’s Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Omnibus Licensing Scheme Handbook is currently being reviewed and this motion will be considered during the consultation process before a final decision by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee is made later in 2022.

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Public Petition - Save the Promenade in Crosby Coastal Park

We the undersigned petition the council to save the Promenade in Crosby Coastal Park and the Multi-use Path on top of it by clearing the sand from its top surface, removing the sand from the beach side of the revetment, and restoring its surface, railings and signage.

It is the official policy of Sefton MBC's Cabinet and of Green Sefton to keep the promenade clear of sand, but Green Sefton struggle to do so within their budget and resources of manpower and machinery. There is therefore a kind of unofficial policy of neglect which has intensified over recent years. Sand dunes have built up on both sides of the seawall/promenade. Sand covers the existing Multi-use Path for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, etc. on top of the promenade, in particular between the point on the prom where it is joined by the access path from Blucher Street car park past the water treatment works, and a point opposite Crosby Leisure Centre at Mariners Road.

The Council's 'Vision' for the future of Crosby Coastal Park up to 2030 included proposals for a new inland Multi-use Path in the Marine Park between Mariners Road and Cambridge Road ('Zones D and E'). The Seafront Residents' Action Group (SRAG) and others have long campaigned for the Council to keep the promenade in good repair, and its existing Path open, and free from sand.

SRAG has opposed the new proposed inland Multi-use Path, which is billed as an alternative to the one on the prom, but in the prevailing circumstances is almost certainly going to be a substitute for it. The Council are about to launch an application for planning permission for the new Path, which if allowed would run through the Park between Blundellsands Road West and Cambridge Road, with a section along Endsleigh Road. They consulted on most of it being 3m (10') wide, but their planning application will ask for permission for it to be 4m (13') wide, and as such it would look like a road bisecting and attacking the green space of the Park. The existing Path on the prom is actually wider and potentially safer for multiple use, and is further away from residences, but its true dimensions are partially concealed by sand.

A retired engineer whose company used to contract with the Council to keep the sand away from the seawall by moving it to the mean low tideline has proposed that a reputable firm or firms could remove the dune from the beach and clear the dunes from the top of the prom for free or at little cost, provided they could retain the sand themselves for recycling. It could be done in a manner that would create minimal disruption to the general public, though it would require planning for the necessary logistics and contractual arrangements.

In August 2021 SRAG alerted the Council and suggested meetings between Councillors and Officials with representatives from the company or companies potentially involved. Green Sefton have said that this proposal is not feasible and is undesirable. SRAG are continuing to press for its feasibility to be properly considered. It is clearly desirable in the short term, though there would be heavy machinery working on the beach and lorries removing the sand for a period.

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Undertaking this work would remove the dangers now posed by hidden hazards such as wire at ankle level, half-buried signage and broken fencing. It would potentially reduce the sand blow into the Marine Lakes, obviating or mitigating the need to dredge it from time to time.

The existing promenade route is scenic and preferable to an inland alternative route, whether for leisure or commuting. It runs alongside the iconic statues of Antony Gormley's 'Another Place'. It has recently been adopted by the Secretary of State for the Environment as part of the new National Trail, the England Coast Path. It needs to be kept open, not least to prevent roll back of the Trail towards seafront residences.

Green Sefton say that in advance of any formal discussion with sand winning companies that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required to address the impact on coastal habitats and species in the wider Liverpool Bay, River Mersey and Sefton Coast; and it would need to be assessed by Natural England as the site has multiple local, national and international scientific and nature designations. So be it. The Park was created before the designations were made. Where there is a will there is a way.

They also say that a Feasibility Study by an external consultant would be required which has cost implications.

The offer is of free or low cost sand removal. We ask the Council to consider whether to undertake and fund the necessary Environmental Impact Assessment and Feasibility Study.

The dunes in front of Waterloo and Brighton-le-Sands have formed relatively recently in front of a densely populated residential area. They have at least in part been made by human intervention, including fencing, planting and the deposit of used Christmas trees. The considerations that apply should take into account all the other benefits of a scenic route for walking and cycling along the coast and through an amenity park which has become a hybrid of amenity and natural enclave, before dismissing an idea whose time has come through a chain of circumstances. These beachside sandhills of the Marine Park are hardly a genuine part of the much more important and valuable dunescape of the Sefton coast, which is the largest in England and runs for 12 miles to their north. They are a recently formed small adjunct to it.

The promenade was created between February 1969 and July 1973 as part of the 'seaside improvements' which created the Marine Park part of Crosby Coastal Park. It was funded at considerable expense by Crosby Borough out of local funds and it is a key asset of green infrastructure which should be cherished. No part of it ought to be buried and abandoned by its successor Local Authority.

We petition the Council to SAVE THE PROM!

Agenda Item 7

Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date of Meeting:	7 April 2022 21 April 2022
Subject:	New Realities 2022		
Report of:	Executive Director (People)	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Y	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To consider a revised New Realities Protocol which has been co-produced with the Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) Sector.

Recommendation(s): That

- (1) Cabinet consider the content of the revised New Realities protocol; and
- (2) Council be recommended to approve the revised protocol for adoption.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To approve a revised New Realities protocol.

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

The Council is not obliged to have a protocol in place but it is recommended best practice.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

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There are no revenue costs to this decision.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no capital costs to this decision

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): There are no resource implications beyond the regular engagement with the VCF sector as part of the Council's usual business.</p>									
<p>Legal Implications: There are no legal implications</p>									
<p>Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.</p>									
<p>Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Have a positive impact</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a neutral impact</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a negative impact</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> </table> <p>The protocol relates to ways of working with the VCF sector and although there is collaboration on the climate emergency it is not a substantive issue within the protocol.</p>		Have a positive impact	N	Have a neutral impact	Y	Have a negative impact	N	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
Have a positive impact	N								
Have a neutral impact	Y								
Have a negative impact	N								
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y								

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Most of the work undertaken by the VCF sector protects the most vulnerable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The VCF sector is pivotal in facilitating strong and resilient communities
Commission, broker and provide core services: Some VCF organisations are commissioned to provide services.
Place – leadership and influencer: The VCF sector and the way the Council works with the sector is a key part of place leadership
Drivers of change and reform: The New Realities protocol won national awards for formalising the relationship between the Council and VCF organisations.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Volunteering opportunities are recognised as steps towards employment

Greater income for social investment: Not applicable
Cleaner Greener: The council and the VCF sector collaborate on climate emergency response.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6756/22) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4956/22.) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Consultation has taken place through the New Realities Joint Steering Group and to the following specific networks - Every Child Matters Forum and network members, Health and Social Care Forum network and members and presentation, Sefton Faith Forum network members and workshop, Sefton In Mind network and the Healthwatch Steering Group. It has also been circulated via Sefton CVS's e-bulletin.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Council meeting.

Contact Officer:	Andrea Watts
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 2030
Email Address:	andrea.watts@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

New Realities Protocol 2022

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 New Realities (NR's), is a 'Can-Do' collaborative agreement between Sefton Council and Sefton's Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector (VCFS). The agreement was launched in 2015, alongside an operational framework that aimed to strengthen relationships and help to 'get things done' whilst making the most of all resources available.

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- 1.2 Since June 2021, the New Realities Steering Group (made of VCF organisations across Sefton, Sefton Council and Sefton CVS) have reviewed the 2015 protocol and refreshed the approach.
- 1.3 The Group are also working to complete an action plan associated with the protocol which is included within the document.



NEW REALITIES

A 'CAN-DO' COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN SEFTON COUNCIL & SEFTON'S VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY & FAITH SECTOR

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES ARE CHANGING

"AT THE HEART OF THE CHANGES THAT ARE UNDER WAY IS A 'RE-IMAGINING' OF LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS, WITHIN WHICH THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW, BETTER, MORE EQUAL AND PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES IS KEY"

CLLR. TRISH HARDY, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES & HOUSING, SEFTON MBC

INTRODUCTION

We recognise that as the needs of Sefton's communities change overtime we must adapt and continuously improve the way we work together, in order to facilitate changes which have a positive, lasting impact on the lives and wellbeing of local people.

To help achieve this, since 2015, we have established an operational framework that strengthens working relationships between the local authority and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. This meant that, during 2020, as Sefton experienced the impact of Covid-19 locally, we were well placed to respond and mitigate the effects.

The 'new normal' has yet to be fully understood, but one certainty is that we must continue to work together, strengthening our new ways of working and networks across organisations as we move towards recovery and life beyond lockdown.

Sefton as a Borough is also moving to become part of an Integrated Care System (ICS), bringing together local health and care organisations and councils to re-design care and improve population health, the scene is set for even stronger partnership working with joint objectives and shared campaigns and resources.

THE VISION

Our overall aim is to help to make Sefton a great place to be and to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in our communities by creating a culture which stimulates and encourages innovation. This enabling culture will be supported by:

- **Systems** - developing constructive ways to improve systems and procedures, to remove barriers and improve consistency to reflect the needs of our communities

- **Relationships** - developing measures that challenge negative / deficit attitudes, which often underpin procedural barriers, and developing measures that promote positive and constructive partnerships. That challenge negative/deficit attitudes that often underpin procedural barriers.
- **Collaboration** and co-produced solutions must become the norm and the added social value they bring must be recognised. This must become a shared approach.
- **Expectations** – communicating and planning together more effectively will enable us to develop realistic and informed expectations for the future. The Voluntary, Community and Faith sector offer vital, local support and services but cannot always be expected to 'pick up the pieces', and communities need to recognise that it is not 'business as usual' for local authorities.
- **Creative solutions** - the ways in which we combine and adapt existing approaches will have to be imaginative and ingenious. Promoting a culture of creativity, social innovation and identifying what creative solutions look like in practice will be a priority
- **Sharing** – the assets unique to our own organisations or areas of work, such as; skills, sharing, expertise, costs, learning. We also share a vision, respect for each other's organisation and success.
- **Adapting** – quickly to unanticipated threats and redesigning how we operate in order to focus priorities to where they most needed and have the biggest impact in Sefton. Public support for each other's roles when tackling common issues.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Our motivations remain the same as they were since we first launched New Realities in 2015.

Because...

- **It is crucial we make the most of ALL available resources.** Not losing sight of this as the ultimate aim is vital.
- **The role of the local authority is changing** in its nature, form and function and we recognise the dramatic impact this is having in communities. In addition, the local health economy is transforming, as it moves towards delivering an integrated model of care and adopts new ways of working.
- **Resources are scarce...** meaning we need to pool resources and think differently about how they are utilised, demands better ways of working together strategically and operationally.
- **Creative solutions are needed.** The core assumptions underpinning the 'status quo' have been challenged and the changes that we all face are sweeping. If we are to make a difference in our communities, we need solutions that reflect the growing importance of collaboration and partnership, and challenge practices that prevent this from happening.
- **Being involved is important** - recognising the changing realities and possibilities in local communities, improving involvement by communities, including local leadership through joint design and delivery of local services.
- **...And yet there are untapped assets in all of our communities.** At times of resource scarcity, identifying untapped assets is critical – the buildings, networks, 'below the radar' services and support, the finances, skills, energy and the goodwill. These assets must be recognised and more effectively mobilised in the years ahead to strengthen our communities and neighbourhoods.
- **More resilient communities** will be needed in the years ahead. Communities will need to be capable of organising, mobilising and responding to the long term changes that are now under way. All partners must come together to enable this to happen.

NEW REALITIES PRINCIPLES

- **Common purpose** – if changes are to be constructive and enduring, the way forward must involve the strengthening of goodwill and trust between all parties in pursuit of common goals.
- **Solutions focused** – if change is to be effective, all parties must be focused on the development of collective solutions as the starting point for working and interacting – a ‘can do’ attitude. We need to establish ‘reasons to do things’ as the norm – rather than ‘reasons why we can’t’.
- **Mutual respect** – relationships and roles are changing; the importance of demonstrating mutual respect, acknowledging the contributions made by all parties and recognising the need to adapt and change together underpins our approach.
- **Risk ‘aware’** – A shift is needed within the local authorities away from a norm that is ‘risk averse’, to one in which risks are identified, analysed and managed in partnership with communities. Moving from ‘Gatekeeper’ to ‘Facilitator’ cannot happen without this shift.
- **Support an inclusive Sefton** - diversity, equality and being a place of welcome and opportunity underpins the social and economic fabric of our borough, where all individuals with protected characteristics are able to thrive free from discrimination and inequality.

ACTIONS

- Local authority and the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector **meeting regularly** to measure how far the local authority has changed and moved towards an enabling culture as a 2 year goal.
- **Use of case studies** – how do you highlight what effective partnership working might look like and how do you disseminate this for impact? Recognising that good practice exists all around us – capturing examples of this so that people can see what ‘success’ looks like as well as highlighting challenges that remain.
- **What if...** would asking the question ‘what if it had been done differently’ be a useful method for addressing problems or system failures? What might ‘differently’ look like?
- **Collaborative Learning Programme** working with all parties – ‘changing together’. This will provide learning for both good and poor practice and will include local authority officers, the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector and elected members. This will be linked to annual events to review progress and celebrate success.
- **Solutions Framework** – establishing mechanisms through which system failures or cultural blockages may be challenged and dealt with quickly and effectively to produce constructive outcomes as well as providing important lessons for all involved.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Outcome 1: Increased investment in the Sefton economy.

- Successful joint investment programmes that access external funding, based on
 - Pooling of knowledge and skills – models and impact.
 - Use of other funds to bring in additional investment.
- Employment opportunities for local people in the Sefton economy arising from improved collaborative working.

Outcome 2: An engaged community working effectively in partnership.

- Collaboration in action - combining the human, social, technical and financial resources of the local authority and communities to produce tangible, beneficial outcomes, for example;
 - Repurposing resources, for example, bring a redundant building or space back into use.
 - Delivery of joint events or actions making a difference at a local level e.g. activities to improve community spirit, 'fun days' or seasonal events, actions to restore community pride, such as litter picks, 'grotspot' clean ups, planting and renovation.
 - Develop a new facilities.
 - Launch a service that is jointly managed and delivered (public/VCF partnership)
 - Embark on a new way of working – co-location, shared services and co-design, such as provider collaboratives and consortia.

- Effective and timely solutions are achieved when 'system blockages' are identified, for example;
 - Issues identified quickly and acknowledged.
 - Steps taken to address.
 - Resolution and positive outcomes achieved.
 - Learning identified and effectively disseminated.

Outcome 3: Improved health and wellbeing for residents and communities point 1 will this be included elsewhere or in a narrative about building on what works?

- Further development of existing networks and sharing of good practice.
- Evidence of improved referral and signposting between community, statutory and other services.
- Evidence of improved, ongoing joint planning and resource allocation at local levels.
- Common endeavour - effective, combined planning and action to address specific issue or event, for example; winter, emergency, flood, covid19
- Respond jointly to unanticipated threats, such as pandemics

THE NEW REALITIES APPROACH

DRIVING COLLABORATIVE CHANGE IN SEFTON

Since its inception in 2015, New Realities has helped to champion collaborative change in Sefton through the following outcomes;

- Established shared values and behaviours which are now embedded within the Professional Development Reviews (PDR's) of Sefton Council staff, resulting in the New Realities ways of working in day to day practice.
 - Embedded the New Realities approach into the recruitment and induction process including Councillor's Induction Programmes, which ensures a consistent leadership and governance process across the Council.
 - Over 1,400 staff from VCF sector, Department of Work and Pensions, Council and Health and Elected Members trained in Making Every Contact Count (MECC) in 2018/19.
 - Participating in this training enables those trained to better engage with local people in conversations about improving their health and wellbeing.
 - Improved access to shared Training and Workforce Development opportunities with over 7,627 staff taking up opportunities in the last three years.
 - With funding from Barrow Cadbury Trust, Sefton CVS led an intensive capacity building programme for CEO's looking to improve skills, knowledge and access to social investors informed by Sefton Council commissioner priorities.
- The impact is that 66% of those organisations are now making applications to investors for project and business ideas.
- Over the last four years, the introduction of a 'New Realities' awards for Sefton MBC staff at the Annual Council Awards (STAR Awards), enables VCF sector organisations to nominate those Council staff who have demonstrated the New Realities approach in their practice.
 - By linking the Communications Officers between the Council, CVS, the CCG's, and local VCF sector organisations improving social messaging between agencies, celebrating good news and raising awareness of local services to assist our residents.
 - An intelligent commissioning approach adopted by Sefton Council enabled a consortium of local VCF Sector providers through Sefton CVS, as a Lead Contract holder, to come together. This resulted in the creation of Living Well Sefton, a community-based Public Health Programme which adopted common referral pathways, IT and workforce development, with a programme of community grants to meet needs and start up new health and wellbeing initiatives.
 - New Realities is embedded within all formal Council papers requiring New Realities principles to be considered in all Council decisions.
 - The New Realities approach has been nationally recognised for partnership working through Compact Voice, NHS Health Education England and National Housing Federation Community Impact Awards.

THE NEW REALITIES APPROACH CONT.

- Sefton Council invited expressions of interest from VCF sector organisations to re-imagine usage of redundant buildings leading to the development of new and improved facilities in local community settings. These include the SWAN Centre, Ykidz Centre and Venus.
- The Council's purchase of the Strand Shopping Centre in Bootle enabled the development of a social highway alongside retail outlets enabling VCF sector organisations such as Bootle Tool Shed, the Veterans in Sefton, Strand By Me, Ykidz, In Another Place and others to provide easier access to services for residents.
- Developed new ways of working across our organisations in response to Covid-19. Staff from all agencies worked together quickly to implement a new process which saw timely referrals into new VCF sector pathways to offer support and signposting to 1,252 residents required to shield and 1,615 residents not required to shield but who needed support.
- Worked together to promote volunteering roles and support the recruitment and placement of volunteers to respond to Covid19 (Sefton Council's community response offer , and the local CCG's Testing and Vaccination sites)
- At the start of lockdown during March 2020, we streamlined our communications across organisations webpages to make sure messages were clear and consistent so that people could access a wide range of local, regional and national information.
- Engaged with VS6 who are providing the VCF sector conduit through to the Metro Mayor, LEP and Combined Authority. Engagement with the Social Justice Advisory Panel, Social Solidarity Panel and actively engaged and supported the LCR Build Back Better submission to central govt.
- VCF sector groups participated in VS6 assemblies sharing intelligence, practice and recommendations focused on the themes of Children and Young people, Vulnerable Shielded and Carers, Mental Health and two events in relations to Equalities Both Covid-19 response and recovery.

NEW REALITIES CREATIVE SOLUTIONS
EXPECTATIONS
RELATIONSHIPS
COLLABORATION

CASE STUDIES - NEW REALITIES IN ACTION

CASE STUDY 1: ASYLUM SEEKERS AND COVID-19

THE CHALLENGE

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Home Office and Serco, arranged for 127 asylum seekers to be housed in the Scarisbrick Hotel in Southport whilst they awaited the outcome of asylum applications or appeals. This was an unprecedented arrangement locally which was made more complex given the impact of Covid-19.

Some of the challenges that presented were;

- Language barriers, particularly regarding communicating key information relating to covid-19
- The local healthcare system responding to an influx of demand and needing to navigate cultural sensitivities
- Concerns being raised by members of the public regarding the suitability of the accommodation and the basic needs of the residents being met
- Incidents of racial hatred.



THE RESPONSE

NHS Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) invited Sefton Council and local VCF sector partners, notably Sefton CVS, to work together, with Serco, in order to ensure the asylum seekers were registered with local GP services and any additional needs were met and address some of the presenting issues. Regular meetings were arranged and all partners attended to consider what support/actions could be taken to assist seekers during their stay in Southport.

Examples of actions undertaken which demonstrate the collaborative and innovative values of the New Realities approach include:

- The group became aware that national communications around covid had been sent out in plain English and not in the language of choice which meant many of the residents in the hotel were at risk of being ill informed around covid messaging. The VCF had already worked with the CCG around the NHS England shielding letter that had similarly been sent out in plain English which was brought to the attention of all Sefton GP services with BAME and other patients being contacted regarding the shielding information. This resulted in all CCG's in the Liverpool City Region, following Sefton's approach.

This outcome was replicated by the partners working together to compile information around COVID for the residents in the hotel and subsequent information regarding the vaccine programme.

- Residents were supported to register with local GP Practices in order to access healthcare services. GP Practices were provided with information about cultural sensitivities which were presenting, alongside direct work with the asylum seekers to increase understanding of

how primary care worked in England and explain basic protocols which should be followed. This approach was welcomed by the GPs and resulted in a more efficient and calmer interaction with primary care services for all involved.

- The Sefton district of the British Red Cross and local church leaders/community groups though not members of the partnership group provided a much needed drop-in facility which enabled asylum seekers to obtain items such as clothing and toiletries, as well information about getting to know the local area.
- Following an incident at the hotel where far right members briefly entered the hotel and began taking photographs and asking questions of residents, it was discovered that the event had not been recorded by the local Community Safety Partnership as a Hate Crime. This was raised by the VCF sector group at the Sefton hate crime joint action group (JAG) resulting with the incident being recorded correctly. Moving forward members of the JAG partnership are to deliver additional training to ensure services are fully aware of what constitutes a hate incident, that will hopefully improve the situation for all involved, the asylum seekers themselves, and the wider BAME community across the Liverpool City Region.
- The Serco lead on the partnership emailed the partnership thanking all those involved CCG and VCF members for their support throughout period the asylum seekers were in the hotel and to work with all involved again.

CASE STUDIES - NEW REALITIES IN ACTION

CASE STUDY 2: ALLEYWAY IMPROVEMENT

THE CHALLENGE

During lockdown local residents of Rufford Road in Bootle realised how much potential there was to create a usable outdoor space in the alleyway which ran to the rear of their properties.

The alleyway was had become overgrown with weeds and was filled with rubbish, as well as abandoned white goods and unwanted household appliance

Local residents contacted Sefton Council about making improvements to the alleyway. Neighbourhood teams in the Council supported with cleansing, removal of all rubbish and helped with the clean-up. Ward Councillors supported with £500 towards plants and planters.

THE RESPONSE

Local residents worked together to clean up the alleyways and make an inviting space. The area has now been decorated with bunting and garlands along with flower pots, hanging baskets and planters to grow small fruits and herbs.

The alleyway is now an inviting safe space for residents, neighbours can socialise and it is a safe space for children.

The approach demonstrates how local residents, not only have the ability to directly improve their local areas, but the way in which it is achieved, by working together and sharing resources, also strengthens community cohesion and connectivity, as residents work towards a shared goal and benefit from the creation of a space to socialise and connect.

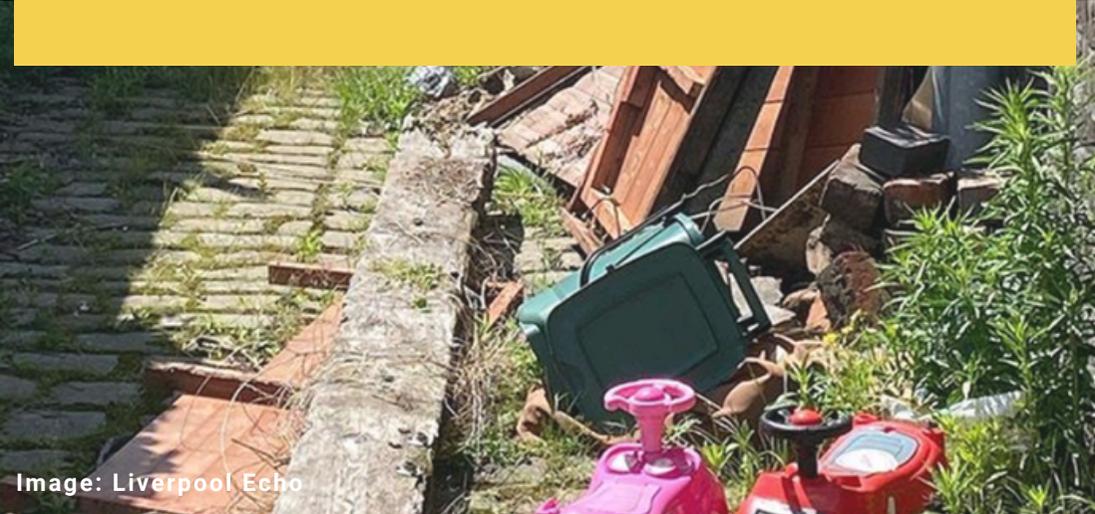


Image: Liverpool Echo

Image: Liverpool Echo

CASE STUDIES - NEW REALITIES IN ACTION

CASE STUDY 3: LIVING WELL SEFTON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE GRANTS

BACKGROUND

Living Well Sefton is a wellbeing organisation with a focus on supporting people with matters that may be affecting their health and wellbeing. Funded through Sefton Council's Public Health Team. It is a collaboration of various Sefton organisations which have the expertise and knowledge to help people reach realistic lifestyle goals. This supports the New Realities approach of working together, sharing knowledge, resources and recognising the unique benefits each partner brings in order to improve the lives of people in Sefton.

Funded via Sefton Council, Community Resilience Grants were made available to community groups as a way of increasing wellbeing for their local areas. During the pandemic there were two rounds of funding in which 28 groups received a share of £44,000 to deliver projects to improve wellbeing.

Many of them had to adapt the original way the project was to be delivered due to ongoing changes to restrictions or lockdowns being introduced. Overall, Sefton's communities were helped to remain strong and resilient in the face of Covid-19's impact. The approach demonstrates how large organisations can encourage innovation by funding smaller organisations to deliver activities within their local communities.

[Read more about the case study here...](#)

GRANT FUNDING DISTRIBUTED

Two Scout Groups received **£2,996** to run ambitious camping projects designed to instil environmentally sustainable ways of living and teach valuable life skills.

Big Love Sista received **£2,000** which specialises in arts-in-health projects, overcame the coronavirus obstacles by developing on-line resources that local residents could access.

Tyred Rides received **£2,000** to run workshop for young people around bicycle restoration and maintenance.

Inclusion Network received **£855** to run a their project 'Get Out, Get Active' was for young people in Bootle to meet up on a Saturday and get walking whilst improving mental wellbeing and tackling social isolation along the way.

Galloways Society for the Blind received **£800** to run their 'A Brush of Fresh Air, workshop to improve the health and wellbeing of blind and partially sighted people by giving them the chance to create artwork outside with natural materials.



CASE STUDY 4: YKIDS & ORRELL LIBRARY

In 2014, Bootle-based charity YKids submitted an expression of interest to Sefton MBC for the acquisition of the Orrell Library site, which was scheduled for closure. Ykids discussed options of acquiring the building with Sefton MBC, who committed to helping YKids, adopting a New Realities approach to overcome barriers.

The initial agreement issued for the building through Sefton Council's legal department proposed a rental cost of £1 a year for the first 5 years, followed by full rent after 5 years – which was an unrealistic request, especially as the original tender had stated 25 year commitment. Following further discussions with Sefton MBC, it was accepted this was wrong approach, as YKids would be unable to access external funds without a longer commitment. YKids then secured a long term lease for 25 years at £1 a year.

In early 2018, YKids announced the official launch of the new site and the change in premises enabled the charity to install a state-of-the-art creative kitchen space and expand their services.

CASE STUDY 5: THE SWAN CENTRE & LITHERLAND LIBRARY

In February 2015, The SWAN Centre contacted Sefton MBC to enquire about the Litherland Library site located on the corner of Linacre Road and Bridge Road as a possible new premises for the charity. This went through a tendering process, with The SWAN centre successful in acquisition.

A challenging refurbishment programme proceeded, with the charity receiving support from the council, The SWAN Centre officially opened the new site in May 2017 and this securing a safe and accessible location for the charity and it's clients. Since 2017, the transformation has allowed for the development of new services and improved community access, enhancing the future sustainability of The Swan Centre and the offer available to women to achieve mental wellbeing.



CASE STUDIES - NEW REALITIES IN ACTION

CASE STUDY 6: RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN SEFTON

THE CHALLENGE

As Sefton experienced the impact of Covid-19 locally and the first national lockdown was announced, our incredible voluntary, community and faith sector came together, with Sefton Council and NHS Sefton Clinical Commissioning groups to identify residents who were particularly vulnerable to the threat of the pandemic.

In particular, concentration turned to residents who had been advised by the government that they needed to shield for 12 weeks, as well as those residents who weren't clinically required to shield, yet nonetheless had other vulnerabilities which resulted in need for extra help and support.

[Read more about the COVID-19 Support Pathways](#)

THE OUTCOMES

2867 residents assisted with activities such as; shopping, collecting medication and social contact.

632 residents were provided with shopping services and a total of **5705 shops** were completed across all partners.

120 Active volunteers per week were supporting clients during the peak of the pandemic.

In addition to practical support, wellness checks were conducted with residents. Subsequently, volunteers were identified and supported to keep regular contact with those clients feeling isolated to offer support and companionship over the phone.

THE RESPONSE

Residents who had been advised by the government that they needed to shield for 12 weeks were contacted by Sefton Council to identify what their needs were regarding social contact, food and medication. Supported by a family of local voluntary and community sector groups and organisations, Living Well Sefton triaged the enquiries, then forwarded to Sefton CVS whereby Living Well Mentors, local Social Prescribing Link Workers and the Community Connectors, provided ongoing assistance which was supported by a dedicated team of local volunteers. The service offered a response within 4 days For others in need of help and support, but who were not on the shielded extremely vulnerable list, a referral pathway was established to advise people they could access information and help by calling the Council's Contact Centre or by completing an online form.

The Council's Contact Centre then shared the information Sefton CVS , following which the referral was triaged and people were connected with appropriate support which met their needs. Support included signposting people into various localised offers across our borough, so residents received a localised response where possible. The service offered a response within 3 days.

National support for shielded residents was withdrawn from 1st August 2020; the partnership of VCF groups worked in partnership with Sefton Council to identify those residents who would require ongoing support. There were 64 individuals identified by Sefton Council, of which only 25 were not known to VCF partners. Contact was made with these individuals in order to determine level of need and appropriate referrals to partner organisations. The main request was for ongoing telephone befriending or support to reduce isolation. The VCF organisations remained on standby to work with the Council should shielding be reintroduced nationally.

[Watch the COVID-19 Response video here](#)



ACTIONS AND VISION FOR 2020 - 2025

- Under take a **full refresh of the New Realities** way of working and focus on ensuring the approach is discussed at relevant Senior Leadership Teams.
- Encourage other Public Partners to **adopt the New Realities approach** both Strategically and Operationally.
- Sefton 2030 Vision - Identify the **key priorities** in which the New Realities approach can achieve positive outcomes.
- Continue to **extend workforce development opportunities** through shared investment programmes, improved access & encourage new initiatives.
- **Two-way shadowing programme** between local authority and VCF sector.
- Identify 2 areas of work for **impact and critique**. Aspire to invest in Common Leadership programmes between Sectors.
- Aspire to the **principles and values of the 21st century Public Servant**;
 - Benevolence
 - Predictability
 - Ability
 - Integrity

[More information here](#)

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Report to:	Council	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 21 April 2022
Subject:	Review of the 2021-2022 Member Development Programme and Proposed Strategy for the 2022-2023 Programme		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

This report provides a review of the Member Development Programme which ran in 2021-2022 and proposals for the 2022-2023 Programme.

Recommendations:

Council is requested to:

- (1) Approve rolling forward of the Sefton Council Member Development Programme for 2022-2023 Municipal Year.
- (2) Approve the continued designation of Mandatory to the following non-statutory courses:
 - Information and Compliance
 - Safeguarding Children Awareness
 - Safeguarding Adults Awareness
 - Corporate Parenting
- (3) Approve the establishment of a Member Development Steering Group comprising representation from the respective political groups and authorise the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services to approve the membership and terms of reference of the Steering Group.
- (4) Note and endorse the intention to work towards achievement of the North-West Member Development Charter for Sefton.

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Reasons for the Recommendations:

The aim of the Member Development programme is to provide Councillors with skills and knowledge to help them more effectively fulfil the vital role they play in working with and supporting their local communities.

The North-West Member Development Charter provides an established framework to help Councils undertake a self-assessment to develop and review good practice in relation to Member Development.

The formation of a Member Development Steering Group would help ensure that Members are actively involved and take ownership of the Member Development Programme.

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

To cease continuance with the Member Development Programme, not progress with the establishment of a Member Development Steering Group and not work towards the North-West Development Charter would lead to Members being less able to fulfil their role in effectively supporting their local communities.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

None directly

(B) Capital Costs

None directly

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):

Aside from Overview and Scrutiny Training and Code of Conduct training which used an external providers in 2021-2022, there are no direct costs associated with the Member Development Programme which is provided in-house by the Corporate Learning Centre, other Sefton Council departmental staff and local partners, such as Sefton Carers, Merseyside Police and Sefton CVS.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

Equality Implications:

A number of courses – Equality and Diversity Awareness, Hate Crime Awareness, Unconscious Bias, etc, raise equality issues and actively promote equality.

Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: YES
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: YES
Commission, broker and provide core services: N/A
Place – leadership and influencer: YES
Drivers of change and reform: YES
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: N/A
Greater income for social investment: N/A
Cleaner Greener N/A

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

- A Member Development Survey seeking Councillors’ feedback on the Member Development Programme 2021-2022
- The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD6762) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD6764) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

North-West Employers have provided advice about the Council’s working towards a Member Development Charter.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the Council meeting.

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Contact Officer:	Ruth Appleby
Telephone Number:	0151-934 2181
Email Address:	Ruth.appleby@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following Appendix is attached to this report:

- Appendix 1- Member Induction Programme 2022

Background Papers:

The following background papers which are not available on the internet can be accessed via the Council's intranet:

- Guidance for Councillors Handbook - 2021-2022 [Guidance For Newly Elected Members Handbook For Councillors 2021/2022](#)
- Member Development Programme Handbook 2021-2022 [Member Development Programme Handbook 2021-2022](#)
- Course Participation Statistics 2021-2022 [Member Development Programme](#)
- Individual Course Feedback Summaries for courses held remotely and face-to face [Document Individual Course Feedback 2021 2022](#)
- Member Development Programme 2021-2022 Survey Feedback Results [Survey Results 2021 2022.pdf](#)

1. Introduction/Background

The Member Development Programme was launched as a result of recommendations arising from the LGA Peer Review in 2018.

A report to Cabinet on 19 January 2019, set out the LGA action plan, including an action to “Develop the role of all members in a changing context for local government and a changing model of delivery locally”. Work on the Member Development Programme commenced in 2019 with a view to launching the programme following the elections in 2020.

Working closely with the, Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Resources, a report - ‘Briefing on proposals for induction of newly elected members and continual member development’ was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 5 November 2019.

The following proposals were outlined in the report:

- Production of a Guidance for Newly Elected Members Handbook – Providing information for Members (and continuing Members).
- A revamp of the Member Induction Programme to include introductory ‘bite sized’ videos from each Head of Service to support members in becoming familiar with key officers.
- Provision of a Member Development Programme of Courses to support new and continuing Members in their role as a Councillor, involving production of a handbook containing full details of all courses offered.
- Newly Elected Members being given access to the Council’s Learner Management System - ‘Me Learning’, in order that Members may access Sefton’s e-Learning resources such as information compliance and the Office 365 suite of training modules.
- An intranet page (Library) be developed for Member Development where resources and information can be accessed.

2. Preparation and Planning

Planning and preparation for the launch of the Member Development Programme involved:

1. Assigning a dedicated Democratic Services Officer to lead and work on the Member Development Programme.
2. Planning meetings between Democratic Services and Corporate Learning Centre staff in provision of courses to be accessed via on-line e-learning, virtual/remote via Microsoft Teams and face to face sessions.
3. Support from Strategic Support/Comms colleagues in production of the 2 Member handbooks.
4. Support from the Corporate Communications Manager in planning and preparing for the Induction Programme – in particular, production of

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- 'bite sized' videos of Executive Directors and Heads of Service.
5. Creation of a dedicated Member Development Library on the Intranet to enable Members to access Member development material such as course slides and Member Development Handbooks.
 6. Liaison with Executive Directors and Service Heads in production of the Guidance for Newly Elected Member Handbook.
 7. Liaison and close working between Democratic Services, course providers and CLC colleagues in scheduling and preparing for respective courses listed in the Member Development Handbook.
 8. Liaison and close working with ICT department and political group PAs for the swift supply and distribution of Council laptops to new Members following 2021 election, which was crucial for the success in their being able to function as a Councillor.
 9. On-going liaison with the Cabinet Member, Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Resources on the content of the programme.

3. Impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic

As indicated in 1 above, the launch of the Member Development Programme was initially planned to take place in May 2020. However, the onset of the Covid pandemic in March 2020, the subsequent lockdown and the postponement of the 2020 Elections meant that the Induction of New Members and the Member Development Programme did not take place that year.

Following the easing of lockdown restrictions and the announcement by the Government that the Elections would take place in May 2021, work continued with the preparation and development of a Member Induction and Development Programme which was launched in May 2021.

4. Member Induction

Member Induction in 2021-2022 comprised 2 main aspects and the Induction Programme for 2022-2023 will follow the same format, namely:

1. One-to-one (face-to-face) meet up with Democratic Services Staff to introduce Members to the Council and for completion of forms, etc., and provision of Induction Information Packs.
2. Induction Programme

As set out in Appendix 1 to the report, the 2022 Induction Programme will be held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 12 May 2022 and will involve introductions by the Chief Executive and the respective Executive Directors. The Service Area Heads will each provide 'bite sized' video introductions to their service areas.

The supply of Council laptops to new Members will be essential to the success of the Induction Programme and to be able to commence in

their new role with immediate effect.

A key component of the induction programme will be a slot delivered by the Corporate Learning Centre on accessing e-learning courses on the Council's Me-Learning website.

5. **Councillor Handbooks**

In 2021-2022 - 2 key documents were produced and distributed to support Councillors in their role as Sefton Councillors and on-going development.

Namely:

1. Guidance for Newly Elected Members Handbook 2021-2022
2. Member Development Programme Handbook 2021-2022

Both documents are currently being updated for the 2022-2023 Municipal Year.

Electronic and paper copies were provided to newly elected Members at their Induction and copies were emailed to continuing Members. Copies were also made available on the Council's Intranet web library at the above links.

Both of the handbooks are 'living' documents - continually evolving and being amended in response to changes to Council personnel, addition of new courses, etc.

5.1 **Guidance for Newly Elected Members Handbook**

Link:

[Guidance For Newly Elected Members Handbook For Councillors 2021/2022](#)

This handbook provides a guide to Members to help them in their first weeks and continuance as a Sefton Councillor. The document provides information about Sefton, the Core Vision, Core Purpose and Framework for Change, responsibilities of elected Members, Code of Conduct, the decision-making process/Committees, the political management structure, local government finance and so on. The handbook also provides information and contact details for the respective service areas.

As previously indicated, this document is a 'living' document and amended subject to changes in the Council, such as Council personnel.

5.2 **Member Development Handbook -**

Link: [Member Development Programme Handbook 2021-2022](#)

This document contains a programme of courses to provide Councillors with a

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steady stream of information to support them in their role as a councillor.

In 2021-2022 the majority of courses were offered in-house with training delivered by service providers and CLC trainers at no additional cost to the Council.

Exceptions were:

- Overview and Scrutiny Training provided externally by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.
- An additional training session on the Council's new Code of Conduct was provided remotely on 13 September 2021 by Bethan Evans of Governance Training & Consultancy.

Courses were offered in a variety of teaching/learning formats – namely:

- Remote sessions (held via Microsoft Teams)
- via e-learning on the Council's Me-learning website
- face to face sessions – more recently following relaxation of Covid precautions.

Members were sent reminders about all of the courses 1-2 weeks before they were due to run. Teams/Calendar invitations were sent for remote courses and email reminders were sent about e-learning courses prior to recommended completion dates.

To maximise take-up, some of the courses were offered on more than one occasion and at different times (e.g. during the day and/or in the evening).

In the case of the mandatory Corporate Parenting Course, this session was held twice in 2021. However, to maximise take-up, 3 more sessions were added and took place early in 2022. The handbook was updated to reflect these additions and Members were sent Teams invitations immediately after the New Year.

Some of the courses were requested by Members during the year and added to the programme accordingly – e.g. Culture, Values and Behaviours – Understanding Your Role as a Councillor, requested by Clthe – Cabinet Member – Regulatory Compliance and Corporate Resources and 'Dementia Friends' requested by the – Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care.

6. Corporate Learning Centre (CLC)

Information about all of the courses listed in the Member Development Handbook is also available on the CLC website and Members have individual learning profiles providing a history of the courses they have undertaken to date. Guidance on accessing the CLC website is provided as part of the Member Induction Programme and the CLC are also available to help individual Councillors on request.

7. **Accessibility of Courses**

As previously indicated, sessions are run in a variety of formats – e-learning, sessions held remotely via Teams and face to face (where possible given Covid restrictions).

Information is provided in accessible formats and Members experiencing difficulties accessing course information are accommodated (e.g. course material provided on yellow paper for members with dyslexia).

ICT support

Members of the CLC Team and Democratic Services staff are available to help Members experiencing difficulties accessing remote and e-learning courses and their learning records. Also, one-to-one stand-alone ICT training sessions for any Members requiring additional support with basic IT skills are provided on request.

8. **Monitoring Participation - 2021-2022 Course Take-up**

Take-up statistics for courses held remotely and face to face in 2021-2022 can be viewed in the graphs at the following link: [Member Development Programme](#)

This document includes take-up statistics for the respective political groups.

9. **Monitoring Member Satisfaction - Evaluation of Courses 2021-2022**

9.1 **Courses held Remotely and Face-to-Face**

Feedback on courses held remotely and face to face was obtained via on-line forms made available to attendees (together with presentation slides for remote and classroom courses) immediately after each course. Feedback on the individual courses run can be viewed at the following link: [Document Individual Course Feedback 2021 2022](#)

9.2 **E-Learning Courses**

We also captured evaluation feedback for **e-learning** courses and below are some comments provided by Members:

Equality and Diversity Awareness

- “training is great but interactive sessions may be good as reading things aloud and discussing can further aid understanding. Also, it is good to challenge discrimination and we all should, but only safely, so training on that would be good too”.

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Safeguarding Adults Awareness

- “Good course around a difficult subject”.
- “Better if these things are more interactive”.

Safeguarding Children Awareness

- “Thank you for the detailed and informative talk”
- “I thought this was very informative and very well put together”

Unconscious Bias

- “Interesting course to complete”
- “Would be good for this course to be mandatory”.

9.3 Mandatory Courses

Some of the courses were designated mandatory:

Namely:

- Planning Committee Training (statutory requirement) (Remote – Teams session)
- Licensing Committee Training (statutory requirement) Face to face session
- Information and Compliance (e-learning)
- Safeguarding Adults (e-learning)
- Safeguarding Children (e-learning)
- Corporate Parenting (Remote Teams Sessions)

Feedback on whether these courses should be classed as mandatory has been mixed and in some cases was fed back via direct email communications with Democratic Services. For example, some Members objected vociferously to non-statutory courses being classed as ‘mandatory’; whilst other Members felt that more courses should be mandatory for Members (e.g. Equality and Diversity Awareness and ‘Unconscious Bias’).

9.4 Member Development Programme 2021-2022 Feedback Survey

9.4.1 In December 2021 Councillors were asked to complete an **on-line** feedback survey on the whole of the Member Development programme to help gauge Member satisfaction and opinion to inform development of the programme for 2022-2023.

Paper copies of the survey were also handed out for completion by Members at the full Council meeting on 3 March 2022.

The survey closed on 7 March 2022 and 38 responses were received.

This response was disappointing, especially as the deadline for completion of the on-line survey had been extended **three times** to encourage more Councillors to participate in the survey.

9.4.2 Survey results

- The survey summary report can be viewed at the following link: [Survey Results 2021 2022.pdf](#)

Analysis and comment on the Survey:

	Comment /Action for 2022/2023 programme
<u>Overall Programme / Handbook</u>	
Q1 – 37 of the 38 respondents indicated that they thought the Member Development Programme 2021 -2022 was of benefit	Continue to run the Member Development Programme
Q2 – 35 respondents found the Member Development Handbook helpful. Suggestion was made that hard copies should be distributed	Copies of the 2022/23 Member Development Handbook to be distributed to Members via email (and made available on-line) with paper copies provided to Members on request.
Q3 – 21 Respondents thought more of the courses should have run in 2022 (as opposed to 2021). However, it should be noted that the take-up for courses which ran in January to March 2022 was significantly lower than in 2021 with 2 remote sessions having had to be cancelled due to poor take-up.	2022/2023 programme to follow same format as in 2021/2022
Q4 – 35 respondents thought the frequency of courses was suitable	2022/2023 programme to follow same frequency as in 2021/2022
Q5 – 36 were happy with the variety of courses offered	2022/2023 programme to follow same format as in 2021/2022, with new/additional courses offered if requested (subject to resources)
<u>Accessibility of courses</u>	
Q6– 33 respondents felt they had received adequate support accessing the courses, 5 said they felt that they had partly received adequate support	Continue to offer ongoing support to Members in accessing courses

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Q7– 36 respondents found emails reminding them about courses helpful	Continue to send email reminders about upcoming courses
Q8 - 35 said they were easily able to access e-learning	Continue to offer support to Members in accessing e-learning. The Member Development Handbook includes a Guide to Accessing e-learning courses.
Q9 – 14 respondents agreed that non-mandatory e-learning courses should have a recommended completion date - 24 said not	The completion date for non-mandatory is recommended only , but not enforced
Q10 – 37 found courses held remotely via Microsoft Teams accessible	No change
Q11 – 28 thought courses should be held more than once, 5 thought not and 5 were undecided	Offer courses more than once on request / if required – subject to resources
<u>Mandatory Courses</u>	
Q12 the majority of respondents agreed that the following courses should continue to be designated mandatory as indicated below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Parenting – 34 • Information and Compliance - 21 • Safeguarding Adults Awareness – 24 • Safeguarding Children and Young People – 29 	Recommend continuation of mandatory designation
Q13 – 24 respondents agreed that mandatory courses should have a deadline for completion. 14 said not.	Mandatory courses to continue to have a completion deadline date (although this is difficult to enforce). Suggest that the courses run annually.
Q14 Although it only received 16 indications that it should be mandatory - additional comments were received about the importance of Equality and Diversity Awareness training being mandatory for Councillors in line with policy for Council staff.	Suggest that a Member Development Steering Group (see para 10.2 below) give further consideration to Equality and Diversity Awareness training being mandatory for Members.

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<p>Q15 – the following responses were received indicating that training should be mandatory for members of the following Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Audit and Governance – 15 ➤ Overview and Scrutiny – 18 ➤ Health and Wellbeing – 8 ➤ No response -15 	<p>Training for these Committees to be included in the Member Development Programme but not mandatory.</p> <p>Audit and Governance Committee Members receive on-going training and development prior to each quarterly meeting.</p>
<p>Q16 – the majority of respondents felt that Code of Conduct Training should be offered annually with an equal split of 18 respondents saying it should be mandatory and 18 that it should be non-mandatory. 5 did not think Code of Conduct training should be offered annually.</p>	<p>Code of Conduct training is provided as part of the Induction Programme for new members.</p> <p>Recommend that Code of Conduct training is also made available annually for all members as part of the Member Development Programme, but is not designated mandatory</p>
<p>Q17 – A number of suggestions were given on how to encourage Member take-up of courses as detailed in the survey</p>	<p>A Member Development Steering Group (see para 10.2 below) to take on board suggestions and consider how to improve course take-up.</p>
<p>Q18 – the following suggestions were made for future Member Development themes/courses.</p>	<p>Member Development Steering Group (see para 10.2 below) to take on board suggestions for the development of future programmes.</p>
<p>Q19 – all of the respondents indicated that they felt better informed after taking part in the programme.</p>	
<p>Q20 – the following additional comments were received.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It should be stressed that courses are for learning not a way of bringing issues to officers or for political point scoring.” • “I think it is great – even courses I am repeating are reassuring and there is so much to learn. I also really like to see other Councillors in the sessions as well as getting to know 	<p>Member Development Steering Group / Democratic Services to take on board and give further consideration to the comments and suggestions.</p>

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<p>trainers/officers better.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Only to say thank you to the officers involved.”• “In every job I have had I have had to take part in a professional development program. At the very minimum, Councillors should be able to demonstrate an understanding of safeguarding, equality and diversity and their role and responsibility as corporate parents.”• “Having been on Planning so far I believe some element of planning training should be mandatory to all Councillors to better inform them and give them an understanding of process”• “It’s easier to do remotely”• “A survey of 21 questions is going the wrong way. Ask a maximum of 5 questions, beyond this and people are disengaged.”• “We can always learn new ideas.”	
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10. **Member Development Strategy 2022/2023**

In addition to rolling out a Programme of Courses for Members in 2022-2023, taking on board feedback survey results, 2 key actions are proposed namely:

10.1 Working towards Achieving the North-West Member Development Charter

The aim of the Member Development programme is to support and develop councillors to enable them to fulfil the vital role they play working with and supporting local communities.

The North-West Member Development Charter provides an established framework to help the Councils undertake a self-assessment to develop and review good practice the principles contained within the Charter.

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To start the accreditation process, the Council would sign a declaration to demonstrate its commitment to the principles of the Charter and using the charter framework, build a portfolio to practically demonstrate this commitment and show that it has met all of the requirements. This would be followed by an external assessment before being awarded the charter.

The Council previously achieved the Charter in 2014, but this lapsed after 3 years, following Council cutbacks which led to the post of dedicated Member Support Officer post not being replaced when the post holder left the Council and the Member Development Charter was not progressed.

Key advantages to the Council in working toward and achieving the Member Development Charter are:

- The quality of councillor development is improved
- New councillors are better prepared for their roles and responsibilities
- Councillor progression is better enabled
- Helps ensure councillors can operate at their most knowledgeable, skilled and effective
- Increases councillors' competence and confidence
- Helps councillors navigate the ever more complex and demanding role and local government landscape
- Self-care and reflection for councillors through development and growth.
- Impact on all Partners
- Strengthens member-officer relationships
- Helps ensure effective top team political and managerial leadership
- Encourages robust and accountable decision making
- Helps ensure proactive succession planning
- Helps improve councillor diversity
- Enhances democracy and participation

10.2 Establishment of a Member Development Steering Group

A key aspect to working towards the Member Development Charter would be the establishment of a Member Development Steering Group.

This would be Chaired by the Cabinet Member, Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services and would also comprise membership from across all of the Council's political groups. It is suggested that the group Whips would be Members and any Councillors with a keen interest in Member development.

This would mean that Councillors would be at the heart of supporting and shaping member development taking into consideration the changing role of the Councillor.

A key function of the Member Development Steering Group would be to help

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guide the Council's work towards achieving the North-West Member Development Charter, which would include consideration of the introduction of personal development plans and identification of key skills of Councillors and identification of suitable topics for future Member development courses.

Subject to approval of the formation of a Member Development Steering Group, the proposed Membership and Term of Reference would be delegated for approval by the Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services.

APPENDIX 1

MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME - THURSDAY 12 MAY 2022

THE PROGRAMME WILL BE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Times	Running Order /Contents																																				
9.00-9.30	Welcome by Dwayne Johnson Chief Executive																																				
9.30 to 10.00	Introduction to Executive Directors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People – Andrea Watts • Place – Stephen Watson • Corporate Resources and Customer Services – Stephan Van Arendsen • Adult Social Care and Health – Deborah Butcher • Children’s Social Care and Education – Martin Birch 																																				
10.00 to 10.50	Bite sized Video introductions to Council Service areas by Service Area Heads: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Service Area</th> <th>Service Head</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Strategic Support -</td> <td>Jan McMahon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Health and Wellbeing and Statutory Director of Public Health</td> <td>Margaret Jones</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Communities</td> <td>Simon Burnett</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td>Economic Growth & Housing</td> <td>Stuart Barnes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td>Operational In-house Services</td> <td>Michelle Williams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6.</td> <td>Highways & Public Protection</td> <td>Peter Moore</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.</td> <td>Commercial Development</td> <td>Christian Rogers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8.</td> <td>Adult Social Care</td> <td>Sarah Aldis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9.</td> <td>Children’s Social Care</td> <td>Laura Knights</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.</td> <td>Education</td> <td>Tricia Davies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11.</td> <td>Head of Quality Assurance, Performance and Safeguarding -</td> <td>Joe Banham</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Service Area	Service Head	1.	Strategic Support -	Jan McMahon	2.	Health and Wellbeing and Statutory Director of Public Health	Margaret Jones	3.	Communities	Simon Burnett	4.	Economic Growth & Housing	Stuart Barnes	5.	Operational In-house Services	Michelle Williams	6.	Highways & Public Protection	Peter Moore	7.	Commercial Development	Christian Rogers	8.	Adult Social Care	Sarah Aldis	9.	Children’s Social Care	Laura Knights	10.	Education	Tricia Davies	11.	Head of Quality Assurance, Performance and Safeguarding -	Joe Banham
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6.	Highways & Public Protection	Peter Moore																																			
7.	Commercial Development	Christian Rogers																																			
8.	Adult Social Care	Sarah Aldis																																			
9.	Children’s Social Care	Laura Knights																																			
10.	Education	Tricia Davies																																			
11.	Head of Quality Assurance, Performance and Safeguarding -	Joe Banham																																			
10.50 to 11.00	Coffee break																																				

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11.00 to 12.00	Welcome and Introduction by David McCullough - Chief Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer Nolan Principles, Code of conduct, Declarations of interest – Member allowances
12.00 to 13.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helen Spreadbury – Use of IT – Contacting the Helpdesk, etc• Olaf Hansen - Guidance on using the Intranet in particular, Mod Gov• Ruth Appleby – Introduction to the Member Development Programme 2021-2022• Anne Hawksworth - Guidance on applying for Corporate Learning Centre (CLC) courses

Members will be sent invitations to the Teams meeting to their Councillor email address.

If you need any support in joining the Teams meeting please contact:

- Ruth Appleby (0151 934 2181)
or
- Amy Dyson (0151 934 2045)

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Report to:	Council	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 21 April 2022
Subject:	ICT Acceptable Usage Policy		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for revised security policy documentation relating to the Authority's ICT estate. The Policy Document is a yearly review of the ICT Acceptable Usage Policy reviewed and approved by the Audit & Governance Committee on 16th March 2022.

Recommendation(s):

Council is requested to approve:

- (1) The revised security policy documentation relating to the authority's ICT estate
- (2) The internal publication of the Acceptable Use Policy.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To ensure that Sefton's ICT is operating in line with industry standards for ICT Security Management

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

Not to make any changes to existing documentation – rejected, as this would not be consistent with the requirements of the ICT Contract and Sefton would not be operating in line with leading industry practice, which could expose the organisation to increased risk of CyberCrime/Cyber Security or Information Breach.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

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(A) Revenue Costs

Not Applicable

(B) Capital Costs

Not Applicable

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
Revised policy documentation for review by all authorised users of Sefton ICT services	
IT changes and security infrastructure changes to be addressed within the ICT Contract Management	
Legal Implications:	
There are no legal implications	
Equality Implications:	
There are no equality implications	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Approval of the ICT Acceptable Usage Policy will have no direct impact on the Council's Climate Emergency Implications.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Not Applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Yes, the provision of a secure network will provide the foundation for any further developments of digital services for residents
Commission, broker and provide core services: Yes, provision of a secure ICT Environment
Place – leadership and influencer: Not Applicable
Drivers of change and reform: Yes, ICT is a key enabling programme to deliver the Framework for Change
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Not Applicable
Greater income for social investment: Not Applicable
Cleaner Greener: Not Applicable

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

Members of the Executive Information Management Group have been consulted on the policy documents and feedback incorporated as required. Membership includes

- Head of Commissioning Support and Business Intelligence
- The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services
- Chief Legal and Democratic Officer
- Performance and Intelligence Manager
- Information Management and Governance Lead
- Workforce Learning and Development Manager

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 6763) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 4963) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Members of the Audit and Governance Committee have also reviewed and approved the Acceptable Usage Policy.

(B) External Consultations

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Council meeting.

Contact Officer:	Jamal Aslam
Telephone Number:	07702026983
Email Address:	jamal.aslam@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

ICT Acceptable Usage Policy

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 In 2017 the authority embarked on a radical programme of ICT Transformation, to improve the Council's ICT provision to support both the Framework for Change Programme and to create a state of readiness for a new external ICT Provider. In addition this enabled a step change in service delivery to support the delivery of interdependent PSR workstreams namely the Asset and Accommodation Strategy (PSR8) and Locality Teams (PSR2). The three key deliverables were:-

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1.1.1 Services and staff – to improve the end user experience and support the introduction of new ways of working

1.1.2 ICT Service – to deliver a new ICT Support service and associated services to improve reliability and functionality of ICT as well as supporting continual improvements/service transformation

1.1.3 ICT Infrastructure – to enable agile working, reduce the complexity of system delivery as well as providing the platform for Sefton to take full advantage of advances in technology moving forwards

1.2 Alongside the delivery of a new technical and support infrastructure it is essential to align associated policies that govern both ICT Security operations and Acceptable Use of ICT to ensure the provision of a robust and secure network. These documents are as follows:-

1.2.1 Information Security Management System Policy, which governs the provision of contracted technology and telecommunications services to Sefton in line with the International code of Practice for Information Security Management ISO27001:2013;

1.2.2 The Initial Security Management Plan which describes how the external ICT Services provider (Agilisys) manages Information Security according to leading industry practice and specifies any additional or different application of controls to ensure a secure network; and

1.2.3 ICT Acceptable Usage Policy, which aims to provide clear guidance on the acceptable use of ICT for authorised users, to protect the security of the network and reduce the risk of a data breach.

2. Proposals for Approval

2.1 Since the publication of the last ICT Acceptable Usage Policy the authority has continued to change in ways of working due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this has resulted in a significant increase in Sefton Council personnel working from non-council sites.

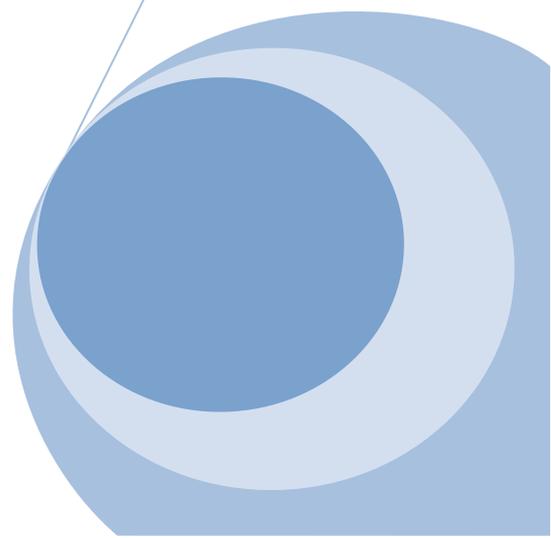
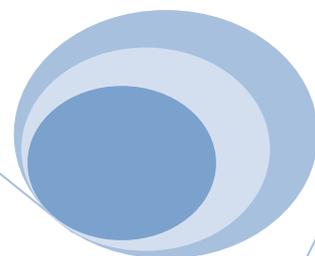
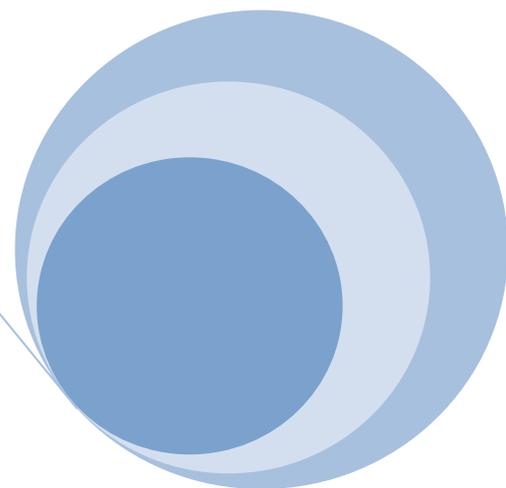
2.2 Given the fundamental changes in ways of working, the ICT Acceptable Usage policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure all personnel are taking the precautionary steps to protect the Council's ICT environment whilst working from remote locations as well as general changes in line with the National Cyber Security Centre guidance.

3. Conclusion

This report provides a two core policy documents for approval, to streamline the current guidance documentation available for all authorised users of Sefton's ICT environment, as well as ensuring the Sefton is operating in line with Industry Standards for ICT Security Management

ICT Acceptable Use Policy

2022



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Summary Sheet

Document Information

Protective marking (Unclassified / Restricted Circulation / Confidential)	Unclassified
Ref	Acceptable Use ICT
Document Purpose	To ensure all users of Sefton's ICT are aware of guidance around acceptable use
Document status (Draft / Active)	Final
Partners (If applicable)	N/A
Date document came into force	TBC
Date of next review	March 2023
Owner (Service Area)	Sefton Council – ICT Client Team
Location of original (Owner job title / contact details)	Helen Spreadbury
Authorised by (Committee/Cabinet)	Audit and Governance Committee

Further documentation and supporting material can be found via the following page <http://intranet.smbc.loc/our-council/data-protection-information-handling/policies.aspx>

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to ensure that all Users of Sefton Council's ICT (Information Communications Technology) Services feel confident in the use of ICT to complete their work. The aim of this policy document is to describe what is acceptable activity to ensure the security of Sefton's ICT network, to protect the disclosure of information and ensure we can prevent, as far as possible, cyber-attack or cybercrime.

The increasing use of Information and Communication Technology and the development of information strategies to support the process of providing effective services make it necessary to take appropriate action to ensure that these systems are developed, operated and maintained in a safe and secure manner.

Whilst the aim is to provide facilities for employees to use freely in pursuit of their job there are, however, management and legal issues, which should be borne in mind to ensure the effective and appropriate use of information technology.

Scope

This document applies to all authorised users of Sefton's ICT systems; including council employees, members, contractors, consultants, commissioned service providers and organisations that connect to or support any part of the IT Infrastructure

Individual Responsibilities

- All Elected Members must accept responsibility for maintaining ICT standards within the organisation.
- All Managers must accept responsibility for initiating, implementing and maintaining ICT standards including those outlined in the Starters, Movers and Leavers policy within the organisation.
- All non-managerial employees must accept responsibility for maintaining standards by conforming to those controls, which are applicable to them.
- The ICT Client Team, supported by Agilisys, is responsible for implementation of technical security solutions to protect the network

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How to use this document

This document outlines what Sefton deems to be acceptable and unacceptable use of ICT, all individuals as defined within the scope of this document must comply with this policy failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

If you do not understand the definitions and guidance in this document please do not hesitate to seek advice from either your manager, The ICT Client Team or the IT Helpdesk.

User Accounts and Passwords

Access to Sefton Council's ICT systems and Information must be adequately protected. Whilst different business applications have varying security requirements, these individual requirements must be identified through risk assessments that will 'control the access' to the ICT systems and filing cabinets where the information is held in paper form.

Management Responsibilities

- Managers must ensure that all staff within their team have access rights to systems and IT services that are commensurate with the tasks they are expected to perform
- All staff must have a unique login that is not shared with or disclosed to any other users along with an associated unique password that is requested at each new login
- Employees must not make copies of computer software owned by the Council for private use
- User's access rights must be reviewed at regular intervals by their manager to ensure that the appropriate rights are still allocated. System administration accounts must only be provided to users that are required to perform system administration tasks.
- Managers must ensure that all computer software and hardware is purchased via the ICT Client team, under no circumstances should any free of charge evaluation software be installed without prior approval from the ICT client team.
- All authorised users are required to comply with the Starters, Movers and Leavers Policy document found in Appendix A.
- Managers must ensure that all new employees must complete the Information Management and Governance and ICT Acceptable Usage Policy training on MeLearning within 7 days of their start date. Failure to complete the MeLearning courses will result in limitations being placed on the ICT account.

1. IT Device Management

As a principle, and to ensure value for money, there will be no more than one workstation asset allocated per user (desktop/laptop) In exceptional cases staff requiring multiple assets must provide a business case (signed by Head of Service) to the ICT Client team before an additional device will be purchased.

How you should use your device (key principles)

- All devices directly connected to the Sefton MBC Network (wired, wireless or access via VPN) must be approved, deployed and supported by the ICT Managed Service Provider
- The installation of any software and any required local configuration is managed and supported by the ICT Managed Service Provider, users should not install any software themselves.
- All devices are owned by Sefton MBC
- All mobile end user devices must be assigned a named individual within a team
- If a person moves role within the organisation the device remains with the leavers team for reallocation to the new postholder, in cases where there is no new postholder it must be returned to the ICT Managed Service Provider.
- All fixed desktops must be assigned to the departmental manager for that area
- When a device is no longer in use then the device must be returned to the ICT Managed Service provider
- All devices must be listed within the team's equipment inventory

Things you must not do

- Connect any personal devices to the corporate network – Bring your Own Device (BYOD) is not permitted
- Do not take your council devices outside of the United Kingdom without prior approval from the ICT Client Team
- Do not move or install devices without the support of ICT, all requests for installation, moves or changes to any device must be logged through the ICT Service Desk
- Do not dispose or reallocate any device without logging a call with the ICT Service Desk, any disposals must comply with WEEE Regulations 2017

2. User network and Applications Accounts

- Always use your own personal Sefton Council account to carry out your work
- Only use your administration account to carry daily specific system administrator duties assigned to you by your manager (if relevant)
- All Sefton Council IT Accounts not accessed for longer than 30 days will be disabled

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- **Always use CTRL ALT DEL/Windows Key + L to lock your machine when unattended**
- Follow the password policy in Appendix B, a summary of what you shouldn't do is described below

Things you must not do

- Never write passwords down
- Never send a password through email
- **Never save passwords in your browser/s**
- Never include a password in a non-encrypted stored document
- Never tell anyone your password or hint at the format of your password
- Never use your network password on an account over the internet which does not have a secure login, Secure web pages have addresses that start with https://
- Don't use common acronyms as part of your password
- Don't use spaces, common words or reverse spelling of words in part of your password
- Don't use names of people or places as part of your password
- Don't use parts of your login name in your password
- Don't use parts of numbers easily remembered such as phone numbers, NI numbers or street address
- Never let someone see you type your password

3. OneDrive and SharePoint

Access to OneDrive for Business is from a managed Sefton Council **Windows 10** device or a managed mobile device only.

OneDrive for Business is your personal area on the cloud, confidential to you, previously known as your H: Drive. OneDrive for Business requires an Office 365 license, once employment ends this data will be accessible to the user's manager and will then be archived in line with the data retention policy, please refer to Appendix C

SharePoint is a web-based collaborative platform that integrates with MS Office, used for sharing documents, this is where you will find all the documents migrated from your old G: Drive or team drive or Microsoft Shares.

How you should use OneDrive for Business and SharePoint

- All data stored in OneDrive for Business should be relevant to the user's role
- All data that needs to be shared across teams/groups must be stored in SharePoint
- Data should be stored in line with the retention schedule and deleted when no longer required

- The sharing of files to third parties is permitted however this should only be done for valid business purpose, and approved by the relevant [Information Asset Owner](#) (, the basic configuration to facilitate this is supported by the ICT Service Desk

Things you must not do

- Personally identifiable data must not be kept in OneDrive
- Personal/Copyright Pictures must not be stored in OneDrive or SharePoint
- Personal/Copyright Videos must not be stored in OneDrive or SharePoint
- Any pictures, music or videos that are stored will be deemed to be property of Sefton Council
- Do not save any documents/files which hold sensitive/personally identifiable data on your desktop.
- Your OneDrive must only be accessed your own user account and users must not attempt to access another user's OneDrive without their prior expressed permission. Exemptions to this are;
 - Where a colleague or manager requires access to the OneDrive folder of a user who has left the organization or is on Long Term Absence
- If a manager requires access to another user's OneDrive folder as part of an investigation, then approval is required by HR in the first instance

4. Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Council recognises that it is not practical to define precise rules that cover the full range of Internet activities available and in general, it is adherence to the spirit and essence of the policy that will allow the Council as a whole, and employees in person, to productively benefit from access to this powerful technology.

All personal usage must be in accordance with this policy. Your computer and any data held on it are the property of Sefton Council and may be accessed at any time by the Council to ensure compliance with all its statutory, regulatory and internal policy requirements.

What you should use your Council Internet account for

Your Council Internet account should be used in accordance with this policy to access anything in pursuance of your work including:

- Access to and/or provision of information.
- Research
- Electronic commerce (e.g. purchasing equipment for the Council)
- Supported council applications which are hosted externally by the supplier
- Personal use in your own time (i.e.: during your lunchbreak), any personal use must not include any activity listed in the section below

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The Council is not responsible for any personal transactions you enter, for example in respect of the quality, delivery or loss of items ordered. You must accept responsibility for, and keep the Council protected against, any claims, damages, losses or the like which might arise from your transaction for example in relation to payment for the items or any personal injury or damage to property they might cause.

The Council is not responsible for any losses or issues relating to personal use of the Council's internet facility.

If you are in any doubt about how you may make personal use of the system you are advised not to do so.

Things you must not do

- Browse non-work sites during working hours
- Leave open live internet feeds to collect news, sports updates or to download images, video or audio streams for none work purposes
- Download any copyrighted material without the owner's permission
- Create, download, upload, display or access knowingly, sites that contain pornography or other "unsuitable" material that might be deemed illegal, obscene or offensive.
- Subscribe to, enter or use peer-to-peer networks or install software that allows sharing of music, video or image files.
- Subscribe to, enter or utilise real time chat facilities such as chat rooms, text /image messenger or pager programs.
- Subscribe to, enter or use online gaming or betting sites.
- Subscribe to or enter "money making" sites or enter or use "money making" programs.
- **Subscribe to, enter or use Free PDF Conversion websites.**
- Run a private business.
- Download any software used for hacking or cracking passwords.
- Make repeated attempts to access any sites automatically blocked by the Council's filtering software.
- Use the Council's Internet Service for personal online shopping, to purchase other personal goods/services.

The above list gives examples of "unsuitable" usage but is neither exclusive nor exhaustive.

5. Email Acceptable Use Policy

The email system is provided to allow electronic communication in pursuance of Council business between Elected Members, Council employees, individual Council service users and external organisations. All email sent and received via Sefton Council is owned by the council and should not be deemed personal. The Council will monitor your email account usage and may access your email content. Be aware that Sefton MBC may be required to disclose your emails or responses to

them, to third parties for legal reasons, which may include requests made under the UK GDPR, Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations.

How you should use your email (key principles)

- Communication in connection with Sefton Council's business
- Users must exercise due care when writing an email to ensure that their message maintains the standards of professionalism the Sefton Council expects of their position
- Users should not make statements on their own behalf or on behalf of the Sefton Council that do or may defame, libel or damage the reputation of Sefton Council or any person
- Limited personal use of email is allowed provided it is kept to a reasonable level, does not interfere with a user's performance in carrying out their duties, does not have a negative impact on Sefton Council in any way, is lawful and adheres to the principles contained within this email Policy.
- Sefton Council email / public folders and shared mailboxes not accessed (e.g. opened content) for longer than 30 days will be disabled
- Sefton Council email / public folders and shared mailboxes not accessed for longer than 90 days will be archived except where otherwise directed by the relevant manager i.e.: for long term sickness, maternity or direct instruction from HR, see Appendix A
- All Sefton Council email / public folders and shared mailboxes must have an owner and if an owner leaves it must be reassigned or the mailbox will also be removed in accordance with policies above.
- The Sefton Council ICT Division will hold archived leavers data for 7 years, this data will only be accessed upon a formal request approved by a manager or HR.
- Sefton Council reserves the right to monitor and/or record individual email use for lawful business purposes. Users should therefore have no expectation of privacy whilst using Sefton Council equipment for the purposes of communicating via email
- The contents of all email attachments, inbound and outbound, are scanned electronically to help implement this Mandatory Policy against the acceptable use policy and to prevent malware
- Individual users are responsible for the day-to-day house-keeping of their account and must minimise their mailbox space.

Things you must not do

- Use the Council's email system to facilitate or operate any business/ commercial activity, other than that of the Council.
- Send business related email to large distribution groups without the permission of the ICT Client Team (over 250 recipients)
- **Email confidential, sensitive or personally identifiable information to other people (either internal or external) without ensuring that the data is secured and that the authority has the legal power or explicit consent to do so**
- Provide your work email address as contact details to sites you have accessed for non-work purposes
- Use personal web-based email from your work equipment i.e.: Google mail

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- Send files with non-business-related attachments (i.e. compressed files, video streams, executable code, video or audio streams or graphical images)
- Email must only be accessed via the user's personal user account and users must not attempt to access another user's mailbox without their prior expressed permission. Exemptions to this are:
 - Where a colleague or manager requires access to the mailbox of a user who has left the organization or is on Long Term Absence
- If a manager requires access to another user's mailbox as part of an investigation then approval is required by HR in the first instance
- Except where it is strictly and necessarily required for your work (for example, corporate advertising, IT audit activity or other investigation), you must not create, download, access, display, transmit or engage in the following:
 - full videos or clips
 - photographic or cartoon images
 - chain letters
 - jokes or 'joke' chains
 - conversational email
 - harassing or bullying content
 - entertainment software
 - other non-work related software
 - advertisements
 - global emails (see paragraph 13 below)
 - game
 - gambling
- Again, except where it is strictly necessary and required for your work (as defined above) you must not create, download, access, display, transmit or engage in the following
 - material that is obscene, offensive, sexually explicit, pornographic, racist, sexist, ageist, defamatory, hateful, or homophobic in nature, incites or depicts violence, or describes techniques for criminal or terrorist acts
 - derogatory remarks or express derogatory opinions regarding the Council, its Officers or Members or communicate extreme views that could be to the detriment of the Council or its reputation or bring the Council into disrepute

If you receive an unsolicited "unsuitable" email please inform your manager and notify the ICT Service Desk.

6. Telephones

For the purpose of this policy the term 'Phones' refers to Council 8x8 Cloud Telephony System landlines and mobile telephony devices, including pool phones. Users are expected to exercise due care when making telephone calls and using mobile messaging, to ensure that they maintain the standards of professionalism the Council expects of their position. Managers have the responsibility to inform the ICT

Service Desk when a mobile phone is no longer required, e.g. a member of staff has left, and the phone is not being passed on, so that the contract can be cancelled.

Sefton reserves the right to monitor and record/log individuals' use of the mobile device systems for its lawful business purposes. Sefton's employees, secondees and workers must not expect privacy whilst using Council equipment for the purposes of communicating. Sefton MBC may be required to disclose voice recordings to third parties for legal reasons, which may include requests made under the UK GDPR or Freedom of Information Act.

How you should use your Telephone (key principles)

- In connection with normal business
- Use of personal mobile phones in work for short conversations/messages provided it is kept to a reasonable level, does not interfere with a user's performance in carrying out their duties, does not have a negative impact on Sefton Council in any way, is lawful and adheres to the principles contained within this Policy

Things you must not do

- Allow the use of Council Phones by unauthorised person(s)
- Use a Council phone for personal calls (this includes the use of SMS text messages/internet use) except in an emergency
- Use your Councils mobile data package (mobile phone or MiFi device) for non-work purposes.
- Incur international roaming costs unless pre-authorised by your manager (or Democratic Services Manager, for members)
- Use phones in a manner that could bring Sefton Council into disrepute
- Send SMS or MMS messages that could contain discriminatory, abusive, racist, pornographic, obscene, illegal, offensive, potentially libellous or defamatory content
- Send personal and/or sensitive data using SMS or MMS messages without verifying that the Council has the legal powers or explicit consent to do so.
- Use a Sefton Council number to promote any external private business
- Use a Sefton phone to contact premium rate numbers
- Remove the Council SIM card for any purpose (unless explicitly told to do so by a member of the ICT Service Desk as part of fault diagnosis/repair)
- Transfer the SIM Card to any other device

If you receive any harassment via telephone, do not attempt to contact a person who has left you an unpleasant, suspicious, or threatening message. Do not engage in conversation with a person making an unwanted call. Remain calm and try not to show emotion.

Put the handset to one side for a few minutes then replace it. Record the date and time of the call as well as the details even if they were unanswered or silent calls. Write down and save any text messages and the time they were received. In

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the first instance users should inform their line manager and contact HR for further advice.

7. Security

All computer equipment should be placed in suitable physical locations that

- Reduce risk from environmental hazards, for example, heat, fire, smoke, water, dust and vibration
- Reduce the risk of theft
- Facilitates workstations handling personal data being positioned so that the screen cannot be seen by unauthorised personnel
- All items of equipment must be maintained on a departmental inventory
- When working in an agile way, users are responsible for the security of device(s), some key general guidance notes are provided below
 - Ensure the device is logged out of the network when not in use and correctly shutdown
 - Devices must not be left unattended in a public location
 - Conceal when transporting on leaving i.e.: in the boot of a vehicle instead of the back seat
 - Do not leave devices in parked cars overnight, even if they are concealed
 - Place in a safe place if the device is to be stored at home/away from the office e.g. away from windows
- All Council devices and accounts are protected by Microsoft InTune and thus the Microsoft 365 Conditional Access policies apply, the conditional access policies will prevent you from
 - Logging into any device from a country other than the UK
 - Logging into the Sefton network via a non-council device (unless previously authorised in line with member usage)
 - Accessing Council resources until your device is security compliant
- You must ensure any WiFi access point you connect your Council device to is appropriately secured e.g. with a password. Public WiFi that you would find in a Café, Hotel or Restaurant is unsecure and should not be used in any case.

Reporting Information Security Events and Weaknesses

Security events, for example a Data Security Breach or a virus infection could quickly spread and cause data loss across the organisation. All users must be able to identify that any unexpected or unusual behaviour on the workstation could potentially be a software malfunction. If an event is detected users must:

- Note the symptoms and any error messages on screen
- Disconnect the workstation from the network if an infection is suspected (with assistance from IT Support Staff)

All security events should be reported immediately to the ICT Service Desk on ext. 4999.

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Appendix A – [Starters, Movers, Leavers Policy](#)

Appendix B – [Password Policy](#)

Appendix C – Data Retention (IT Systems)

This document does not replace the authorities Retention Schedule but outlines the core principles of how data will be managed on the IT Infrastructure, this document only relates to electronic files, paper files are not included in this policy.

- User data for confirmed leavers is to be archived after 90 days this includes data and information stored in **OneDrive** and **Email**. The Sefton Council ICT Division hold a backup of the archive for 7 years, this data will only be accessed upon a formal request approved by a manager or HR.
-
- Managers are responsible for ensuring the removal of electronic information from systems once retention periods are expired.
- It is expected that business information required for regulatory purposes will be stored in the relevant business document management systems. For example, finance data must be stored in Oracle or finance server not in user's email.
- Where an end user device is a desktop the saving of information will be restricted, where the device is mobile then that device will have approved encryption methods enabled and are not to be circumvented. Usage of approved and encrypted devices for storage of information while conducting daily work activities is permitted. Such devices include Council tablets and other smart devices; however, users must upload content to the appropriate systems (e.g. planning photographs) and remove it from the device.
- Unauthorised use of any cloud storage or online file transfer sites e.g. drop box or We Transfer is prohibited by the policy and using any cloud storage not authorised may result in disciplinary action.

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Report to:	Council	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 21 April 2022
Subject:	Sefton Council Policy on Dealing with the On-Line Abuse and Intimidation of Councillors		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:			
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

The Council seeks to introduce a policy to assist members dealing with social media and to provide advice and assistance if they consider that they are being subjected to on-line abuse and intimidation.

Recommendation(s):

(1) That the policy is endorsed by Full Council.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

Social Media can be an effective tool to promote political views and activities/projects with which members are engaged. It can also however, present a minefield of delicate situations which can, if not managed correctly, place members at risk of abuse or at risk of breaching the code of conduct

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

None

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

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(A) Revenue Costs

N/A

(B) Capital Costs

N/A

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
None	
Legal Implications:	
Legal implications are outlined within the draft policy.	
Equality Implications:	
There are no equality implications.	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	N
Have a neutral impact	Y
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: NA
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: NA
Commission, broker and provide core services: NA
Place – leadership and influencer: Becoming and serving as a councillor is a responsibility, a privilege and a hugely rewarding undertaking. The introduction of such a policy will help encourage people to become a councillor and will assist councillors in the performance of their duties.
Drivers of change and reform: NA
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: NA

Greater income for social investment: NA
Cleaner Greener NA

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD6764) has been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

None

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Council meeting.

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Appendices:

- Sefton Council Policy on Dealing With the On-Line Abuse and Intimidation of Councillors

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Becoming and serving as a councillor is a responsibility, a privilege and a hugely rewarding undertaking. However, we are aware that an increasing number of councillors and candidates are being subjected to abuse, threats and public intimidation, undermining the principles of free speech, democratic engagement and debate. The growth of social media has provided an additional and largely anonymous route for individuals and groups to engage in such activity. There is also the concern that the growth in public intimidation is putting people off standing as local councillors.
- 1.2 It is of course correct that those who do put themselves forward for public office, and who currently hold public office, should be subject to increased scrutiny and challenge, and that they should expect to be faced with sometimes very strong criticism. The public interest in a democracy of open discussion of matters of public concern does not denote 'open season' and there should be a bar beyond which such challenge and criticism is unacceptable, particularly where the basis of that challenge is devoid of factual substance.
- 1.3 Social Media can be an effective tool to promote political views and activities/projects with which members are engaged. It can also however, present a minefield of delicate situations which can, if not managed correctly, place members at risk of abuse or at risk of breaching the code of conduct.
- 1.4 There is also a darker side to social media which has increased over recent years. Malicious abuse, threats of violence and harassment are unfortunately, all too prevalent across virtual platforms.
- 1.5 The Council takes this situation very seriously and seeks to introduce a policy to assist members dealing with social media and to provide advice and assistance if they consider that they are being subjected to on-line abuse and intimidation.

Sefton Council



Sefton Council Policy on Dealing With
the On-Line Abuse and Intimidation of
Councillors

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1. Introduction

Becoming and serving as a councillor is a responsibility, a privilege and a hugely rewarding undertaking. However, we are aware that an increasing number of councillors and candidates are being subjected to abuse, threats and public intimidation, undermining the principles of free speech, democratic engagement and debate. The growth of social media has provided an additional and largely anonymous route for individuals and groups to engage in such activity. There is also the concern that the growth in public intimidation is putting people off standing as local councillors.

It is of course correct that those who do put themselves forward for public office, and who currently hold public office, should be subject to increased scrutiny and challenge, and that they should expect to be faced with sometimes very strong criticism. The public interest in a democracy of open discussion of matters of public concern does not denote 'open season' and there should be a bar beyond which such challenge and criticism is unacceptable, particularly where the basis of that challenge is devoid of factual substance.

Social Media can be an effective tool to promote political views and activities/projects with which members are engaged. It can also however, present a minefield of delicate situations which can, if not managed correctly, place members at risk of abuse or at risk of breaching the code of conduct.

There is also a darker side to social media which has increased over recent years. Malicious abuse, threats of violence and harassment are unfortunately, all too prevalent across virtual platforms. The Committee on Standards in Public Life's review on 'Intimidation in Public Life" (2017) stated *"The vitality of our political culture depends upon free and vigorous expression of opinion, and it is crucial that this freedom is preserved. The increasing prevalence of intimidation of Parliamentary candidates, and others in public life, should concern everyone who cares about our democracy. This is not about defending elites from justified criticism or preventing the public from scrutinising those who represent them: it is about*

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defending the fundamental structures of political freedom". This is a position that the Council takes seriously.

2. Councillors and Social Media

This section sets out background information on the use of social media for councillors.

Key points:

- Social media can be very useful in getting feedback on proposals and communicating information about councillors' activities. However, remember that not everybody is on social media and so opinions expressed may not be representative.
- Social media is always on, so consider setting personal limits and establishing your own routine. You have no obligation to respond to posts and comments at any speed but it is often helpful to explicitly indicate that to users.
- Councillors are subject to the council's code of conduct when using social media.
- Consider the content of your communications carefully and apply this test – if you would be reluctant to say it face-to-face or in an official email, then it is probably inappropriate to say online.
- Once something is posted on social media, it is difficult to retain control over how it will be used. Think about this when posting.
- Different platforms allow for different types of interactions. It is useful to indicate the aims and intended audiences of your different accounts.

2.1. Why you may find social media useful

Social media has become an every-day communications tool for councillors and the people they represent, and the potential for councillors using social media is huge. Social media allows you to be innovative and responsive as well as providing links to useful sources of information or sign-posting to other organisations.

In addition, it is a useful source of intelligence:

- People will talk about local issues, their concerns and interests.

- You can find out about breaking news, the latest research or publication or the latest policy announcements.
- People often have little understanding of the councillor role and may have negative perceptions, but social media can give people an idea about the 'life of a councillor'.
- Residents can be made aware of and provide feedback to your work and campaigns, including mobilising support and interest and gathering followers.
- You can have conversations with people who do not traditionally seek out their local representatives.
- Social media allows for immediate communication. You can pass on information and receive opinions in minutes. You can forward information from other people equally quickly (bearing in mind that you may then share equal responsibility for anything later seen to be untrue or defamatory).
- The local and sometimes national press will follow councillors on Twitter or Facebook. Social media is a growing source for stories for news outlets as each tweet or comment is effectively a mini-press release.

2.2. Online safety, personal security and digital citizenship

Digital Citizenship is about engaging in appropriate and responsible behaviour when using technology and encouraging others to do so as well. It encompasses digital literacy, ethics, etiquette, online safety, norms, rights, culture and more.

Developing digital citizenship requires us to improve online political communications.

It is about expressing our opinions while respecting others' rights and personas and avoiding putting them at risk or causing unnecessary distress. It is about respecting freedom of speech and dissidence while condemning abuse.

In any personal online biography, it is advisable to make clear that the views are those of the councillor in question and may not represent the views of the council. If space allows, you may also want to set out the aims of the page, the 'response' policy, such as "I welcome questions via email" and an 'engagement' policy, such as "abusive content will be removed".

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It is easy to put personal information online, such as your birthday, routines, places you frequent, future visits, holiday destinations, relationships, and opinions, etc., which are then available for anyone in the public domain to access. For personal safety, as well as identity security, you may want to consider whether you share personal information, images of friends and/or family and details of any routines.

Social media platforms have different privacy options. You can choose different levels and change them depending on your own preferences.

Concerning personal security, it is advisable not to include on social media details such as your personal phone numbers, home address, details of family members or vehicle details. A picture paints a thousand words, and a photo can relay personal information you may not want to be shared on social media.

Some people say things via social media that they probably would not say in person, and they can post false information, insults or messages that you would not want to be associated with you. These can multiply and be shared quite rapidly. Councillors, and in particular female, LGBTQ+ and BAME councillors, are unfortunately increasingly the subject of online abuse, bullying and harassment on social media.

You can be sent phishing requests and malicious software on social media the same as you can on email, so maintain the same level of vigilance. Be aware that some individuals post socially unacceptable, defamatory, inciting or even intimidatory remarks to generate online activity on the back of advertising or promotion of ideologies, brands or events. Similarly, the term "internet troll" is used to refer to a person or group of people who deliberately start arguments or upset people by posting inflammatory or off-topic messages online with the deliberate intent of provoking readers into an emotional response or of otherwise disrupting normal discussion, often for their own amusement.

Be aware that social media is the principal form in which misinformation spreads. Very often articles that spread false information trigger strong emotional responses

such as fear, anger or shock to maximise 'share ability'. Individuals posting online are responsible for the content of their posts even if they did not originally create it. Councillors should very carefully consider the content of new posts, posts they have shared and posts they support.

Be aware of safeguarding because social media sites are often misused by offenders. Safeguarding is everyone's business – if you have any concerns about other site users, you have a responsibility to report these.

The usual protocols regarding confidential information, copyright, data protection, purdah, exempt reports, etc., apply to social media. Avoid publishing anything where there is doubt or seek permission in advance.

To be an effective councillor you won't stop meeting people and posting leaflets simply because you are posting online. You will know your residents best—consider which channel works best for them to connect with you, online and offline.

2.3. Responsibilities of councillors on social media

Councillors are personally responsible for the content they publish on any form of social media.

Social media sites are in the public domain and it is important to ensure you are confident of the nature of the information you publish. Once published, content is almost impossible to control and may be manipulated without your consent, used in different contexts, or further distributed.

You can make use of privacy settings if you do not want your social media to be accessed by the press or public. It is advisable to read the terms of service of any social media site accessed and make sure you understand their confidentiality / privacy settings.

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Some councillors choose to have separate social media profiles for personal and council use. It is important to keep in mind, however, that even the strictest privacy setting is no guarantee for posts or actions to remain private. As a rule of thumb, never post anything online you would not be comfortable saying or sharing in a public meeting.

The code of conduct for members and relevant legislation continues to apply online and in social media. If you are referring online in any way to your role as a councillor, you are deemed to be acting in your “official capacity” and any conduct may fall within the code.

Don't become a troll yourself!

Social media is a great tool for councillors to challenge and scrutinise, but always think about what you are saying, how you are saying it, how often and about whom. If you are perceived to be too aggressive or too confrontational or too frequent, it could begin to damage your reputation, undermine your relationship with colleagues or you could risk breaching the Code of Conduct in terms of bullying, intimidation or lack of respect for others.

Remember

If you receive a message or someone posts something on your page that you consider to be unsuitable remove it as soon as possible. If you “like” or appear to endorse or retweet a message or image you are regarded as having published it, and will face any legal consequences. It is therefore important to regularly check and moderate any site on which others can post.

Beware of Fake News!

Social media is breeding ground for fake news or ‘click bait’ (where a deliberately salacious headline with a link tries to draw you in, often to a very mundane news item accompanied by lots of pop-up adverts); view all news or gossip with a discerning eye – it could be embarrassing if you retweet or promote fake news and, worse, you could be breaking the law if you circulate false statements about someone, even if you are just retweeting something someone else has posted.

If you create a social media presence it may be a good idea to have a graphic like below to set the grounds rules of how you will manage your social media platform.

Rules of engagement

Welcome to my page, which aims to communicate my activities as a councillor.

If you wish to be a part of this online community, you must agree to abide by this code of digital engagement, which is designed to keep everyone safe.

RULE 1
Debate and disagreement are welcome on this page, but only if expressed with courtesy, respect and politeness.

RULE 2
Posts should not contain abuse, harassment, intimidation or threats of any form.

RULE 3
Posts should not contain any form of discrimination – including racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia or religious intolerance.

RULE 4
Posts should not spread false or unverified information.

RULE 5
For transparency reasons, users should not post anonymously.

If any of these rules are broken, page admins reserve the right to delete posts, block users and report content to the police if necessary.

It may not be possible to respond to all queries on this page due to time constraints - if you have specific enquiries or casework, please send directly to my official email.



For more information on the LGA's work on handling abuse on social media and digital citizenship visit: www.local.gov.uk/civility-public-life

REF 43.4

2.4. Dealing with harmful rumours and misinformation

It is difficult not to engage when you are the subject of rumours, misinformation and smear campaigns. While it is always tempting to respond and clarify every rumour and falsehood circulated about you, it is also useful to think about the emotional, economic and time costs of engaging as in many cases, rumours disappear as quickly as they emerged. The following tips may be useful:

- Calmly try to understand who is behind the attack. Most of the time, they are people with a clear agenda trying to gain control or to manipulate.
- Correct the facts. This can be done with a formal statement or if you can identify the source, then do it publicly by correcting their posts with facts and evidence.
- Remember that rumours and misinformation are fed by repetition. It is good to defend your reputation but councillors may find that the most efficient way is to do it once and then stop engaging this way.
- Respond or ignore? When faced with an abusive comment give yourself some time to decide whether to respond or ignore it. Trolls often have few followers or few followers of significance – if you reply it can lead to a tit for tat argument

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fuelling further confrontation and provides the troll with the “oxygen of publicity” or the satisfaction of seeing you riled. Chances are you’ll have far more followers than the troll, so if you reply, all of your followers will be aware of the troll’s original tweet. Ignoring the comment can lead to short term allegations of dodging an issue but may succeed in the long term.

- Stay calm and polite - not every criticism is from a troll – sometimes a frustrated member of the public may be critical or angry with you initially on social media, particularly if they are trying to resolve a council service issue. If you respond constructively, their tone may change and they may even apologise or show you appreciation online.
- Bear in mind that for every troll there will be many more legitimate and sensible followers. Think of them when you respond. One approach is to respond with facts only or to refer the troll to a longer factual statement about the situation. You might want to invite the troll to a public meeting. They may find it harder to be abusive in public. You may also want to remind the troll that you are more than happy to have a political debate in your role as a councillor but that personal comments about you or your family are unacceptable.
- Leave the environment the rumour is being spread. A smear campaign tries to manipulate and gain control but no control can be gained if you do not participate. You may wish to advise your followers that you will be logging out of social media for a period of time, which gives the rumour time to calm down while protecting your own emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Rumours and smear campaigns can be very stressful and at times, they can feel very isolating. Keep your self-confidence by talking to family, friends and others in your support network. Some may also feel able to counteract rumours with factual information.
- If you can identify the source of the rumours and smear campaigns, you should document it and keep a record. This may be useful if further legal action is required.

2.5. Handling abuse on social media

This section provides advice on handling intimidation and abuse online.

Key points:

- Keep a record of any abuse
- Carefully consider how and whether to respond to inaccurate or defamatory social media comments
- Report any abuse to the social media companies for its deletion or to raise concerns about an account

Any intimidation or abuse on social media is subject to all the same potential criminal prosecutions as other forms of intimidation, with the additional criminal offences relating specifically to electronic communications.

You are best placed to determine whether a post or interaction is abusive or intimidating, and if you feel intimidated you can take action to report it. Good digital citizenship encourages the labelling of abusive and inappropriate online material so that both the perpetrator and others viewing it can also know it is not acceptable.

However, it does not necessarily follow that the police or courts will regard it as intimidatory behaviour in law as they have to apply their own 'average person' tests – also known as 'reasonableness tests' or the 'Clapham omnibus' test.

Every situation will be different, and it will need a personal judgement about whether it is worthwhile to pursue the incident, ignore it or politely acknowledge.

Keep a record

If you have received online abuse, even if you are not overly concerned or if you intend to ignore it, you should consider keeping a record should any incidents escalate in the future. You can simply 'screen shot', 'clip' or 'snip' tweets or posts on your phone, tablet or computer. You may also decide to warn the perpetrator that you are keeping a record of all messages and may refer them to the appropriate authorities, which may stop them posting further comments or might encourage them to delete them.

2.6. Tackling abuse on social media

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In any situation that arises on social media, you will need to decide whether you want to engage in a discussion or ignore it, and whether the communication is abusive, intimidating or threatening.

When determining whether to engage or ignore, you'll need to balance the risks and likely success of either approach in stopping the situation. Engaging in online discussion could defuse it through the use of humour or similar, or could inflame the situation further. There is no right or wrong here. However, it is likely that the person posting has less of a following or public profile than you and by engaging you can increase their audience.

If you think there are threats to your personal safety or security, you can ask for advice from the police.

It may be useful to refer to the section on the legislation applicable to harassment and abuse to see if the communication falls into any of the categories so you can describe it to the police in these terms.

Perhaps most distressing is when multiple users all send abusive messages in quick succession or at the same time. This can be overwhelming and the structure of Twitter in particular means that the more posts and retweets, the more others see it, and they can be encouraged to add to the abuse. It can escalate very quickly. There are sadly some who will willingly add to the abuse for their own amusement, even if they are unaware of the details. This is a difficult situation to handle, particularly if the information is being held by another user. If this occurs, you are advised to make a record of the abuse, inform the social media platform, the council and the police if any of the tweets make significant personal threats.

If someone has posted some inaccurate information about you or the council, and if the information is defamatory (a false statement that could harm your reputation), again, the first step is to gather evidence. You may then want to contact the individual initially to request that the tweet or post be deleted; some individuals may have made a mistake without malice and will remove their post immediately.

Depending on the nature of the tweet or post and the number of followers who may have viewed the tweet, you may wish to seek a correction and/or an apology. If this approach is unsuccessful or where a defamatory tweet or post causes serious concern or is part of a concerted campaign, in addition to informing your council, you may wish to take legal advice and to issue a “notice and take-down” letter via your solicitor (assuming you are able to locate the perpetrator). Although you may not have the intention of proceeding further, the threat of legal action is often a powerful deterrent and can prompt a swift and successful resolution.

If the tweet or post is a complaint about a council service, you can ask for contact details and pass the information to officers to follow-up on and inform the individual that this is the course of action you are taking. This may help defuse any tensions.

2.7. Muting or blocking accounts on Twitter and Instagram

You may wish to unfollow, mute or even block a person or group who is persistently posting you or is being abusive or intimidatory. Guidance about how to mute and block is available from Twitter and Instagram, but in summary:

Muting allows you to remove an account’s posts from your timeline but does not go as far as unfollowing or blocking the account. Muted accounts will not know that they have been muted and you can ‘unmute’ them at any time.

Blocking allows you to restrict specific accounts from contacting you, seeing your posts or following you. Unlike muting, the perpetrators can find out that they have been ‘blocked’ and may accuse you of avoiding their scrutiny; this may be a small price to pay if their behaviour is checked and can be easily rebutted if necessary.

2.8. Reporting the abuse on Twitter

Twitter itself promotes ‘Rules’ encouraging constructive debate but it explicitly prohibits behaviour “...that crosses the line into abuse, including behaviour that harasses, intimidates, or uses fear to silence another user’s voice”.

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If tweets are so offensive that you believe they violate Twitter's rules, you can report them to Twitter who may decide to take action. For further information about how to report 'violations' visit Twitter's "how to report violations" page.

Anyone can report abusive behaviour directly from a Tweet, profile, or Direct Message.

An extract from the guide on Twitter is as follows:

To report a Tweet:

- Navigate to the Tweet you'd like to report on twitter.com or from the Twitter for iOS or Android app.
- Click or tap the icon.
- Select Report.
- Select It's abusive or harmful.
- Next, we'll ask you to provide more information about the issue you're reporting. We may also ask you to select additional Tweets from the account you're reporting so we have better context to evaluate your report.
- We will include the text of the Tweets you reported in our follow-up emails and notifications to you. To opt-out of receiving this information, please uncheck the box next to Updates about this report can show these Tweets.
- Once you've submitted your report, we'll provide recommendations for additional actions you can take to improve your Twitter experience.

To report an account:

- Go to the account profile and click or tap the overflow icon
- Select Report.
- Select They're being abusive or harmful.

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- Next, we'll ask you to provide additional information about the issue you're reporting. We may also ask you to select Tweets from that account so we have better context to evaluate your report.
- We will include the text of the Tweets you reported in our follow-up emails and notifications to you. To opt-out of receiving this information, please uncheck the box next to Updates about this report can show these Tweets.
- Once you've submitted your report, we'll provide recommendations for additional actions you can take to improve your Twitter experience.
- Note: You can report an account that you have blocked or that has blocked you. Go to that account's profile and click or tap the overflow icon and then select Report.

How to report an individual message or conversation

Step 1

Click into the Direct Message conversation and find the message you'd like to report. (To report the entire conversation, click the more icon)

Step 2

Hover over the message and click the Report message icon when it appears.

Step 3

You can also click on the information icon and select Report @username.

Step 4

If you select It's abusive or harmful, we'll ask you to provide additional information about the issue you're reporting. We may also ask you to select additional

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messages from the account you're reporting so we have better context to evaluate your report.

Step 5

Once you've submitted your report, we'll provide recommendations for additional actions you can take to improve your Twitter experience.

Reporting the abuse on Instagram

Instagram has a set of 'community guidelines' allows you to report abuse via its Help Centre which can be accessed in the Help section in Settings.

An extract from the guide on Instagram is as follows:

There are multiple ways to report something or someone on the Instagram app for **Android and iPhone**:

Tap more actions (iPhone) or more actions (Android) above the post.

Tap Report.

Follow the on-screen instructions.

Tap their username from their feed, story post or from your chat with them. You can also tap explore and search their username to go to their profile.

Tap more actions (iPhone) or more actions (Android) in the top right of the profile.

Tap Report.

Follow the on-screen instructions.

There are also multiple ways to report something or someone on Instagram.com from a **computer or mobile browser**:

Click or tap more actions in the top right of the post.

Select Report and follow the on-screen instructions.

Click or tap their username from their feed or story post, or click or tap explore and search their username to go to their profile.

Click or tap more actions next to their username.

Select Report user, then select the type of account that you want to report and follow the on-screen instructions.

2.9. Tackling abuse on Facebook

Facebook has slightly different 'Community Standards' to Twitter and alternative methods of dealing with complaints.

You are also more likely to encounter community or campaign groups or pages which facilitate scrutiny of you, fellow councillors or your local council on Facebook, and some pages will have been set up specifically with that purpose in mind. If these groups are not moderated effectively, they can provide a conduit for abuse and harassment.

The Council has a presence on Facebook and Twitter and it may be helpful to seek advice and assistance from the Council's Communications Team.

There is no right or wrong way with regards to responding to a group or page which regularly criticises the council or councillors; some believe that it is beneficial to engage constructively, to explain, inform or signpost and hopefully improve awareness, understanding and support, whilst others are more reluctant as it will require emotional energy and time and the likelihood of successful engagement may be limited.

If you are concerned about comments or posts about you in a group or page, you can report the post to the group administrator. If you are concerned about a group that is abusive and you think it has broken Facebook's Community Standards, you can report the group to Facebook.

Although Facebook encourages respectful behaviour and takes action to protect 'private individuals' from bullying and harassment, it permits 'open and critical

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discussion of people who are featured in the news or have a large public audience based on their profession or chosen activities’.

There is a range of options for you to manage abuse or harassment on Facebook and full instructions are available on the Facebook help page:

- if you want a post removed from Facebook, you can:
 - ask the person who posted it to remove it
 - if you don't like a story that appears in your news feed, you can hide it
 - if you are not happy with a post you're tagged in, you can remove the tag
 - you can leave a conversation at any time, though the other people in the conversation will be notified and you will no longer receive messages from the conversation
- you can **unfriend** or **block** another user; they will no longer be able to tag you or see things you post on your timeline
- If the post goes against Facebook's Community Standards you can report it to Facebook.

An extract from the guide on Facebook is as follows:

If you think a message you've received is spam or goes against our Community Standards, you can let us know.

To send feedback on or report a conversation on Facebook:

In the top right of your Facebook account, click messenger.

Open the conversation that you want to report.

At the top, click the person or chat's name or.

Click Something's wrong.

Select a category to help us understand what's wrong, and then click Send feedback.

Click Done.

We won't let the person know who's reported them. Bear in mind that not everything that may be upsetting violates our Community Standards.

Community Standards violations include:

Bullying or harassment: Content that appears to purposefully target a person with the intention of degrading or shaming them, or repeatedly contacting a person despite that person's clear desire and action to prevent contact.

Direct threats: Serious threats of harm to public and personal safety, credible threats of physical harm, specific threats of theft, vandalism or other financial harm.

Sexual violence and exploitation: Content that threatens or promotes sexual violence or exploitation, including solicitation of sexual material, any sexual content involving minors, threats to share intimate things you want to keep private (such as images or videos) and offers of sexual services.

Learn more about Facebook safety tools and resources. If you ever feel like you or someone you know is in immediate danger, contact your local police.

If someone is bothering you on Messenger, you can always block messages from them or block them on Facebook.

2.10. Tackling abuse on blogs

Blogs are a quick and easy way for members of the public or councillors to set up mini-websites to discuss and air views on matters of interest. Occasionally, blogs may take an interest in local, community matters and some have been set up specifically to scrutinise the local council or councillors. At other times, councillors may face negative comments on their own blog.

While scrutiny is a key part of local democracy and accountability, on occasions, some blogs may make unfair comments or untrue allegations or may include abusive or threatening commentary. Unlike Facebook and Twitter, there are no 'community rules or standards' to moderate or challenge such content.

Depending on the nature of the comments, councillors therefore have several choices:

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- ignore them altogether and hope that few people read and become aware of the comments.
- engage with the blogger and seek to assure, inform or correct the comments as appropriate. Bear in mind that this course of action may fuel and prolong the debate and abusive comments further.
- If you are concerned that the blogger is harassing you, threatening you, spreading malicious communications or is defaming or libelling you, you may wish to record any evidence (such as screen shots) and seek legal advice or refer the matter to the police.

3. Legal Considerations

Whilst the law on physical and verbal intimidation and abuse is better established and known, the law has been catching up with developments in the area of communication generally and the recent seriousness of intimidation arising from the conduct of our democracy. This includes the speed and available uses of the internet as well as the subsequent significant growth in the use of social media in both promoting political causes and discussions with residents and voters.

Although social media can create a new type of relationship with the electorate, it can provide a platform, through its remoteness and anonymity, to be used by those wishing to intimidate others.

Councillors are not employees of the council and do not have the benefit of safeguards in employment legislation if they suffer intimidation. However, they will be supported by the council to undertake their duties safely and without fear or intimidation. Their political party may also offer them support.

In undertaking your activities as a councillor, you are protected by the same legislation relating to intimidation or threats as to any member of the public. As councillors are servants of democracy, they, arguably, deserve greater support as they undertake their public duties.

If you are feeling intimidated, then that experience is legitimate and should be your own test as to whether you want to report the situation. In determining whether an act is classed as intimidation in law, the police and the courts will apply their own tests based on the existing legislation and 'reasonableness'. However, legislation, guidance and case law evolve and this should not put you off reporting a situation and seeking a resolution should you feel you have been intimidated.

Threats to kill, rape, serious violence or actual common assault, damage to property (such as arson) should be reported to the police.

3.1. Harassment

There have been a number of cases arising from the provisions of the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act where judges have provided guidance as to when the intimidation complained about should require the involvement of the civil or criminal law. The judge in the case of *Dowson and Others v Chief Constable of Northumbria* [2010] EWHC 26 set out six steps under the 1997 Act:

1. There must be conduct which occurs on at least two occasions
2. Which is targeted at the individual
3. Which is calculated in an objective sense to cause alarm or distress, and
4. Which is objectively judged to be oppressive and unacceptable
5. What is oppressive and unacceptable may depend on the social or working context in which the conduct occurs
6. A line is to be drawn between conduct which is unattractive and unreasonable, and conduct which has been described in various ways such as "torment" of the victim, "or an order which would sustain criminal liability".

Although the courts look at the conduct from an objective point of view, the victim's reaction to the intimidation will be subjective and it will be for that individual to decide upon the action which is taken. The courts will also take a view on whether the perpetrator knows or ought to know that his conduct amounts to harassment.

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Unlike with defamation claims by officers or members, a council can indemnify officers and members to bring an action under the Act. The council can also start an action in its own name (section 1(1A) and 3A of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997) where there is harassment of two or more of its members or officers which the perpetrator knows or ought to know involves harassment of those persons; or by which they intend to persuade any person to do something which they are not obliged to do or not to do something which they are entitled or required to do.

3.2. Defamation

Defamation is a complex legal area necessitating specialist legal advice. It is often a lengthy and costly pursuit of action and should be considered carefully. Simply put, if someone has posted a false statement which could cause serious harm to an individual's or organisation's reputation and character this could give rise to a claim for defamation. Defamation law both protects from damage to reputation and character and compensates for the loss and damage arising.

There are a number of defences to defamation, including truth, honest opinion, fair comment, publication on matter of public interest, absolute privilege, and innocent dissemination.

It is important to note that local authorities cannot themselves sue in defamation, which was a principle laid down by *Derbyshire County Council v Times Newspapers Limited* ([1993] 1 All ER 101). In that case the court held that local authorities are distinguished from corporations as democratically elected government bodies and as such, it was highly important that they were open to criticism. The threat of defamation would therefore inhibit freedom of speech and be contrary to the public interest.

Officers (or members) of a local authority can sue for defamation in connection with statements made about them which relate to the exercise or discharge of their duties or as an employee of the authority and where it personally relates to them (*McLaughlin v Lambeth LBC* [2010] EWHC 2726 (QB)).

In *Thompson v James* [2013] EWHC 515, the judge acknowledged that there would be “a serious gap in the law if members and officers of a local authority (and others who work in or for other public authorities) could not sue for libel” and “if those who work in or for public authorities could not defend themselves against the dissemination of falsehoods, the public would be the losers”.

In accordance with The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 an authority cannot provide an indemnity for a defamation claim brought by a councillor but it can fund a defence to such a claim.

3.3. Malicious Communications Act 1988

Section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988 makes it an offence for a person, with the intention of causing distress or anxiety, to send certain items to another person which convey an indecent or grossly offensive message or are themselves of an indecent or grossly offensive nature, or which convey a threat or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.

3.4. Communications Act 2003

Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send through a 'public electronic communications network' a message or other matter that is 'grossly offensive' or of an 'indecent, obscene or menacing character'. The same section also provides that it is an offence to send or false message 'for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another'.

Prosecution Service guidance in relation to both the Communications Act 2003 and the Malicious Communications Act 1988 makes it clear that a prosecution should only proceed where it involves offensive, shocking, and disturbing communications.

Agenda Item 10

4. Support and Advice

The Corporate Communications Team provide social media training for elected members, especially newly elected. Please contact Democratic Services if you wish to register for the next training session. The Corporate Communications Team are always willing to provide advice and guidance on the use of social media, and can be contacted at communications@sefton.gov.uk

As part of the Council's Member Development Programme training sessions are provided on 'Communications and Social media' and 'Cyber Security'

If a councillor is concerned about social media activity they can seek support and guidance from:

- Their political group leader or whip
- The Council's Chief Executive – dwayne.johnson@sefton.gov.uk - 0151 934 2057
- The Council's Monitoring Officer – david.mccullough@sefton.gov.uk – 0151 934 2008
- **Merseyside Police** have identified dedicated officers who can advise members as follows:
 - Hub 1 for us is South Sefton – Bootle / Seaforth / Litherland / Netherton / Maghull / Aintree / Lydiate / Crosby / Waterloo (Insp Mavrakakis)
 - B.Community.Hub.1@merseyside.police.uk
 - Hub 2 is North Sefton – Southport, Birkdale, Ainsdale, Formby, Hightown (Insp Fisher)
 - B.Community.Hub.2@merseyside.police.uk

Access to Counselling and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Support via Health Unit

The Council currently provides support to its employees and councillors for mental health related issues, harassment support and where employees have been subject to abuse through its contracted agreement with Listening Ear. Listening Ear is a charitable organisation offering a wide spectrum of accredited support services.

These services include:

- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)** which focuses on current problems rather than past issues. It aims to change the way clients think about these (the cognitive element) and how they behave in the face of them (the behavioural element). In short, it aims to help people to deal with their problems in a more positive way over a dedicated period of time, allowing them to learn new techniques and then test them out.
- **Counselling** which can be provided in a number of ways such as person centred, solution focused, mindfulness and bereavement.

More information about counselling and CBT is available via the health.unit@sefton.gov.uk

To access either of the above services please contact Jan Martin in the Health Unit on 0151 934 3650.

Links to access therapy are supported by providing details of the web chat Qwell, which is an online counselling and emotional wellbeing service for employees and councillors over 25 and Kooth for those employees and councillors under 25. They are accessible either through a smart phone, tablet or computer and employees can sign up for free and explore both services at <https://www.qwell.io/> or <https://www.kooth.com/>

After signing up, employees and councillors have access to online counsellors every day until 10pm via drop-in sessions or scheduled text-based sessions; self-help materials; moderated forums and personal goal-based journals.

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COUNCIL – 21 APRIL 2022

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – CALL-IN AND URGENCY PROVISIONS

I wish to report that the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) gave her consent, under Rule 46 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in the Council Constitution to the following issue being dealt with, on the basis that the decision could not be reasonably deferred, and not be subject to call-in.

CABINET MEMBER (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) DECISION – 11 FEBRUARY 2022

Procurement of E5 Security Licences for all ICT Microsoft E3 Accounts

The Cabinet Member considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services seeking authority to complete a formal Change Control to the existing Microsoft Enterprise Agreement for Sefton to uplift all Microsoft Office 365 E3 licences to Microsoft E5 Security licences. The decision does not require a procurement exercise to be completed as the authority has already an Enterprise Agreement in Place with Phoenix for the purchase of any licences from Microsoft. This contract was awarded on the 1st of May 2021 via a CSS Framework, which includes the ability to complete variations for the life of the contract.

The appendix to the report is exempt from publication due to the sensitive nature of the ICT Security information within, which could, if released, make the authority more vulnerable to a Cyber Attack.

Decisions Made: That:

- (1) change control be authorised for the existing contract to uplift all Office 365 E3 Licences to E5 Security licences in line with Cyber Security Recommendations. The uplifted contract will run for until 30th of April 2024; and
- (2) it be noted that the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) had given her consent under Rule 46 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules for this decision to be treated as urgent and not subject to "call in" on the basis that it cannot be reasonably deferred because a Cyber security assessment for Sefton based on recent incidents in other authorities has identified an urgent requirement to change the Microsoft 0365 licencing model for Sefton, this has been agreed by all members of Executive Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Board and Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services. Given this risk features on the Corporate risk register there is a need to move forward at pace to secure the

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authorities network.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To enhance the Security of Sefton's ICT Environment and reduce the risk of a Cyber attack.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Do nothing – rejected due to the risk profile to the authority

COUNCIL – 21 APRIL 2022

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – RULE 29 (SPECIAL URGENCY)

I wish to report that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) gave his consent, under Rule 29 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution. The report was in relation to Business Rates - COVID Additional Relief Fund and it was urgent on the basis that the determination of applications must be completed within regulatory timescales.

CABINET – 7 APRIL 2022

129. Business Rates - COVID Additional Relief Fund

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services seeking consideration of the adoption of a local discretionary business rates policy – the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF); indicating that the policy would provide for the award of relief from business rates for one year only; that relief would be applied retrospectively to the 2021/22 Rate liability in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; and that Sefton Council had been allocated £4,447,663 by Government to disburse in relief.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund Policy referred to in Appendix 1 to the report be adopted as Council Policy;
- (2) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services, be delegated authority to administer the scheme;
- (3) any variance to the awards of relief set out in Section 4 of the policy document be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services, where the number of applications received would result in an underspend or overspend of the funds allocated; and
- (4) it be noted that the proposal was a Key Decision but it had not been included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions. Consequently, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services had given their consent under Rule 29 of the

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Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution for these decisions to be treated as urgent on the basis that determination of applications must be completed within regulatory timescales.

Reasons for the Decisions:

- (1) Government has allocated funds to each local authority to assist businesses that otherwise have missed out on alternative business rates reliefs allocated to aid them through the COVID-19 pandemic. Relief will be granted using discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 that require individual billing authorities to adopt a local scheme.
- (2) It is expected that there will be several hundred applications. Delegating administration of the scheme will allow officers to make decisions in line with other business rates relief.
- (3) The business rates database does not contain information that would enable the Council to accurately predict how many businesses may apply and qualify for the additional relief. When the application window has closed and applications have been reviewed, detailed calculations of the awards can be made. However, to comply with business rates regulations referred to in (1) above decisions on awarding relief must be made no later than 30 September 2022. Delegating a decision to vary the awards will enable businesses to receive the awards earlier.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

NOTICE OF MOTION

TO BE PUT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2022

Moved by: Councillor Wilson

Seconded by: Councillor Carr

A Fair Deal for Lydiate, Maghull and Aintree – Return the Double Rating Rebate to the Town and Parish Councils

This Council notes that as part of the overall council tax precepts for this year, that in addition to Sefton Precept, the precepts agreed by both Lydiate Parish Council (8.67%) and Maghull Town Council (12%) are significantly in excess of inflation rates.

Parish and Town councils are now having to significantly increase the precept and adjust budgets because of the continued inequity in the funding of Parks within the Borough.

Unlike other areas of the Borough (Bootle, Crosby, Formby and Southport) there are no Sefton maintained Parks in Lydiate, Maghull and Aintree and these are paid for by separate Parish and Town Council precepts. This has been the case for many years and was initially accepted by the Parishes as all Councils were hit with Austerity measures. This can no longer be accepted without a challenge, as it is no longer sustainable.

Previously this inequity in Parks funding was accepted by the Council and Town/Parish Councils were given a financial rebate but this ended some years back. This rebate amounts to approximately £140,000 per year to Maghull and £46,000 to Lydiate

With a multi £Million-pound budget it is not beyond the wit of Council Officers and Members to make good this lost provision and right a wrong to the residents and Council Tax-payers of Lydiate, Maghull and Aintree

Accordingly, the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services be requested to look at this inequity and report back to Council in due course on proposals that will be a Fair Deal for Lydiate and Maghull as well as Aintree.

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COUNCIL MOTION

21 April 2022

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Mike Prendergast

SECONDED BY: Councillor Tony Brough

LOCAL AUTHORITY PUBLICITY

This Council adheres to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (31st March 2011 edition) ('the Code'). The public have a legitimate expectation that public money will not be used for party political purposes.

It is therefore, highly regrettable that the Leader of the Council has chosen to disregard the Code and proceed to print and deliver thousands upon thousands of letters and send out many thousands of emails (at the expense of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council) of a clearly political nature which accompanied the recently issued Council Tax Bills.

These letters, a copy of which is attached, may well breach the Code.

Therefore, this council resolves:

- To instruct the Chief Legal and Democratic and Monitoring Officer to carry out an urgent investigation into whether the attached letter breaches the Code (instructing outside counsel if he feels it appropriate), and
- For the results of the investigation to be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee in the form of a report at the earliest opportunity for Members to consider.

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Your Council Tax 2022/23



Dear Sefton resident,

I would like to thank you for continuing to follow the Covid-19 rules and guidance that apply to all of us. I would also like to extend my sincere condolences to you and your family if you have lost any loved ones during the pandemic.

Since 2010, before Coronavirus, Sefton Council had to deal with over 51% cut in funding for the Borough from the Government. And sadly, I am writing to you at the end of another year when the Government has failed to recognise just how hard our Borough has been hit by over a decade of those cuts and the COVID pandemic.

Instead of providing the funding we need to deliver services for local people and businesses and ensure a brighter future for all, the Government is, once again, forcing us to increase Council Tax to pay for vital services instead.

I am glad to see Ministers have come up with a Rebate scheme for some households. But the reason this Rebate is needed is the Government's own mis-management and lack of vision.

If we are going to be able to build back better from the damage done by this Government's policy of austerity and the impact of the pandemic, then we need sustainable, three-year financial settlements that would enable us to plan strategically and support our frontline services.

Finally, I want to thank our incredibly hardworking staff and partners who have and continue to deliver services that keep us all safe and well during incredibly difficult times. They deserve more than claps and badges from this Government.

Ian Maher

Leader of Sefton Council



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Ask Sara

Sefton Council has launched, a new online self-assessment and guidance tool that helps people access equipment for independent living.

ASK SARA people can link people to providers of over 10,000 products including falls alarms, walking frames and even smart speakers!

You can find more at www.sefton.gov.uk/tecs

Reading is for more than bills

Research shows that children who read books often at the age of 10, and more than once a week at age 16, gain higher results in maths, vocabulary and spelling tests at age 16.

Reading for pleasure can promote better health and wellbeing, aids in building social connections and relationships with others and is associated with a range of factors that help increase the chances of social mobility.

Find out more about Sefton's Libraries at www.sefton.gov.uk/libraries

Children's Social Care in Sefton

Sefton Children's Social Care is an innovative, forward-thinking place to work where you will find a workforce full of caring and compassionate people, committed to making a difference to the lives of our children, young people and families.

We are investing over £10m into our service and have embarked on an exciting improvement journey and are looking for the very best people to join us.

If you'd like to find out more and to apply, please visit www.sefton.gov.uk/socialworkrecruitment.

Are you registered to vote?

Local Elections take place on Thursday, 5th May.

To make sure you can vote, you need to register by Thursday 14th April.

You can register to vote online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. It takes just five minutes.

If you can't register online, you can contact 0345 140 0845 or email electors@sefton.gov.uk.

Fly tipping

Illegal fly tipping costs the Council more than £1/2 million each year.

That's over £1/2 million that we can't spend on services and facilities for local people.

And, if you are caught fly tipping, you will be fined £400.

Have you seen it? Then report it at www.sefton.gov.uk/litter

Thank you.

Sign up for our environmentally friendly e-billing service

Have you thought about supporting the Council's target of making our Borough net zero carbon by 2030 by having your Council Tax bill sent to you electronically?

You can sign up to e-billing now at www.sefton.gov.uk/mycounciltax

SEFTON LABOUR GROUP

NOTICE OF MOTION

TO BE PUT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2022

Moved by: Councillor Ian Maher

Seconded by: Councillor Ian Moncur

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

The cost-of-living crisis is hammering families in Sefton. But all we got from the Conservative Chancellor in his Spring Statement was a promise of a tiny bit of jam tomorrow rather than the real support that is needed now – and now we learn that workers in Sefton are facing a sharp squeeze on their wages, losing £953.37 from an average pay packet by next year.

His spring statement was the day for the Chancellor to scrap his unfair tax hike on working people and on businesses. It was the day for him to bring in a one-off windfall tax on oil and gas producers, to take up to £600 off people's energy bills. It was the day to set out a plan for British businesses.

In failing to do any of these, the Chancellor made the wrong choices for Sefton, and our Country.

We've got to get a grip on spiralling inflation and the rising cost of living crisis which is leaving people worse off and facing financial crisis.

Not only is it leaving people worse off and worried about paying the bills - it's stopping their spending going back into our local economy so our businesses and our growth is suffering. The Chancellor has left households and businesses to fend for themselves in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, as we're set to see the biggest drop to incomes on record this year.

For every £6 the Chancellor has taken in tax since becoming Chancellor, he's giving back just £1 today.

As such, this Council calls on the Conservative Government:

- 1) To immediately scrap the national insurance increase.
- 2) To impose a windfall tax on oil and gas companies and use this to take £600.00 off people's energy bills.
- 3) To re-introduce the triple lock for pensions immediately.

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SEFTON LABOUR GROUP

NOTICE OF MOTION

TO BE PUT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2022

Moved by: Councillor Natasha Carlin

Seconded by: Councillor

Sefton Council Race Equality Declaration of Intent

Sefton is home to many people from many diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and they are key members of our communities. The Council recognises that those of a Diverse Ethnic Background are not homogenous – different communities and individuals within communities have differing needs. Needs that should not be defined by stereotyping or presumptions. This Council understands and acknowledges that systemic and institutional racism is an issue affecting the outcomes for all those who identify with having a Diverse Ethnic Background (DEBs – Previously known as Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic/BAME).

The Pandemic -and its disproportionate impact on disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities - and the Black Lives Matters Movement give social and racial justice a new level of urgency. There is strong expression of the need for change.

Sefton Council accepts that it has an important role to play in tackling race injustice and inequality and driving forward positive change.

- As a major employer, we must look internally at our own organisation, and ensure that it is representative of the population we serve, welcoming, safe and inclusive, and that DEBs staff have equality of opportunity to develop and succeed.
- As a lead organisation within the community, we have a responsibility to ensure our services are accessible to all of our residents.
- Finally, as a partner in the Liverpool City Region Race Equality Programme, we must use our commitment to race equality to help identify best practice for us, and other organisations and stakeholders, to follow.

The council recognises that there is work to do in order to have a workforce where the percentage of DEBs staff reflects that of the borough's DEBs community in terms of DEBs staff in the Council's workforce and DEBs representation at a director and senior management level.

Proportional representation in the workforce is only one indicator of race equality in employment. An equally important indicator is the 'lived experience' of DEBs staff and DEBs residents, and we know that tackling the impact of systemic and institutional racism is the key issue to achieve.

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Sefton Council is working with the Combined Authority and the other Liverpool City Region (LCR) Councils to develop and deliver a Race Equality Programme that seeks to meet the shared vision of “tackling systemic injustice and inequality and driving forward positive change for our DEBs employees and residents - influencing the partners we work with to do the same”.

Sefton Council is committed to emerge from the current crisis and achieve the Sefton Council Strategy vision of *A Confident and Connected Borough*.

Our Race Equality Declaration of Intent supports and embodies the Sefton 2030 Vision priority of *“Together a Stronger Community”*. It contributes to ensuring that *“We focus on our similarities and the strength that comes from diversity, but never on our differences”*.

The Success of this intent will be measured by demonstrating that *“people feel safe and supported”* and ensuring that *“people are influencing decisions which affect them and communities work together and with partners to deliver effective change”*.

This Council therefore will:

- Support an inclusive and safe workplace environment for DEBs Staff.
- Provide a mandatory equality and diversity training programme for all staff and councillors and ensure it is undertaken by staff and councillors, with the programme continuing to capture all future new starters to the organisation.
- Demonstrate ‘due regard’ to race equality in employment policy and decisions.
- Work with the DEBs Staff Group to understand how the organisation can improve.
- Ensure discrimination and harassment cases are investigated and outcomes reached within reasonable timescales.
- Set up a Racial Equality Monitoring Group – drawing on the expertise from Councillors, from DEBs staff, local communities, residents, young citizens, critical race theories, local organisations and anti-racism charities, businesses, and other relevant parties. Within this over the following 12 months, the group will consider strategies and actions being developed by the Council and other partner organisations and develop a Borough-wide strategy in line with the Liverpool City Regions targets of 2025/2026. It will also recommend ways we can maximise the voice of the DEBs staff group, promote improvements in the number of DEBs staff, improve retention, and promote progression into Senior leadership roles.

It will obtain data on DEBs staff and be able to assess this data and use it to set obtainable targets around DEBs staff – including having a minimum number of DEBs staff based on local and regional demographics and based on the makeup of individual professions. Within this the working group will also assist in promoting the DEBs staffing group throughout the Council and the Borough.

- Monitor impact assessment of policy and decisions.
- Promote good race relations and raise public awareness through the council’s commitment to race equality, diversity, and inclusion.

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- Develop more responsive, accessible, safe, and inclusive services that meet the needs of our increasingly diverse community.
- Develop a coordinated communication strategy in relation to the council's commitment to race equality, diversity, and inclusion – which maximise the opportunity to improve awareness of good race relations, and acknowledge, value, and celebrate cohesion and diversity.
- Review and improve the Community Impact Assessment process and ensure all necessary staff are trained to complete assessments effectively.
- Review and improve the Council's Equality Monitoring processes to ensure appropriate collection, storage and use equality profile data to provide meaningful information to demonstrate equality of opportunity in service access, quality, and outcome.
- Support inclusive participation in engagement strategies for residents, community organisations, and businesses, representing people who share protected characteristics.
- Ensure an Annual Equality Monitoring report is undertaken – which will include the outcomes of staff training, discrimination and harassment monitoring, and impact assessment of policies and decisions. This will also include rigorous and substantial community impact assessments.
- Sefton Council will support LCR Race Equality Programme and its target of substantial change in both policies and practices by 2025.

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SEFTON LABOUR GROUP

NOTICE OF MOTION

TO BE PUT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2022

Moved by: Councillor Sean Halsall

Seconded by: Councillor Natasha Carlin

Work of Trade Unions

Sefton Council notes the excellent work our trade unions do to protect workers' rights in our borough. The work the trade unions do both in workplaces and lobbying on behalf of workers is valued in our borough. Without the trade union movement we would not have seen furlough, workers and businesses would have been left without a safety net.

Sefton Council supports the rights of the various trade unions to organise and represent their membership in our borough. To protect them against unscrupulous employers and ensure the highest level of health and safety in workplaces across the borough of Sefton. We as a council recognise the need for workers to be able to organise and defend themselves, now more than ever with the recent behaviour of P&O ferries on our doorstep.

Sefton Council resolves to:

- Write to the Government and ask them to outlaw the so-called act of 'Fire and Rehire' and ensure when companies blatantly ignore UK employment law that the punishments are proportionate to the damage they do.
- Write to the North Wests Trade Unions thanking them for their work, especially during the pandemic in protecting our boroughs workers.
- Ensure we continue to engage in good practice of communicating and working with our employees Trade Unions making sure we are an example of good industrial relations.
- Call on all workers in our Borough to join a Trade Union.

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