

Public Document Pack

Sefton Council 

MEETING: CABINET
DATE: Thursday 1st December, 2022
TIME: 10.00 am
VENUE: Committee Room, Town Hall, Bootle

DECISION MAKER: **CABINET**

Councillor Ian Maher (Chair)
Councillor Atkinson
Councillor Cummins
Councillor Doyle
Councillor Fairclough
Councillor Hardy
Councillor Lappin
Councillor Moncur
Councillor Roscoe
Councillor Veidman

COMMITTEE OFFICER: Steve Pearce
Interim Democratic Services Manager
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The Cabinet is responsible for making what are known as Key Decisions, which will be notified on the Forward Plan. Items marked with an * on the agenda involve Key Decisions

A key decision, as defined in the Council's Constitution, is: -

- any Executive decision that is not in the Annual Revenue Budget and Capital Programme approved by the Council and which requires a gross budget expenditure, saving or virement of more than £100,000 or more than 2% of a Departmental budget, whichever is the greater
- any Executive decision where the outcome will have a significant impact on a significant number of people living or working in two or more Wards

If you have any special needs that may require arrangements to facilitate your attendance at this meeting, please contact the Committee Officer named above, who will endeavour to assist.

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

Items marked with an * involve key decisions

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Subject/Author(s)</u>	<u>Wards Affected</u>	
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 the Previous Meeting Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2022		(Pages 5 - 14)
4	Local Government Association Peer Review - Adult Social Care Report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health	All Wards	(Pages 15 - 22)
* 5	Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited - Three Year Strategy and Business Plan Report of the Executive Director - Place	All Wards	(Pages 23 - 32)

* 6	<p>Phase 1 Business Plan for Sandway Homes Ltd</p> <p>Report of the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services</p>	All Wards	(Pages 33 - 48)
* 7	<p>Financial Management 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2022/23 – December Update</p> <p>Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services</p>	All Wards	(Pages 49 - 68)
8	<p>Programme of Meetings – 2023/24 Municipal Year</p> <p>Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer</p>	All Wards	(Pages 69 - 92)
9	<p>Member Development in Sefton - The Next Steps</p> <p>Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services</p>	All Wards	(Pages 93 - 116)

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THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2022.

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 3RD NOVEMBER, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Maher (in the Chair)
Councillors Doyle, Fairclough, Hardy, Lappin,
Moncur, Roscoe and Veidman

76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkinson and Cummins.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

78. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

79. SEFTON CARERS CENTRE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Care which sought approval for the implementation of a 2-year integrated contract with the Sefton Carers Centre from 1 April 2023, which would incorporate all commissioned activity detailed within the report, whilst an in-depth strategic review of the service is undertaken.

Decision Made: That:

- (1) the Executive Director of Adult Social Care who is also the NHS Place Director for Sefton be authorised to implement a 2-year integrated contract with Sefton Carers Centre from 1 April 2023, that incorporates all commissioned activity within the current NHS and Council budget available, whilst an in-depth strategic review of the service is undertaken;
- (2) it be noted that a further report will be presented to Cabinet detailing the findings of the strategic review once finalised; and
- (3) any decision with regards to any variance of the existing contract/contract value, within the current NHS and Council budget

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available, be delegated to the Director of Adult Social Care and NHS Director of Sefton in consultation with the Executive Director of People, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing in the event that the service review highlights additional activity to be delivered to ensure compliance with our statutory obligations.

Reasons for the Decision:

The implementation of a 2-year contract bringing together the funding streams will enable time and capacity to complete a strategic review of the service offer for carers in Sefton which will inform longer term recommendations and also reflects the priority to provide integrated Social Care and Health services in Sefton. The review will involve carers and families.

The review of the service will be underpinned by Sefton's Carers Strategy for the next 5 years and reflects the aims and vision of the Council's New Realities Agreement which outlines our commitment to working in partnership with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

To do nothing in terms of maintaining the current service delivery arrangements has been considered, but on the basis of being able to develop services further and achieve greater system wide efficiencies, as well as improved experiences for carer's this option is not recommended.

80. HOUSING STRATEGY 2022 - 2027

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) which sought approval for the Sefton Housing Strategy 2022-2027 which sets out the vision, key themes and strategic housing priorities for Sefton over the next five years.

Decision Made: That:

- (1) approval be given to the Sefton Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027 as set out in the Appendix to the report for publication.
- (2) it be noted that further work would be undertaken in Autumn/Winter 2022 on the Housing Strategy Action Plan and Monitoring Reports. The Action Plan would include specific activities and actions to be undertaken by the Council to achieve the strategic priorities as identified in the Housing Strategy document; and
- (3) the Assistant Director Place (Economic Growth and Housing) be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Member for

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Communities and Housing to approve the Housing Strategy Action Plan and Monitoring Reports as set out in resolution (2) above

Reasons for the Decision:

The Government has recognised that “housing should provide a secure foundation for individuals to live the lives they want to live. Finding the right home, in the right place, can be an essential platform for people seeking to support their families and sustain work”. The updated Housing Strategy sets out the locally agreed, long-term vision for housing and sets out strategic housing priorities, objectives and broad target outcomes to help achieve this aim.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Council could utilise the existing Housing Strategy (2016 – 2021) to deliver housing priorities and guide economic growth and investment in the Borough but this option had been considered and rejected for the following reasons:

The existing Housing Strategy (2016 – 2021) is now largely obsolete as many of the housing priorities contained within it have been successfully implemented. Additionally, the landscape and the way in which housing services are delivered has changed considerably over the past 5 years, therefore, a refreshed housing strategy is considered appropriate.

81. SEFTON ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) which provided an update on the progress of the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan, the associated Covid-19 Recovery Plan and plans to refresh and update the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan to take effect from April 2022.

Decision Made: That:

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the progress of the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan approved by Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing in December 2019 and the associated Covid-19 Recovery Plan be noted; and
- 3) approval be given to the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan being updated to take effect from April 2022.

Reasons for the Decision:

To update members on this ongoing work and advise on the progress of the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan (Dec 2019), the associated Covid-19 Recovery Plan and work underway to refresh and update the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan to take effect from April 2022.

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Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

82. MAKING AN ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION TO PREVENT THE CONVERSION OF USE CLASS E (COMMERCIAL, BUSINESS AND SERVICE) TO USE CLASS C3 (HOUSING) WITHOUT THE NEED FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing which sought approval for the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction in relation to changes of Use from E to C3 in relation to shopping parades within the Bootle Area Action Plan Area. The Article 4 Direction would remove the permitted development rights that allow units within shopping parades to be changed to residential dwellings without the need for planning permission.

Decision Made: That:

- (1) approval be given to the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction, attached in Appendix A, for the reasons set out in the report, in relation to changes of Use from use class E to C3 in selected areas of the Bootle Area Action Plan;
- (2) approval be given to the required consultation; and
- (3) approval be given to the preparation of a report, following notification and consultation, to seek Cabinet approval as to whether or not to confirm the non-immediate Article 4 Direction.

Reasons for the Decision:

To remove the permitted development rights that exist for units in shopping parades to convert to residential in parts of the Bootle without the need for planning permission. Once the Article 4 is enacted, planning permission will be required, and this would ensure the Council had control of those proposals. The Council would therefore be able to consider whether the proposals, either individually, or in combination, would have a detrimental impact on residential amenity and the vitality and viability of existing parades.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Option 1 – Do not have an Article 4 Direction.

This is a possibility. It would mean business as usual, and that the Council would continue to have little control over conversions from units in Use Class E (such as in shopping parades) to Use Class C3 (residential). It may risk further fragmentation of shopping areas with a detrimental impact on the usability and health of those shopping areas. It may also mean that

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some accommodation provided may not be low quality and provide poor living conditions.

Option 2 – Article 4 Direction with an immediate effect.

This would mean that the control of use from units in parades to dwellings would be in place as soon as the direction was made. However, the Council would be liable to pay compensation to owners. This could be costly, and it was not clear how that would be financed.

Option 3 – Cover the whole of the Bootle Area Action Plan area with an Article 4 Direction.

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that an Article 4 should be kept to the minimum area that is necessary. The Council are aware of Article 4 Directions being rejected by the Secretary of State due to proposed directions being applied too wide.

83. HIGH NEEDS FUNDING 2022/23 - QUARTERLY MONITORING UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Services which provided:

1. The monitoring position of the High Needs budget position on the 1 September 2022 as per the previous Cabinet resolution to provide update on a quarterly basis;
2. The forecast year end deficit position based on current special educational needs and disability (SEND) placement pressures and support for individual pupils with SEND required during 2022/23;
3. An update on the 2022/23 SEN Review / Sufficiency Programme aimed at bringing High Needs expenditure pressures back into a more manageable financial position in the future.

Decision Made: That:

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DSG – High Needs Budget

- (1) the current forecast year-end deficit position relating to the 2022/23 High Needs Budget be noted;
- (2) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2022/23 High Needs budget be noted and it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed / reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis to ensure a more sustainable financial position can be achieved in the future;

Update on the 2022/23 SEN Review / Sufficiency Programme

- (3) the work undertaken in the implementation of the new High Needs Funding Model for SEND placements in Special Schools and Alternative Provision Schools from April 2022 be noted; and
- (4) the changes to SEND placements from September 2022, both in Sefton and out of Borough be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

- 1) To provide an updated forecast financial position of the 2022/23 High Needs budget.
- 2) To ensure that the SEND Review / Sufficiency programme can progress to provide sustainable and effective SEND support for Sefton pupils within the available resources allocated through the Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

84. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2022/23 TO 2024/25 AND FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE 2020 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2022/23 – NOVEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which provided details of:

1. The current position relating to the 2022/23 revenue budget.
2. The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2022/23.
3. The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of September 2023:
 - The forecast expenditure to year end;
 - Variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members; and
 - Updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient

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delivery of capital projects are also presented for approval.

4. The latest performance management information for 2022/23.
5. The latest corporate risk management information for 2023/23.
6. A proposed update to the scheme relating to the discretionary payments of the Council Tax Energy Rebate.

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services reported that this was a consolidated report showing the levels of performance, risk issues and the latest financial forecast for the first six months of 2022/23 and similar reports would be submitted to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis in future.

Decision Made: That:

Revenue Budget

- (1) the current position relating to the 2022/23 revenue budget be noted;
- (2) the actions being taken to offset the budget pressures being faced in 2022/23 be noted;
- (3) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2022/23 revenue budget be recognised and it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position would continue to be reviewed, and remedial actions put in place, to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved;
- (4) approval be given to the utilisation of up to £0.630m from the Transforming Sefton Reserve to fund the costs in 2022/23 relating to the recruitment of 20 International Social Workers within Children's Social Care.
- (5) the current position relating to the High Needs budget be noted and it be acknowledged that officers are currently reviewing all options available to the Council to mitigate the additional pressure and to make the overall High Needs budget financially sustainable.

Capital Programme

- (6) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 8.1) be noted;
- (7) the latest capital expenditure position as at 30 September 2022 of £13.465m (paragraph 7.5) and the latest full year forecast of £51.753m (paragraph 8.6) be noted;
- (8) the programme outputs and progress to September (paragraphs 8.10 – 8.17) be noted;

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- (9) approval be given to a supplementary capital estimate of £1m for the Sustainable Warmth Scheme, fully funded by grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (paragraph 8.18);
- (10) the Council be recommended to give approval to a supplementary capital estimate of £0.350m for the essential repairs and maintenance at two Leisure Centres funded by Prudential Borrowing (paragraph 8.23);
- (13) it be noted that capital resources would be managed by the Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council (paragraphs 7.24-7.26);

Performance

- (14) the latest position relating to key performance measures be noted;

Risk Management

- (15) the latest position relating to key risk management areas be noted;
and

Council Tax Energy Rebate – Discretionary Fund

- (16) approval be given to the proposed change to the scheme relating to the distribution of payments from the Council Tax Energy Rebate Discretionary Fund.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure Cabinet are informed of the current position in relation to the 2022/23 revenue budget.

To provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2022/23 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

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To ensure Cabinet are informed of key performance information and risk management areas.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

85. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2022/23 TO 2024/25 AND FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE 2020 - MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 TO 2024/25

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources which provided:

1. An update to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2023/24 to 2025/26 taking account of all currently available information.
2. The position in respect of the Council's High Needs Budget, the commencement of the Delivering Better Value programme and within this, the need to reach an annual financially sustainable position. In addition, these plans will be shared with the Council's External Auditor.

Decision Made:

That the report be noted, and the Council be recommended to approve the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2023/24 to 2025/26 and any assumptions made.

Reasons for the Decision:

In March 2022, the Council approved a one-year budget plan for 2022/23. As part of the report, an indicative budget gap of £8.9m for 2023/24 to 2024/25 was reported, before any decisions are taken on the level of Council Tax. The MTFP for this period had subsequently been updated to reflect the latest information available and to reflect the ongoing service pressures the Council was facing. The MTFP period had also been extended by a further year to 2025/26 and the Council would continue to ensure resources are well managed and reflect the key priorities of the residents of Sefton.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

86. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POSITION TO SEPTEMBER 2022

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which provided a review of the Treasury Management activities undertaken to 30 September 2022. The document was the mid-year report to Cabinet and Council, as well as the

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second report of the ongoing quarterly monitoring provided to Audit and Governance Committee whose role was to carry out scrutiny of treasury management policies and practices.

Decision Made:

That the Treasury Management update to 30 September 2022, the effects of decisions taken in pursuit of the Treasury Management Strategy and the implications of changes resulting from regulatory, economic and market factors affecting the Council's treasury management activities be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure that Members are fully appraised of the treasury activity undertaken to 30 September 2022 and to meet the reporting requirements set out in Sefton's Treasury Management Practices and those recommended by the CIPFA code.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

87. APPOINTMENT TO SEFTON NEW DIRECTIONS LIMITED BOARD

Further to Minute No. 68 of the meeting held on 6 October 2022, the Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking approval to the appointment of Councillor Hardman to serve on the Sefton New Directions Limited Board.

Decision Made:

That Councillor Hardman be appointed as a Council representative on the Sefton New Directions Limited Board and that the term of office expire on 25 May 2023.

Reasons for the Decision:

The Cabinet has delegated powers set out in Chapter 5, Paragraph 40 of the Constitution to appoint the Council's representatives to serve on Outside Bodies.

To comply with a previous decision of Cabinet that the appointment be made at this meeting of the Cabinet.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

Agenda Item 4

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	1 st December 2022
Subject:	Local Government Association Peer Review Adult Social Care		
Report of:	Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Place Director	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Adult Social Care		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

This report presents to Cabinet the findings of the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review into Adult Social Care in Sefton. The Executive Director of Adult Social Care with the approval from the Cabinet Member and Chief Executive invited the LGA to complete a review of the service ahead of the arrival of the Care Quality Commission's assurance inspections which could be as early as 2023.

The Peer Review was conducted in July 2022 by colleagues from the Local Government Association (LGA), Northwest Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NW ADASS) with senior officers from other participating local authorities. The Peer Review team was led by Cath Roff Director of Adult Social Services from Leeds City Council and was consisted of colleagues from Lancashire, Leeds, Tameside, Waltham Forest, and Wigan councils. Representatives from the LGA also formed part of the challenge tea., The Peer Review mirrored the scope of the new assurance approach which will be implemented by the Care Quality Commission into all Councils with Adult Social Care responsibilities.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Note the content of this report and the full LGA Peer Review.
2. Note that the ongoing monitoring of the plan will be through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health), the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health.

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Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

The Peer Review process forms part of the sector led improvement programme which is available to Adult Social Care Services in the North West. It was commissioned as part of Sefton's preparation for the implementation of the National Assurance framework and inspection regime which is due to be implemented in April 2023. Sefton being the first local authority in the Northwest to take advantage of this peer review programme.

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

Not applicable.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

Not applicable.

(B) Capital Costs

Not applicable.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): Preparation for Inspection does require additional resource however for the purpose of this report there is no specific ask.
Legal Implications: None
Equality Implications: Opportunities for strengthening Adult Social Care's focus on the Inclusivity Agenda are identified within the report.

Implications of the Proposals:

Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	
Have a neutral impact	YES
Have a negative impact	
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	NO

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: peer review provides an independent review on adult social care services provided for those who are most vulnerable within the borough.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: supporting communities and ensuring the adoption of a strength-based approach is a key aspect of the review.
Commission, broker and provide core services: Adult Social Care is responsible for delivering a number of core statutory duties.
Place – leadership and influencer: proposals set out the road map for greater local control driven by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
Drivers of change and reform: the Peer Review process is a key part of the regional sector led improvement programme and is an important part of planning for inspection.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: a key aspect of the review focused on market sustainability and maintaining local community services. Developing workforce strategies is also a key part of the review.
Greater income for social investment: effective management of demand and use of resource will ensure both sustainability and opportunities for reinvestment.
Cleaner Greener: integrated services allow a greater focus on wider determinants of Health and promote independence for local residents.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director Corporate Resources & Customer Services (FD7012/22) and the Chief Legal & Democratic Officer (LD.5212/12.) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Board.

Contact Officer:	Sarah Alldis
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Background Papers:

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The LGA Peer Review Report can be viewed at the following link:

<https://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/documents/s113196/SeftonCouncilAdultSocialCarePreparationforAssurancePeerChallengeReportJuly2022.docx.pdf>

The full report will also be published on the Local Government Association's website once Council's Cabinet has been presented with the detailed findings.

1. Background

In April 2022, the Health and Care Act received Royal Assent and introduced the requirement for a new national assurance framework for Adult Social Care. From April 2023 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will independently review and assess all Local Authority Adult Social Care Services. As part of its preparation for assurance Adult Social Care asked for a Peer Review of its services.

A "Peer Review" is part of the current Sector Led Improvement offer provided by the North West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NW ADASS) and the Local Government Association (LGA). It is not an inspection but provides a "critical friend" and is undertaken by colleagues from other Local Authorities. Sefton Council was the first authority to undertake the process as preparation for the implementation of the assessment process in 2023.

2. Local Context

Adult Social Care with Sefton is responsible for the discharge of a range statutory duties to support and protect adults with care and support needs. This includes advice and information, assessments of need, safeguarding and the provision of support services for those with eligible needs. During 2021/22, Adult Social Care provided support to over seven thousand individuals and carers. During the last 12 months, the service received over twenty-one thousand referrals. The annual gross budget for Adult Social Care is circa £160m. As will all other Adult Social Services across the country, Sefton has continued to face challenges due to increased levels of demand, acuity, workforce shortages and market sustainability.

The previous inspection regime for Adult Social Services ceased in 2010 and was replaced by a sector led improvement programme. The new regime and requirement for a return to a national assurance regime has been heavily influenced by the covid pandemic and a desire by the Department Health and Social Care to have greater visibility of performance and data; similar to that provided by the NHS.

This report outlines Sefton's preparation for the newly planned inspection of Adult Social Care by the CQC through an LGA Peer Review of its current services and practice.

3. Overview of the Review

Sefton Council through its officers invited the Local Government Association to undertake an Adult Social Care Preparation for Assurance Peer Challenge at the Council and with strategic partners from across Sefton including people with lived experience of Adult Social Care

The work was commissioned by Deborah Butcher, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health (DASS) and Cheshire and Merseyside NHS Place Director. The purpose was to seek an external view on the readiness of the Adult Social Care Directorate for the arrival of the Care Quality Commission's Assurance inspections which could be as early as 2023 and a view on how the Council is able to deliver value for money, quality, effectiveness, and the most personal outcome focused offer for local people.

The members of the peer challenge team were:

- **Cath Roff**, Director of Adults and Health, Leeds City Council
- **Councillor Khevyn Limbajee**, Cabinet Member for Adult Services (2018 – 2022), Cabinet Member Community Safety London Borough of Waltham Forest
- **Samantha Baron**, Director of Quality and Improvement and Principal Social Worker, Lancashire County Council
- **Tracey Harrison**, Assistant Director, Adults, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- **Niamh Kearney**, Service Manager, Performance and Practice, Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council
- **Hazel Summers**, Northwest Care and Health Improvement Adviser, Care and Health Improvement Programme, Local Government Association
- **Marcus Coulson**, Challenge Manager, Local Government Association

The Peer Review was conducted between the 5th – 7th July 2022. The Team was led by the Director of Adults and Health at Leeds City Council. Dedicated programme support was provided by the LGA.

Prior to being on-site peer team members met seven people with a lived experience, five carers and a day centre manager and considered fifteen case files from across the areas of adult social care. The Peer team read at least 189 documents including a self-assessment / position statement. Throughout the review the team had more than thirty-seven meetings with at least sixty-four different people from adult social care, health, the Community Voluntary and Faith Sector and other partners. The peer challenge team have spent over 196 hours with Sefton Council and its documentation, the equivalent of twenty-eight working days

The framework the Peer team used was that of the Care Quality Commission and their proposed four Domains of Assurance they will be using for the up-coming Adult Social Care inspection regime:

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Care Quality Commission Adult Social Care Assurance four Domains	
Working with People <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessing needs• Supporting people to live healthier lives	Providing Support <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care provision, integration, and continuity• Partnerships and communities• Workforce equality, diversity, and inclusion
Ensuring Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe systems, pathways, and transitions• Safeguarding	Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance• Learning, improvement, and innovation• Capable, compassionate, and inclusive leaders

4. Findings from the Review

The findings contained within the full report details areas of strength under each domain and suggested areas for focus and improvement. Overall, the review was received as positive, with recognition that the areas of focus will be utilised to further improve and transform services.

The following section is lifted from the full LGA report into Sefton Adult Social Care.

4.1. Working with People

The peer team met a wide range of staff and commented that the staff are the Directorate's greatest asset. The feedback was that staff in Adult Social Care in Sefton are positive and well-motivated. There is an explicit strategy focusing on prevention and early intervention to help people live healthier lives. This was backed up by a revised front door with a focus on advice, information, and signposting. There is also a plan to have investment in the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector and pathways and signposting resource for those who are not yet eligible for services under the Care Act. The directorate will be creating a 0-25 integrated service with Children's Social Care as a dedicated and specialist resource for this cohort of service users and building on the current transitions to adulthood approach already embedded.

Sefton Council has a market position statement in place that explores market shaping and the work needed to develop the future market requirements. The Directorate should consider updating the directory to make it accessible online.

4.2. Providing Support

There are good relationships with providers and strategic forums are in place to work together. There are strong partnerships with the NHS. The peer team felt they were mature and had strengthened during Covid. The DASS being appointed as the new NHS

Place Director for Sefton in the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board is a real opportunity.

The Place-based approach by Sefton Council working in communities is a real strength and there are plans for it to be rolled out. There is also an opportunity with Place based working and investment in the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector to identify and embed strengths-based practice across all areas the Directorates strategic objectives and the shift to prevention.

Public Health spending is aligned to tackling inequalities with wide recognition of universal proportionalism to tackle the health of the poorest fastest and a recognition that there is more to do. Cheshire and Merseyside are a Marmot region, with Sefton being one of nine Places making up the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System supporting the work of the Marmot team. This is based on the Marmot Review into health inequalities in England (2010) which proposes an evidence-based strategy to address the social determinants of health conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age and which can lead to health inequalities

4.3. Ensuring Safety

There is a robust model for transitions and the Peer team heard evidence of a good system for identifying people who are transitioning into adulthood and who have complex needs. There is active take up by young people of direct payments to buy the right support. The Peer team recommended the development of a wider choice for young people transitioning to Adult Social Care especially around pathways into work and supported employment. There would appear to be an opportunity to create a “Promoting Independence” service for young people as they come into adulthood.

The Directorate has a quality assurance team with a focus on care home quality improvements, however, due to challenges in the market the team are largely focussed on reactive intervention. The Peer team recommended a move away to a more proactive approach. The communication between commissioning and contracts colleagues could be stronger and bringing commissioning into the Directorate is an opportunity to strengthen those links.

The engagement between partners at a strategic level in the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is strong.

4.4. Leadership

The Peer team reflected on the political leadership and commented that the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care is an asset to the Adult Social Care Directorate, being knowledgeable and experienced, providing political direction and oversight. There is strong and experienced political leadership by the ruling party and consensus in the area of Adult Social Care and Health between the different political parties.

There is a clear separation between the executive and scrutiny and there is a clear narrative from the political leadership over their direction and what is expected of them from the Care Quality Commission.

There was evidence to suggest there is clear engagement with the other partners across the newly formed Integrated Care System and it was good to see adult social care represented on the Integrated Care Board.

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The Chief Executive of Sefton Council is fully sighted on adult social care and as a Council prioritises the work supporting vulnerable people as per the Council vision.

Both the Executive Director of Adult Social Care (statutory DASS) and the Assistant Director of Adult Social Care and the leadership team are very experienced which they demonstrated throughout this process and from talking with frontline staff, the senior and middle managers in adult social care are seen as approachable and responsive. They described the culture as positive and supportive with clear leadership. There is stability in the management structure retaining organisational knowledge and understanding.

4.5 Areas of focus and challenge

The LGA team provided clear feedback on areas for consideration and improvement a number of which have been referenced in the summary sections above. Other areas are also detailed below, and a full plan has been developed to address these.

- Continue to focus on recovery post covid and managing increased number of referrals and people awaiting assessment and support – it is recognised that Sefton is not alone in this position, and it is a challenge currently being faced by most Local Authorities.
- Ensuring adequate workforce capacity and leadership to manage the scale and requirement of transformation within the service, which is driven by national reform.
- Development of a departmental plan given the breadth of demands and activity within the service.
- Continue to focus on market sustainability increasing availability of domiciliary care and reablement services, reducing variation of offer.
- Explore opportunities for integration approach to access social care at the front door, workforce strategy and specialist learning disability teams.
- Explore opportunities to reset the “strength- based approach” for social work and develop the community service offer
- Greater focus and development of the neurodiversity agenda

5. Conclusion

It is proposed that Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the full report and the plan to address improvements for their comment and to provide further scrutiny and assurance.

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Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	1 December 2022
Subject:	Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited – Three-Year Strategy and Business Plan		
Report of:	Executive Director (Place)	Wards Affected:	All Wards
Cabinet Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Skills		
Is this a Key Decision?	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

The report provides the Cabinet with the latest strategy and business plan for Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited. The focus of the business includes, but is not limited to, operating the hospitality offer at Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre (CLAC), known as The Lake House. This report follows on from the previous business plan presented to Cabinet in February 2022.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) Note the strategy and business Plan for the company, including its continued alignment with the business base for Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre and the previous business plan, both previously presented to Cabinet;
- (2) Approve the Strategy and three-year Business Plan for Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited;
- (3) Approve that any material variations to this financial forecast be presented back to Cabinet for further decision; and
- (4) Approve that an updated Business Plan for the three years from the financial year 2024-25 be brought to Cabinet for approval in advance of the start of that financial year.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

Sefton's Growth and Strategic Investment programme includes a number of projects that enhance and maximise the offer across the borough to residents and visitors alike. This offer goes beyond the physical assets themselves, and the role of Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited (SHOL) and its opportunity are to provide an experience for customers that aligns with the vision and objectives of the borough and the council. Moreover, SHOL and its strategy will enable support for local people with access to higher-quality career opportunities in the hospitality sector. As per the previously-

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approved business case, this model also delivers best value to the Council (via the removal of the subsidy formerly required to the previous hospitality offer at CLAC).

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

There are no alternative options to be considered.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

All financial implications are discussed within the report.

(B) Capital Costs

All financial implications are discussed within the report.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):
Any resource implications are contained within the report.
Legal Implications:
Any legal implications are contained within the report.
Equality Implications:
<p>The vision and values, strategy and operating procedures of the company will align with the ethos of the Council, in respect of equalities, and will be reflected in all areas, including recruitment, procurement, etc. This is evident in the operating performance of the company to date, as reported to its board members, and underpins approach to future opportunity and growth for the company.</p> <p>In respect of employment, SHOL remains focused on offering attractive job and career opportunities to local people from a diverse range of backgrounds, and this is evident in the workforce at The Lake House, for example.</p> <p>The offer at The Lake House remains inclusive, with community access to facilities and the provision of a Changing Places unit, as per the Council's intentions for all capital projects of this scale and importance. The company and its leadership remain focused on the development and maintenance of community relationships to ensure inclusive growth in line with the vision and values of its shareholder, Sefton Council, and this ethos is being embedded as part of the culture of the organisation for all new employees as part of induction and other people-related processes.</p>

Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	Y
Have a neutral impact	N
Have a negative impact	N
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y
<p>The vision and values, strategy and operating procedures of the company will align with the Council's response to climate emergency, with focus on environmental sustainability.</p>	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: Inclusivity will remain at the heart of the company's vision and values, in respect of both the physical and experiential offer to residents and visitors.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above, inclusivity will be at the heart of the company's vision and values, in respect of both the physical and experiential offer to residents and visitors. Moreover, the company will offer quality employment and career opportunities for local people in the hospitality sector.</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: Projected future returns to the Council, as sole shareholder of SHOL, will provide revenue to contribute towards service provision.</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer: The physical and experiential offer of the company will support enhancement of sense of place across the borough. The vision and strategy of the company closely aligns with the 2030 vision and the Place-based strategies of the Council.</p>
<p>Drivers of change and reform: The enhancement of physical assets, the offer to customers, and the approach to employment and career opportunity, will all support change across the borough and in this sector particularly.</p>
<p>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The company will support economic prosperity and resilience through the offer of quality employment and career opportunities for local people in the hospitality sector.</p>
<p>Greater income for social investment: The strategy and business plan outline the significant intended contribution of the company in respect of social value.</p>
<p>Cleaner Greener: All projects and operations will align with the highest environmental standards, reflecting the council's focus on climate emergency.</p>

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What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director Corporate Resources & Customer Services (FD 7015/22) and the Chief Legal & Democratic Officer (LD5215/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

There have been no external consultations.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

Background Papers:

Please see Cabinet Report re CLAC Full Business Case (4 February 2021), and previous report on SHOL Strategy and Business Plan (3 February 2022)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2021 the Council agreed the Full Business Case for the Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre project. This includes approval of the recommendation to incorporate a new operating company, with board members nominated and appointed in accordance with the Council's Constitution, and the recommendation that £500,000 working capital was loaned from Sefton Council to the new hospitality company to cover the launch and the first period of operation. After this time the loan would be paid back to the council over the 10 years of the business plan from profits generated.
- 1.2 The three-year Strategy and Business Plan for the operating company, named Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited (SHOL) and wholly owned by Sefton Council, was approved by Cabinet in February 2022. This report comprises an updated three-year Business Plan for SHOL.
- 1.3 In the period since the approval of the previous Business Plan in February 2022, the economic climate has changed significantly, with the impacts of the cost of living crisis affecting the hospitality sector. This report includes an overview of those challenges for the business and potential mitigations to those emerging risks.

2.0 Hospitality Sector – Market Conditions and Outlook

- 2.1 The hospitality and tourism industries have been through an unprecedented period of disruption, impacted by exiting the European Union, by the COVID-19 pandemic, and by the current economic outlook and cost of living crisis. The hospitality industry was heavily impacted by the change in right-to-work rules following EU exit, leading to high numbers of foreign workers employed in hotels, restaurants and bars leaving the UK due to difficulties in remaining. Furthermore, 2020 saw the global hospitality and tourism industries affected by COVID-19 with lockdown and subsequent restrictions on travel. The pandemic saw the industry experience forced closure, partial reopening, full reclosure and then a staggered reopening.
- 2.2 Since 2021, there has been a perfect storm, combining rapid inflationary pressures with widespread skills shortages and the ongoing disruption to normal working practices caused by the pandemic, global supply chain crises, and the UK's exit from the EU. Unique circumstances presented significant challenges to organisations in every part of the UK. As the UK began to recover and return back to normality following the pandemic period, the hospitality industry has been slower to react and "reopen" due to the previously mentioned continued challenges of Brexit and the lack of foreign workers that have been the backbone of the industry, combined with the realisation that many furloughed workers haven't returned to their previous jobs has resulted in the industry being in a position where it has the demand to financially recover but is struggling with supply. According to the Open University, more than two-thirds of SMEs are currently facing skills shortages, rising to 86% of large organisations.
- 2.3 However, there are now the green shoots of recovery, with hotel occupancy – the hospitality and tourism barometer for indicating customer demand - reporting

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almost pre-pandemic levels of business across all regions, including the North West.

Room occupancy	2019	2020	2021	2022
North West England	80%	47%	76%	78%
Source: Wynter Hospitality Limited, November 2022				

- 2.4 Of the Liverpool City Region (LCR), Sefton is second only to Liverpool in terms of overall tourism value, industry related jobs and hotel bedrooms. Whilst Liverpool has established itself as a key player in the national tourism and hospitality list of destination cities, historically important destinations such as Sefton and more specifically Southport, have to try harder attracting domestic and overseas guests. The UK's once bustling seaside towns have been declining due to factors such as higher levels of deprivation, slower population and employment growth, an aging population, inadequate transport links, and skills. This is an important consideration as seasonal tourist destinations must have a robust business plan that is supported by considering not only how to attract local customers to its hospitality businesses into the "shoulder seasons" and moving into the low "off" season, but also how to compete for a local customer base.
- 2.5 The continued presence of major food, drink and leisure brands across Sefton, and continued investment by local organisations in the sector across the borough are key indicators that opportunity and optimism exists to increase Sefton's leisure and night-time economy. This is echoed by data from Barclays that indicates on average, UK hospitality businesses expect to boost turnover this year by 30% above levels in the last 'normal' trading year of 2019 resulting in a higher than pre-pandemic confidence in growth through 2022 and into 2023, with the Northwest confidence in the top 5 of all areas in the UK.
- 2.6 At the time of writing, despite the easing of all restrictions relating to COVID-19 that have been impacting the sector, rapid inflation, the risk of recession and acute difficulties sourcing key staff are creating instability for the hospitality sector. This is reinforced by feedback from experts in the sector, and by feedback from businesses in the sector presently operating in Sefton. Given the challenges many businesses have in attracting and retaining talent, they are innovating in a way not seen in the industry before. The use QR codes in hospitality an example that most people are now familiar with, and these are still in use now even though social distancing, as a rule, has now ended. The reason is because this reduces the labour headcount required to serve in bar and restaurant settings, and as a result reducing the impact of less people prepared to work in the industry and also reducing labour costs. Online and kiosk check-in is now becoming commonplace in the hotel industry. Once, only seen in certain value brands, the option for a guest to arrive at a hotel and check themselves at luxury hotel chains is now commonplace. What this indicates is that all this is happening whilst customers' desires continue to evolve. Operators are having to assess which pandemic-inspired trends are here for the long term – pivoting their offerings to match those preferences. Loyalty, and more specifically tailoring the offer to match a customer or guests' expectation is fast becoming the norm. An ePOS system, for example, should no longer be seen

as a digitised cash register but a tool to collect data, such as buying habits – products, spend and frequency – to enable the business to match supply to expectation both boosting revenue and reducing friction.

- 2.7 The hospitality sector is often described as the UK's most popular first job but has always attracted individuals who remain in the industry and become its future leaders. What is currently being experienced is a combination of these professionals leaving the industry and the heightened challenges in recruiting for jobs that are scarcely seen as careers. As a result, these businesses have been forced to modernise in terms of working conditions to ensure they are able to attract and retain new talent. Pay rises, flexible working patterns, bonuses and other perks are now being offered and this should be viewed as a positive step. This reinforces the validity of SHOL's strategy and continued focus on being an employer of choice.
- 2.8 With the pressure to maximise all revenue opportunities during the recovery in 2022, it is difficult to predict just how successful operators will be in passing on rising operational costs, how much will the tightening of household budgets impact on leisure spend, will the return of overseas visitors recover quick enough to counterbalance the rebound in outbound travel, and whether domestic tourists will continue to seek more localised holiday destinations and increase its weight of support to UK Staycation. Feedback from industry experts advises that, for those business owners and operators who through the course of the pandemic have learnt to drive the business forward by simplifying and streamlining operations to reduce costs, investing in technology and their people, and retaining belief and conviction in the management strategies employed, their businesses are likely to emerge more strongly and embrace the challenges ahead on a much securer footing.
- 2.9 The cost of living crisis will inevitably affect consumer spending, with 9 in 10 UK consumers intending to cut back on spending amid sharp rises in the cost of living. However, these impacts will be more significant in areas of deprivation, with the least affluent projected to cut back 9.6% of their annual household spending, compared to 8.1% for average household and 7.6% for affluent. The business will continue to monitor these risks and potential impacts on revenues, while ensuring a resilient offer to customers in an increasingly challenging environment.
- 2.10 In summary, given the outlook for the economy, there will inevitably be challenges ahead for the hospitality sector, and therefore the company, which will require not only prudent focus on cost control in an inflationary environment, but also a focus on differentiation of the offer (in terms of food, drink, the quality of the physical environment, and the quality of the customer experience) at venues to remain competitive in a challenging marketplace.

3.0 Strategy

- 3.1 As previously reported, the focus for SHOL will be on being an employer of choice in the hospitality sector. This is intended to include focus on offering full-time, permanent employment opportunities, with all roles paying a real living wage or above (and the Business Plan herein remains based on this assumption). These terms and conditions are one part of an attractive and differentiated offer to

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employees, ensuring that the company attracts, develops and retains staff. This offer will also include training and development opportunity, working towards long-term career growth in the hospitality sector, and will be complemented by the ethos and core values of the company that should ensure an organisational culture of which employees wish to be a part.

- 3.2 The ambition remains to deliver a quality experience for employees, who in turn will deliver a quality experience for customers – this strategic approach is not uncommon at the “higher end” of many sub-segments of the retail sector. This employment offer also aligns with the core values of the Council and of the borough, and SHOL offers employment opportunity for a number of cohorts, aligned to the Council’s priority areas.
- 3.3 The first months of operation at SHOL suggest that this strategy is working effectively, evidenced in both the quality of the offer at The Lake House, and levels of staff turnover that are comfortably below industry norms at this time (see section 5).
- 3.4 There is no change proposed from the previous Business Plan in respect of service delivery and the potential for growth, with the strategy for SHOL during this Business Plan period remaining to:
- Ensure that the start-up of the business continues to be successful, building on a positive first few months of trading at The Lake House particularly, and building the structures and teams necessary to deliver the vision;
 - Continue to build brand awareness and positive recognition for the company and all venues, focused on the quality of the offer and customer experience, and alignment to the natural attributes of the Sefton coastline;
 - Continue to strengthen and support the management and operations teams at SHOL, to enable delivery of the strategy and growth of the business; and
 - Beyond The Lake House, selectively pursue other opportunities for profitable growth, in line with the values and objectives herein, with low capital investment and no additional borrowing by the company.
- 3.5 The business will continue to monitor macroeconomic conditions and their impacts on the sector, the borough, and SHOL and its venues, adapting the strategy and business plan as required.

4.0 Business Plan

- 4.1 The Business Plan for the company remains unchanged from the original Full Business Case from the CLAC project, and from the previous Business Plan approved by Cabinet in February 2022. Despite the economic and sectoral challenges outlined herein, and the delay to the opening of the Lake House in Summer 2022, financial performance is consistent with previous expectations.

£	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Net Profit (+) / Loss (-)	-138,200	2,100	164,100

- 4.2 No shareholder dividends or commencement of repayment of the working capital loan to the Council are proposed during the Business Plan period. However, based on performance of the business and the progression of future opportunities, this will be reevaluated on an annual basis as part of the Business Plan process.
- 4.3 As with other Council-owned companies, any material variations to this Business Plan will be reported separately to the Cabinet for review and approval.

- 4.4 Moreover, an annual update to the three-year Business Plan will be reported to Cabinet, with an updated Strategy and Business Plan for the three financial years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 presented to Cabinet before the start of the 2023/24 financial year.

5.0 The Lake House, Waterloo

- 5.1 While the details of the company's performance at The Lake House are commercially sensitive and confidential, this section aims to provide an overview of the first few months at the venue given its importance to the SHOL business. Opened in August 2022, the venue incorporates a restaurant, events and function space and 14 bedrooms.

- 5.2 SHOL has created new employment for 46 staff, 83% of whom reside within Sefton. The majority of employees (64%) reside within a 5 mile radius of The Lakehouse with 17% of these living within 1 mile of work. 46% of roles are occupied by staff new to the hospitality sector. Staff turnover at 15% is low relative to industry rates in excess of 30%. SHOL and the Council are proud that the current team includes individuals who are refugees having fled the war in Ukraine.

- 5.3 Training has been provided to enhance skills and future employment prospects. The aim is to retain and promote individuals within the organisation as opportunities arise. In addition to on the job training, specific training courses have been completed in such areas as First Aid training, professional coffee training, Back to Basics F&B training, Leadership training courses, Fire Marshall training, Marketing training, and Fire Health & Safety training.

- 5.4 In line with the Council's core values, SHOL takes its commitment to the local community seriously. In addition to creating local employment, using local suppliers and hosting community events, SHOL is working with Sefton to understand how the organisation can maximise its contribution. In November The Lake House hosted a Festive Gathering, a free community event supporting our local food bank.

- 5.5 Trading is largely in line with expectations in all areas, building on a positive reputation and brand profile that the business has quickly established at the venue. Events and corporate trade is increasing, with meeting spaces regularly hired by local businesses, many of whom are already repeat customers. The function room is increasingly popular with local residents to host parties and events such as funerals and birthdays. The Lake House is also being established as a wedding venue and will host its first wedding on New Year's Day 2023, with further weddings confirmed in the diary for spring. The level of bookings to date is encouraging so early after opening and we expect this trade to grow as the business establishes.

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- 5.6 It is useful to highlight the seasonality of trade in the hospitality sector. The SHOL management team (and the informal feedback from other Sefton businesses in the sector) suggests that, as a general rule, venues will be profitable for 5 months of the year, breakeven for 3 months and loss making for 4 months. Over the course of a year there is significant variation so looking at a part year in isolation, particularly the winter months, is not representative of overall performance. However, the initial performance of the venue and its alignment with the previous Business Plan suggests a positive start for the company, with opportunities ahead despite a challenging external environment in which the business will be operating through the period.

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Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	1 December 2022
Subject:	Phase 1 Business Plan for Sandway Homes Limited		
Report of:	Chief Executive and Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the progress and delivery of new homes as part of the Phase 1 Business Plan for Sandway Homes Limited and follows on from previous reports provided to Members on the development and activities within the Company.

In providing this information, the report will provide an update on delivery of construction activity and forecast financial performance, comparing this to the previously agreed Business Plan and highlighting key decisions required by the Council.

The report will also provide details of the current progress in respect of Phase 2 Business Planning.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet are requested to:-

1. Approve the revisions to the Phase 1 Business Plan as provided by the Company to the Council as at November 2022, including changes to the financial forecast, duration of the programme and timing of the dividend, capital receipt and repayment of debt;
2. Note the range of external economic factors that have materialised over the last 6 months that could impact financial performance;
3. Note the options currently identified from the updated exit strategy that would be available to the council should the company fail to continue to operate;
4. Approve that any further material variations to this revised financial forecast in respect of the Phase 1 Business Case (the base case) that arise be presented back to cabinet for further decision at the earliest opportunity; and
5. Note the progress being made in respect of potential business cases for 2 sites that would be included in a Phase 2 Business Plan and that subject to progress these will be reported to cabinet during the second half of 2023. This timeline will be driven by the Council having assurance that the financial objectives of Phase 1 have been or will be met. This will require projected sales income having been achieved and the financial risk to the council having been reduced.

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Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

Since 2016 the Council has been considering its role in the provision of housing throughout the Borough to complement an active third and private sector market.

There is significant demand for housing sites and housing development within Sefton, with over 11,000 housing units being required, over the Local Plan period, in order to meet with the local housing demand.

There is a national shortfall of circa 1m homes (of which 400,000 fall into affordable homes) whilst across the Liverpool City Region a total of circa 50,000 housing units will be required in the medium term. Sandway Homes Limited seeks to increase housing completions and the availability of choice for residents and those wishing to live in Sefton. This will be achieved by working with the council and stakeholders including Homes England and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to leverage in brownfield enabling funds to assist the local authority in proactively re-developing sites included in its brownfield disposal register

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

There are no alternative options to be considered.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

All financial implications are discussed in detail within the report

(B) Capital Costs

All financial implications are discussed in detail within the report

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
All resource implications are contained within the report	
Legal Implications:	
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	N

Have a negative impact	Y
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Y

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The proposals will add housing choice within the heart of Sefton's communities, facilitating confidence.
Commission, broker and provide core services: Projected returns to the Council, as sole shareholder, from SHL which will provide revenue to contribute towards service provision.
Place – leadership and influencer: Housing is a significant contributor to building a better sense of place
Drivers of change and reform: Physical infrastructure (housing) is a significant contributor to and enabler/catalyst for change.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The proposals will make a significant contribution to the local economy, both by way of a direct impact to construction and civil engineering jobs, but additionally providing a housing supply and choice for residents wishing to live and work in Sefton and across Merseyside
Greater income for social investment: The approved Business Case identifies the opportunity for SHL to commission a greater level of social value.
Cleaner Greener: The proposals will be compliant with the Building Regulations and other Planning and Habitat regulations meaning Sefton builds cleaner and greener

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7014/22) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5214/22) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

There have been no external consultations.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 Cabinet have previously approved the Phase 1 Business Plan for Sandway Homes Limited at the meeting in July 2019, with detailed updates being provided at the meetings in September 2020 and October 2021. This report provides a further update on the delivery of that Phase 1 Business Plan and details the key variations since last year and the decisions required from members.

2.0 Approved Phase 1 Business Plan

2.1 At the Cabinet meeting of July 2019, the Phase 1 Business Plan was agreed with the following key outputs and financial performance:

Table 1: Delivery of houses by site as at September 2020

Site	Units to be built	Start date (construction)	End date (Sales completion)
Meadow Lane, Ainsdale	48	May 2020	May 2022
Barton Close, Crossens	30	May 2020	April 2022
Buckley Hill Lane, Netherton	70	February 2021	April 2023
Total	148		

Table 2: Financial Performance as at September 2020

	Business Plan Forecast £
Income (House Sale and Grant)	29,124,678
Expenditure (Construction and Fees)	(23,345,158)
Expenditure (Company Overheads)	(1,622,090)
Expenditure (Land Acquisition)	(2,232,000)
Interest	(627,376)
Earnings Before Tax	1,298,054
Corporation Tax	(246,630)
EARNINGS AFTER TAX (Dividend)	1,051,424

2.2 In order to support the Company's cashflow, it was agreed that the Council would provide a debt facility that would be charged interest and would be fully repayable. This peak debt level was approved by Cabinet at £5.1m with the estimation that this would be reached in December 2021 and would be fully repaid in June 2023. This facility was supported by a formal loan agreement the detail of which was also approved by Cabinet in order to progress the Company set up, and underwrite fees and construction costs associated with the three Phase 1 sites.

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3.0 Phase 1 Business Plan- Update November 2022

- 3.1 At the meeting of Cabinet in October 2021, the outcome of the comprehensive review of Business Plan undertaken by the company was reported and approved by members. This review took account of a number of changes within the company and the full impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the housing sector, wider economy and the ability of the company to progress with the Phase 1 Business Plan and reflected the positive outlook for the company including the delivery of financial objectives, the contribution to Housing supply within the Borough and the social value contribution. In preparing this latest update for cabinet, the well-publicised external economic factors that are having an impact throughout the UK and which will have an impact on the delivery of the Phase 1 business plan are detailed in this report. In considering the impact it is important to focus on both the revisions to the financial forecasts but also the risk that exists at the current time that could impact this performance
- 3.2 This review has now been completed with the findings communicated to Council officers and these are detailed in the following section of the report.

Construction and Sales timelines

- 3.3 As reported earlier in this report, Phase 1 is focussed on 3 sites with a previously approved completion date of March 2025. Following the review of the Phase 1 Business Plan the following changes are proposed to the programme compared to that previously approved in October 2021.

Table 3 : Revised Programme timeline

Site	As per approved Business Plan			Estimated following Business Plan review		
	Units to be built	Start date (construction)	End date (Sales completion)	Units to be built	Start date (construction)	End date (Last sale post construction)
Meadow Lane, Ainsdale	48	December 2020	March 2023	48	December 2020	July 2023
Barton Close, Crossens	30	February 2021	November 2022	30	February 2021	May 2023
Buckley Hill Lane, Netherton	63	March 2022	March 2025	63	April 2023	July 2025
Total	141			141		

- 3.4 From this table it can be seen that in respect of the 2 sites for which construction has commenced, namely Meadow Lane and Barton's Close, the end date for sales completion will move out from the previously reported dates by 4 months and 7 months respectively to July 2023 and May 2023.

In respect of Meadow Lane it is expected that by Christmas 2022, 18 properties will have been completed and handed over with the remaining 30 to be completed

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by May 2023. The 4 month delay has been caused by supply chain issues and the availability of bricklayers and finishing trades.

At Barton's Close, 10 properties are sale complete, with a further 9 due to be build complete by Christmas 2022 with the remaining 11 being complete by the end of January 2023. Again, this delay has been driven by supply chain issues and the availability of certain trades.

The 25 affordable housing plots across both sites are in contract with Together Housing and handovers have commenced on shared ownership units at Meadow Lane

In considering the progress at both of these sites, it is also important to report that prior to recent economic changes, as these schemes moved into the sales phase, plot reservations were extremely positive, with all homes released for sale having been reserved off plan. The Company continues to work with its agents to support homeowners moving into their properties and feedback received to date has been positive.

- 3.5 At Buckley Hill Lane, the exceptionally long lead in period for service diversions has continued to have an impact on the main contractor being able to secure sub-contractor package prices for the key components such as timber frames / roof trusses and drainage which has resulted in a further period of un-certainty for Sandway Homes regarding price. It is now forecast that all services work will be complete by April 2023, with the main construction contract commencing thereafter, thus resulting in a 12 month delay for construction works

The reasons for the delay in the Buckley Hill pre-construction works are as follows:

- Planning for a revised layout of 63 homes was secured on 21st November 2021 by way of a re-design so as to maximise saleability and values on the site, this was an initial 3-month delay;
- Following this a re-negotiation process with the Combined Authority (CA) commenced on the grant funding for the site as fewer units were to be delivered. This was completed on 12th April 2022.
- Stage 4 design period post planning commenced in December 2021 and continued through to approval of the CA allocation in April 2022.
- The Contract with the main contractor for service diversion works was subsequently agreed in May 2022, and quotes to statutory providers re-submitted. Following that period there have been the delays in those services being delivered by the statutory service providers.

- 3.6 As a result of these issues, a full review of all income and expenditure assumptions has been undertaken, with the aim of understanding the impact on the following:-

- Overall dividend due to the council in respect of Phase 1;
- Timing of the final dividend back to the Council from the Company;
- Duration of debt facility being required;
- Timing of the capital receipt due to the council in respect of Phase 1;
- Overall risk exposure for the council;
- Timing of consideration of Phase 2 activities

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- 3.7 Each of these issues is considered in the following sections of the report. In order to inform this work, the company has undertaken a range of modelling exercises on a variety of scenarios, to identify a central or base case that can be provided to the council and the company can work towards.

The external economic environment

- 3.8 This extensive scenario planning and modelling work by the company has been and will continue to be significantly impacted by the current economic conditions and volatility that exists within the UK- the issues and scale of these has increased substantially since September 2022 following the national government budget statement.

The country is now operating in a fundamentally different economic environment with rising interest rates, inflation due to be over 10% for the duration of 2023, a cost of living crisis and the prospect of a lengthy recession as predicted by many economic commentators. This dislocation in economic activity is effecting each area of society but the impact on the housing sector is one of the most significant and will inevitably impact the delivery of the Phase 1 Business Plan over the next 12-18 months despite the excellent start at the first 2 sites. Each of these aspects will have a substantial impact on the company due to:

- Mortgage rates increasing , therefore previous mortgage deals will have either been removed from the market or increased substantially in cost, thereby making potential buyers revisit their plans;
- Potential buyers having less financial resources to purchase a home;
- Both of these issues will result in a lower number of housing sales being undertaken compared to previously forecasts;
- Supply chain issues leading to works delays; and
- Inflation pushing up prices for construction works.

The severity of this economic situation and the potential impact on the company's operations and planning cannot be under-estimated, with the impact already being felt with a slowdown in reservations taking place. This accords with larger and more established Housebuilders who are operating across the Borough. As a result, the company has provided an updated base case forecast and 'worse' case forecast to the council for Phase 1.

Financial Performance and Risk- Update November 2022

- 3.9 As reported earlier in this report, it was originally anticipated in 2019, that Phase 1 would deliver a profit / dividend to the council upon completion of £1.051m, which was subsequently increased to £1.350m in the last report received by members. This is in addition to the capital receipt from the 3 sites of £2.2m. Following the review of this first phase the following revised financial forecast has been developed.

Table 4: Updated financial forecast as at November 2022

	Business Plan Forecast September 2021 £	Business Plan Forecast November 2022 £
Income (House Sale and Grant)	30,269,816	32,788,683
Expenditure (Construction and Fees)	-23,182,761	-25,328,134
Expenditure (Company Overheads)	-2,758,776	-3,381,785
Expenditure (Land Acquisition)	-2,232,000	-2,232,000
Interest	-428,740	-549,881
Earnings Before Tax	1,667,539	1,296,883
Corporation Tax	-316,832	-246,408
EARNINGS AFTER TAX (Dividend)	1,350,707	1,050,475

3.10 From this review it can be seen that:-

- The forecast base case dividend from Phase 1 is £1.050m- this is in line with that estimated in the original business plan in 2019 but lower than that forecast in last years report;
- Following a review of all current and potential sales prices for homes, the income due from phase 1 is now expected to be £32.8m. This reflects updated valuations for properties which are sale complete, which have continued to rise throughout the delivery of the business plan. The Company also continues to track comparable sales performance on similar developments in the Borough. The sales contingency contained within the plan, provides headroom for fluctuations in values, and also accommodates sales incentives on future plots as the market continues to slow. This is obviously a volatile area of the market at present and will need to be the subject of continual review and monitoring over the coming months and risk is attached to this estimate;
- Similarly , construction costs and contingencies have increased during the last 12 months that take account of inflation and supply chain issues- again with rising inflation forecast to be in excess of 10% during 2023 this will be a key area of focus. The key risk in this area relates to the construction cost of Buckley Hill Lane with this yet to be agreed with the main contractor- a robust forecast estimate that the company believes is accurate is included within this plan however until negotiations are completed there is an element of risk to this estimate; and,
- A key issue in this forecast is that with Phase 1 taking longer than previously anticipated, the company will be carrying overhead costs for a longer period that will impact upon the dividend- as has been reported most of these delays have been driven by external economic factors as well as through the redesign of Buckley Hill Lane, but the cost of the overhead has now increased to an estimated £3.4m. In the event that a Phase 2 programme is approved and commences

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before the end of Phase 1 , a proportion of these overhead costs will be charged against Phase 2 but at present these are shown in this analysis.

- 3.11 As previously reported, the revised profit/ dividend of £1.050m is in addition to the capital receipt of £2.2m that would be payable to the Council if this plan is approved and subsequently delivered. This capital receipt was agreed previously via independent valuations of the 3 sites to ensure that the council achieves best consideration, and this complies with its statutory obligations.

Timing of Dividend

- 3.12 The Council were previously advised that it would be in receipt of this dividend and capital receipt in financial year 2024/25. Due to the issues discussed earlier in this report , without any changes to the approach to construction the dividend would be delayed until June 2025, debt would be repayed in March 2025 with the capital receipt also being received in March 2025.

Risk Exposure for the Council

- 3.13 Within the previous cabinet reports approved by Members there has been a strong focus on the understanding and management of financial risk that the company and council would be exposed to and the measures that are in place to manage this risk.
- 3.14 From this updated analysis, the overall profit/ dividend payable to the Council under the base case remains in line with that of the original approved business case of 2019 (but is less than that reported last year), however due to the economic environment that the company is working in and with the sector being impacted to a greater extent than others because of this, the risk that is inherent within the current forecast has increased substantially.

At this point, and as stated earlier in the report the company has scenario planned and modelled this base case for consideration and approval but has also provided a 'worse' case position that needs to be considered.

This alternative position takes into account:

- Potential changes in the levels of income assumed, due to lower sales values should there be a prolonged recession with house prices falling;
- Increases in the final construction cost for Buckley Hill Lane;
- Longer sales periods due to fewer buyers in the market;
- Changes in level of interest and corporation tax payable;
- Programme extensions due to the delays on site with materials; and
- Sales completion rates reducing as mortgage availability becomes less accessible for some customers

From this work that has been undertaken and the interdependencies between these factors a 'worse' case scenario of an overall dividend of £0.4m could materialise. As a result, it will be important that the engagement between the council and the company is robust and regular during this volatile and uncertain period and the company's board receive comprehensive risk assessed reports that allow them to make informed decisions and provide advice to the council for it

to then in turn make informed decisions also. Upon receipt of such information, cabinet will be informed of any issues at the earliest opportunity.

The Council will also need to be cognisant of the following areas during this period:

- A longer programme duration and a slowdown in sales will impact upon the cashflow of the company- the current plan will need continually updating to reflect actual sales income vs budget, which in turn is reflected in how the company manages its cashflow-Critically, the sales of homes on the first 2 sites, provides the cashflow to support the substantial build and contract value on the 3rd site at Buckley Hill Lane so any material variation will have an impact on this.
- There maybe the requirement to increase the peak debt from the currently approved level of £8.3m. The level and risk associated with the peak debt approved for the company and the impact that this has on the council has been acknowledged since the original business case was approved and was also the subject of much review in October 2021. As a result of the current issues in terms of value of Buckley Hill Lane construction contract, a longer build programme and potential delay in sales from external economic circumstances, this risk is increasing and will require careful monitoring and review. It is recommended that this significant risk be noted by the council and that an update be provided in 2023 as greater clarity is obtained and the full impact of the current economic conditions on the sales of the remaining homes at the first 2 sites is understood, with any request for an increase in the level of peak debt needing to be considered alongside the risks set out in this report;
- Similarly, with the company entering into a large construction contract for the site at Buckley Hill Lane and the work being undertaken over a prolonged period as set out earlier in this report, due to the current economic circumstances the contractor may require a parent guarantee from the council. The council would need to consider the terms and risk of such a guarantee should it be required.

3.15 It can therefore be seen that although a base case has been provided to the council , the external economic circumstances that are in existence at the present time will mean that this cannot be guaranteed by the company. It is however this base case that is being presented for approval at this meeting with any material variations following that being reported back to cabinet for decision.

3.16 As stated earlier within the report, it is worth identifying at this point in time that the company has progressed to date in accordance with the direction provided by members. These include strong planning permissions, full policy compliance, the delivery of a quality product that can inform and influence other housebuilders within Sefton, full delivery of policy requirements in respect of affordable housing and a range of social value contributions . It is the change in the national economic conditions that is driving the current risk and uncertainty. This is reflected in the rephrasing of forecast sales income from Q2 of this financial year to later in the programme.

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Exit Strategy

- 3.17 At the cabinet meeting of December 2021, cabinet approved the exit strategy that had been developed by the company and which was presented to the council, in order to support the revised business plan. The detail within the exit strategy is updated on a regular basis by the company and the latest document has been received by the council. Having a clear exit strategy is a necessary requirement in order that the council has a risk mitigation plan should any of the inherent delivery risks associated crystallise. The key imperative being for the Council as Shareholder to recover the maximum level of investment at a given point in time, so as to limit further financial exposure / delivery risk.
- 3.18 The most appropriate form of any 'exit' will be dependent upon a number of factors including the stage of the development project, the overall programme projections (particularly in relation to sales periods and the rate of return on investment) as well as the Council's appetite to retain stock over a longer-term financial plan.

Options Available

- 3.19 There are three proposed exit routes which would allow the Council to intervene if either the peak debt level was realised or the Company failed to operate. However, it is important to note that before that stage, there are further mitigating factors that the Company / Council could deploy to improve the overall position and mitigate risk. A summary of these exit strategy routes is as follows:

Un-sold stock

- 3.20 The revised business plan as presented to Cabinet in October 2021, contained sales contingency provision. This relates to an element of financial headroom (cash assumption) in the plan to allow the Company to incentivise sales. With the economic downturn this is more likely to be required than it was 12 months ago and this would be the first risk mitigation measure to be considered.

Un-sold stock: individual plot sales to RP or Investor

- 3.21 If there are properties that remain un-sold for a period of beyond 6 months, the council could seek a disposal strategy from the company, involving the sale of stock to either a Registered Provider or an Investor. There are circa 15 Registered Providers actively operating and developing homes in Sefton who could be approached to acquire stock for affordable housing purposes. Alternatively, the company could also register as an RP entity and retain properties for shared ownership / rent to buy however that would require a re-negotiation of current loan terms and a likely extension for 5-10 years to cover the initial first tranche sales period.
- 3.22 There are equally larger Build to Rent investors and pension funds seeking to acquire residential stock. Development assumptions will differ between an RP investor / private investor, and it may be that in such a scenario the council may lose a percentage of its overall income by disposing of properties in this manner, however, this does provide an alternative exit route.

For illustration, with grant funding, Registered Providers will seek to acquire at sub market value, reflecting a deduction to cover long term finance and management costs. Comparably, a private investor may seek a discount for acquiring what they perceive to be 'distressed' stock- however this would be subject to a revised valuation process when negotiating the disposal.

Clearly in such a scenario, the Council's strategic housing objectives would need to be factored into the eventual disposal route, which would be based on housing need in the area, and demand for affordable housing compared to private rented accommodation. This would be considered against the financial implications of different disposal routes with appropriate recommendations being made to Cabinet on that basis.

SMBC retention of stock for market rent / affordable housing purposes

- 3.23 The council may equally opt to re-finance and retain any un-sold Sandway stock for use as affordable or market rented housing. The Council is currently considering its options around the provision and delivery of council housing and an assessment of acquiring completed stock from Sandway could be established as part of that process.

Retaining a rented portfolio would require the Council to extend a proportion of the total loan, to cover the full development costs of the remaining stock, due to the properties becoming rented units, as opposed to open market. Typically for a market rented portfolio, this would be over 15 years, with an expected return on investment (yield) of between 5%-8% per annum.

Given the higher management and long-term maintenance costs associated with retaining the stock for affordable housing purposes, combined with the lower rental income, this would require a 30–35-year loan. This would provide the Council with an appreciating asset, which could be used as security for further borrowing in the future.

Considering the options

- 3.24 As stated, throughout the Business Plan period, the appropriate exit strategy will depend upon the stage of construction, and if for example the Contractor was to go into liquidation- the value of the works left to complete on site at that moment time. It will also depend on the number of un-sold homes, and how long they have been un-sold compared to the phasing assumed within the Business Plan. As of September 2022, the financial position for the Company is summarised as follows:

- The Company set up costs, fees associated with Phase 1 planning applications, day to day business operations, and contractually committed 'work in progress' construction payments, stands at £12.63m;
- Construction payments to date of £9.4m have been incurred within the 'WIP' costs as above, which means that there is £3.23m of contractual payments outstanding for committed schemes;
- The contractually committed programme is scheduled to include Buckley Hill Lane from Q1 2023-24. Once Buckley Hill Lane becomes 'contractual' the

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value of committed construction schemes will rise by the associated contract amount;

- The Gross Development Value (GDV) of the Phase 1 Business Plan is £32.4m and sales income assumptions have been set at an average of 2 per month post completion, which is aligned with typical Housebuilder projections. This will be reviewed regularly by conducting competitor analysis to ascertain whether this assumption could be updated based on market conditions.

Plots 'in contract' as a proportion of income

- 3.25 As of November 2022, there are 53 contractually committed open market sale homes, and 18 which are build complete which includes the 4 showhomes across both schemes. Showhomes will be retained until the majority of homes are sold, hence are cashflowed for sale in the latter part of the business plan for each scheme.

In addition, 25 affordable housing plots at Meadow and Barton are in contract with Together Housing and are 68% build complete (and payment drawn down), with handovers having commenced in October 2022. Negotiations are on-going between the council and the company regarding the acquisition of affordable housing plots at Buckley Hill Lane, and subject to future Cabinet approval there will be a similar % of 'in contract' affordable homes at that scheme, hence reducing the overall income risk.

- 3.26 It is important with the councils company that an exit strategy is maintained and continually updated on a regular basis and as material variations take place eg through economic conditions and progress on delivery of the business plan takes place. It is also important that cabinet as shareholder have full visibility and understanding of the current status of financial commitments, obligations and risk that would inform the decision around which option would be the best for the council to maximise the opportunity and minimise any financial loss should this exit strategy be required. The detail in this report provides an assesment of the current options and current financial exposure and this will be continually reviewed as recommended- in the event of the exit strategy being considered the council would procure specialist advice and support in order to inform decision making.

4.0 Governance arrangements

- 4.1 At a Cabinet meeting earlier this year, members approved a range of recommendations to improve the governance arrangements both of the company and between the company and the council. As a result there are no further areas for consideration at this stage. Members are asked to note however that the council's monitoring officer is currently conducting a review of the governance arrangements for each of the councils wholly owned companies against the Local Partnerships 'Local Authority Company Guidance Document'. The outcome of this review and any resulting recommendations will be presented to cabinet for decision.

5.0 Phase 2

- 5.1 At the Cabinet meeting of 3 September 2020, members approved that Sandway Homes Limited be granted approval to develop a phase 2 business case in respect of three sites. To support this work a grant application for £1.033m was made to the Combined Authority to support development work up to the pre-planning stage in respect of the following two sites:-
- Former Bootle High School site, Browns Lane, Bootle; and
 - Land to the rear of Bentham Drive, Southport
- 5.2 This bid was approved by the Combined Authority and following decision was approved by Full Council in July 2022 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules. This funding will come to the council in the first instance before a back to back legal agreement with the company is agreed. It is anticipated that work on these business cases will be complete during 2023 and this will then be presented to cabinet for decision with the company having commenced recruitment of professional development teams to progress planning on both sites early that would minimise the risk to the council and the company and build on learning from Phase 1. This grant award from the Combined Authority is unique and reflected the confidence in the company's plans.
- 6.0 Conclusion
- 6.1 Progress in delivering the Phase 1 Business case for the company was going according to the plan approved by members in October 2021 at the first 2 sites. However, the current economic conditions with the UK, especially since September 2022 and the delays in progressing the Buckley Hill Lane site have meant that a full review of the business case has been required
- 6.2 Whilst this work is to be expected due to the significant change in the financial environment within which the company operates, both from a housing sector point of view and the ability of the population obtain mortgages at an affordable rate (or a rate previously planned for), the resulting financial risks that have been identified are substantial both for the company and the council.
- 6.3 Most of these factors are outside of the control of the company and the council but it is critical that they are understood and their impact evaluated in order that informed decisions can be made by both parties. As stated progress was in line with business plan, but housing sales have slowed in recent months across the country and this is also the case for the company on the initial 2 sites.
- 6.4 The Phase 1 business case has inevitably been affected both in terms of the value of the dividend that will be received by the council due to a longer programme, and the timing of its financial receipts and within this report both a base case and 'worst' case position are presented and neither can be guaranteed. Due to the uncertainty in the sector and the economy which will inform liquidity, availability of affordable mortgages, the availability of a robust supply chain and level of sales, there are a range of scenario's that will be presented to the company on the forthcoming months that will need to be managed. This will include sales prices on the first 2 sites and the timing of works on the 3rd site and how these are funded

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- 6.5 The company has presented an updated exit strategy to the council and the detail and options in this reflect the current position, however as stated previously this will inevitably change over the coming months. As a result any material changes in this revised base case should be communicated to the council as soon as possible and these will in turn be reported to cabinet.

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Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 1 December 2022
Subject:	Financial Management 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2022/23 – December Update		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Leader of the Council		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To inform **Cabinet** of:

- 1 The current position relating to the 2022/23 revenue budget.
- 2 The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2022/23.
- 3 The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of October 2023:
 - The forecast expenditure to year end.
 - Variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members.
 - Updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects are also presented for approval.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to:

Revenue Budget

- 1) Note the current position relating to the 2022/23 revenue budget.
- 2) Note the actions being taken to offset the budget pressures being faced in 2022/23.
- 3) Recognise the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2022/23 revenue budget and acknowledge that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed, and remedial actions put in place, to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved.
- 4) Note the current position relating to the High Needs budget and that officers are currently reviewing all options available to the Council to mitigate the additional pressure and to make the overall High Needs budget financially sustainable.

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Capital Programme

- 1) Note the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 7.1).
- 2) Note the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 October 2022 of £19.758m (paragraph 7.12); the latest full year forecast is £51.250m (paragraph 7.13).
- 3) Approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.140m for the expansion of Melling Primary School funded by Section 106 contributions (paragraph 7.8).
- 4) Approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.339m for the Brownfield Land Fund – Former Bootle High Site funded by external grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (paragraph 7.10).
- 5) Approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.694m for the Brownfield Land Fund – Bentham’s Way Site funded by external grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (paragraph 7.10).
- 6) Note that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council (paragraphs 7.16-7.18).

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To ensure Cabinet are informed of the current position in relation to the 2022/23 revenue budget.

To provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2022/23 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council’s overall capital strategy.

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

N/A

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The report indicates that for 2022/23 an overspend position of £2.497m is currently forecast and that further mitigating actions will be required to ensure the Council returns to a balanced forecast outturn position.

(B) Capital Costs

The Council's capital budget in 2022/23 is £51.207m. As at the end of October 2022 expenditure of £19.758m has been incurred and a full year outturn of £51.250m is currently forecast.

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): Currently an overspend position of £2.497m is forecast for 2022/23. Therefore, further mitigating actions will be required to ensure the Council returns to a balanced forecast outturn position. However, it should be noted that significant pressure and risk remains, particularly relating to Children's Social Care and energy costs. If these budgets experience further demand and inflationary pressure during the remainder of the year further corresponding savings will need to be identified.</p>								
<p>Legal Implications: None</p>								
<p>Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.</p>								
<p>Climate Emergency Implications:</p> <p>The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a positive impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">N</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a neutral impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a negative impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">N</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">N</td> </tr> </table> <p>The allocations of capital funding outlined in section 7 may be spent on projects that will have a high climate change impact as they could relate to new build, rebuild, refurbishment, retrofit and demolition proposals. Environmental consideration will be taken into account when specific projects are designed and tendered – which will help to mitigate negative impacts.</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	N
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	N							

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Effective Financial Management and the development and delivery of sustainable annual budgets support each theme of the Councils Core Purpose.

<p><u>Protect the most vulnerable:</u> See comment above</p>
<p><u>Facilitate confident and resilient communities:</u> See comment above</p>
<p><u>Commission, broker and provide core services:</u> See comment above</p>

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<u>Place – leadership and influencer:</u> See comment above
<u>Drivers of change and reform:</u> See comment above
<u>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:</u> See comment above
<u>Greater income for social investment:</u> See comment above
<u>Cleaner Greener:</u> See comment above

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources & Customer Services is the author of the report (FD 7022/22)

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD 5222/22).

(B) External Consultations

N/A

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

Contact Officer:	Paul Reilly
Telephone Number:	Tel: 0151 934 4106
Email Address:	paul.reilly@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

The following appendix is attached to this report:

APPENDIX A – Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 On 3 March 2022, Members approved the Budget for the financial year 2022/23. This budget was developed throughout the preceding nine months and took account of all known issues. Within that report, and as with previous years, the inherent financial risk within the budget, especially with respect to Children's Services, was identified. This was further reflected within the reserves' strategy for the Council.
- 1.2 A report to June's Cabinet and Council on 14 July, provided an update for Members of the financial position with the Council for events that had materialised since the budget was approved in March, including the increased cost of providing Children's Services and the increase in energy costs affecting the Council from global price increases. A remedial action plan was presented in the report and approved by Council.
- 1.3 The report to July's Cabinet outlined that those pressures continued across a number of service areas, that an overspend in the region of £2.2m was forecast. The report to September's Cabinet outlined that pressures had increased further, primarily as a result of the impact of the initial offer for the local government pay award and further pressure within Children's Social Care. A further remedial action plan was presented in the report and approved by Council. This took the total value of pressure that had been met in year to in excess of £20m.
- 1.4 This report includes the latest Council budget monitoring report as at October and thereby updates the revenue forecast outturn position for all services, including the pressures previously identified in the previous reports.
- 1.5 The report also outlines the current position regarding key income streams for the Authority, namely Council Tax and Business Rates. Variations against expected receipts in these two areas will also affect the Council's financial position in future years.
- 1.6 The capital section of the report informs Members of the latest estimate of capital expenditure for 2022/23 and forecast expenditure for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The capital budget to date is presented in paragraph 7.1. The capital budget to date is presented in paragraphs 7.2 to 7.5. Paragraphs 7.12 to 7.15 review progress of the capital programme. Finally, paragraphs 7.16 to 7.18 confirm that there are adequate levels of resources available to finance the capital programme.

2. **Revenue Budget 2022/23 – Forecast Outturn Position as at the end of October 2022**

- 2.1 Members are provided with updates of the Council's forecast financial revenue position each month during the financial year from July.
- 2.2 The report to Cabinet in June 2022 highlighted the significant financial pressures being faced by the Council relating to Children's Social Care and energy costs that were unforeseen at the time of setting the budget. A remedial action plan was approved to meet these estimated costs during 2022/23. These are included in the forecast outturn position below.

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- 2.3 The report to Cabinet in July 2022 outlined that pressures had continued in several service areas and a net overspend of £2.197m was forecast. The report to September's Cabinet outlined that pressures had increased further, primarily as a result of the impact of the initial offer for the local government pay award and Children's Social Care. A forecast overspend of £7.743m was reported. A further remedial action plan was approved to meet these estimated costs during 2022/23. At this point the total value of these remedial plans is in excess of £20m for the year. However, it was acknowledged that pressures might increase further, particularly relating to assumptions around high-cost accommodation charges within Children's Social Care which required further financial modelling in order that a further accurate figure could be provided. It was also outlined that if these pressures materialised additional remedial actions would need to be implemented to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position, potentially including the adoption of financial principles used in previous years.
- 2.4 Since September's monitoring, there has been a worsening of the position relating to Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care but a reduction in forecast energy costs as well as savings across a number of other service areas. As at the end of October 2022, the forecast outturn shows a net overspend of **£2.497m**. As with all organisations at this time, the Council is operating in a very challenging financial environment. However, it is vital that the Council achieves a balanced forecast outturn position to ensure its financial sustainability. Proposed actions to meet this forecast overspend are outlined in paragraphs 2.8 to 2.11.
- 2.5 The table below highlights the variations across services that make up the £2.497m forecast overspend:

	Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Variance to September
	£m	£m	£m	
Services				
Strategic Management	4.024	4.033	0.009	-0.002
Adult Social Care	102.090	103.490	1.400	1.400
Children's Social Care	52.069	68.076	16.007	0.457
Communities	17.591	16.803	-0.788	-0.004
Corporate Resources	5.559	5.064	-0.495	0.016
Economic Growth & Housing	6.583	6.527	-0.056	0.061
Education Excellence	11.299	12.929	1.630	0.119
Health & Wellbeing	19.349	18.627	-0.722	-0.261
Highways & Public Protection	11.214	10.878	-0.336	-0.076
Operational In-House Services	15.013	15.651	0.638	-0.025
Energy Costs	0.000	2.100	2.100	-2.650
Additional Pay Award Provision	0.000	4.100	4.100	0.000

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Total Service Net Expenditure	244.791	268.278	23.487	-0.965
Council Wide Budgets	0.076	-0.714	-0.790	-0.319
Levies	35.222	35.222	0.000	0.000
General Government Grants	(72.356)	(72.356)	0.000	0.000
Remedial Action Plan - June	0.000	-12.500	-12.500	0.000
Remedial Action Plan – September	0.000	-7.700	-7.700	0.000
Total Net Expenditure	207.733	210.230		
<u>Forecast Year-End Deficit</u>			<u>2.497</u>	<u>-1.284</u>

2.6 The key areas relating to the outturn position are as follows:

- **Adult Social Care** – Previous forecasts have assumed that the Adult Social Care budget will break-even during 2022/23. However, it was reported in November that there are some significant financial pressures arising due to increases in numbers of clients in nursing and residential as well as overspends in Supported Living and Day Care. Additional pressures including agency and consultancy costs are also being seen. It is currently forecast that there will be a net overspend of £1.400m. Further work is being undertaken to refine the forecasts, including around client numbers and associated income levels, as well as the achievement of savings from the Demand Management programme.
- **Children’s Social Care** – The current forecast shows a potential overspend of £16.007m, a slight increase in the figure reported to Cabinet in November.

As has been regularly reported over the last three years, the cost of accommodation and agency staff is the largest risk to the Council’s budget position. Since the July report a number of additional high-cost placements have had to be entered into which have contributed to the increase in the forecast. Since the budget was set in March there has been an increase in Independent Residential Placements from 69 to 75. In addition, there are now more cases requiring high-cost accommodation and support than previously, and the costs of these have also risen significantly. Some new cases are now initially costing substantial amounts per week.

The Council is currently working on developing a range of options to address the inherent demand and costs of Looked After Children whilst supporting the most vulnerable residents, but this budget remains under pressure and purely from a financial point of view this is likely to continue during this year and into the next financial year.

- **Education Excellence** – The current forecast shows a potential net overspend of £1.630m, with an overspend of £1.769m relating to Home to School Transport forecast. There has been an increase in the number of children being transported,

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especially relating to out of borough placements. In addition, there has been an increase in the cost of providing the transport, particularly from September.

- **Operational In-House Services** The current forecast shows a potential overspend of £0.638m. This relates to a number of areas across the Service, including forecast shortfalls in income on Burials and Cremations, Catering, Green Sefton activities (mainly golf courses) and vehicle maintenance.
- **Energy Costs** – As reported in June, the global increase in energy prices is having a significant impact on the Council's energy and fuel costs. Last month this was estimated at £4.750m. The Council has received updated information from the Council's framework providers on the fees being paid, as well as the potential benefit from the energy price cap for organisations. It is now estimated that the net impact will be £2.100m. This will continue to be closely monitored as more information becomes available, including impact of the energy price cap. It should be noted that energy is a national issue affecting all local authorities. However, the Government have advised that no additional funding will be made available for local government, despite representations made both nationally and locally.
- **Additional Pay Award Provision** – The approved Base Budget included a provision for the 202/23 pay award of 3%. This was in line with most other local authorities who had budgeted for between 2.5% and 3% (and when the Spending Review 2021 was published, the Office for Budget Responsibility was forecasting inflation to be 4% in 2022). On 1 November 2022, trade unions accepted the offer from the National Employers for local government services body of a fixed increase of £1,925 (plus an additional day's annual leave from April 2023). For Sefton, this equates to an increase in the pay bill of about 6.5% or an additional £4.100m above the amount included in the 2022/23 budget. As previously mentioned for energy costs, this is a national issue for local government however Government have made it clear that no additional funding will be made available.

From the above it can be seen that additional pressures of about £23.5m are being experienced and this mainly reflects the pressure in Children's Social Care and that experienced from energy costs and the additional pay award. Although many of the causes of pressures on children services are being seen nationally, there are many which are Sefton specific e.g., increases in numbers of Looked After Children and increases in accommodation and agency costs), however the energy and pay award pressures of £6.2m are impacting on all local authorities. These costs were not reflected in the funding provided as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022/2023 and the Government has made it clear that no additional funding will be made available, meaning the Council needs to make remedial plans to meet these pressures.

Proposed Remedial Actions

- 2.7 As reported in the last two months, given there is still a forecast deficit it is proposed to undertake a number of remedial actions, including the adoption of financial principles used in previous years, to enable a balanced forecast outturn position to ensure its financial sustainability. The proposed / implemented actions are:

Recruitment Freeze

- 2.8 The Council has introduced a recruitment freeze until the end of the financial year. This will apply to all services across the Council with the exception of Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Cleansing, Early Help and Special Educational Needs and Disability. Savings from non-recruitment of current vacant posts are now built into the forecast outturn position. Savings from the non-recruitment to posts as they become vacant across the remainder of the year will be built into future forecasts.

No Further Overspend in any Service

- 2.9 All services must manage their budgets to ensure that their forecast outturn position does not worsen from that currently reported.

No Further Growth Items or Additionality

- 2.10 All services to pause any requests for growth or additionality, even if it could be funded from current forecast underspends or further underspends compared to the current forecast position. This will ensure that any further underspends can be used to contribute to mitigating the Council's overall financial position. This doesn't apply to expenditure that can be fully met from external funding received by the Council.

Non-Essential Expenditure

- 2.11 A full review is currently being undertaken of all budgets across the Council to identify any areas of non-essential spend that could be stopped. This includes reviewing progress on spending in all areas to identify options for where additional expenditure commitments could be paused. This will identify further underspends that can be used to contribute to mitigating the Council's overall financial position. These options / areas of non-essential expenditure identified to date include:

- Health and Wellbeing – the forecast underspend currently reported excludes potential underspends on various contracts agreed for the year. These will be evaluated to assess the potential in-year savings, but it is anticipated this could be in the region of £0.750m.
- Agile / Hybrid Working – the Council set aside resources to fund changes to office accommodation for the move towards Agile / Hybrid working. As the works are nearly complete it is anticipated that some of these resources can be credited back to the revenue budget – current estimate is that £0.300m can be released.
- New Burdens funding – the Council has received new burdens funding relating to activity it has been asked to undertake on the Government's behalf. Whilst some has been required to fund additional costs incurred, some is effectively to fund activity undertaken by existing staff. Therefore, £0.100m is available to offset the existing forecast outturn position.
- Energy Reductions – given the additional pressures relating to energy costs the Council is reviewing various measures to reduce its energy consumption.

Summary 2022/23

- 2.12 After the implementation of the previously agreed remedial actions, an overspend of **£2.497m** is currently forecast. The proposed actions in paragraphs 2.8 to 2.11 will be fully evaluated and their financial impact will be reported to Cabinet in

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January – at this stage it is anticipated that the actions proposed will meet a proportion of the current forecast overspend, with a balance estimated at up to £1.3m remaining to be funded. However, this represents the current position that has been forecast to the year end- in the event that further pressure is experienced, further remedial action will be required. As a result of using the options previously approved in June and September, there is no flexibility left for the use of existing reserves and general balances- as a result this pressure, and any further pressure, will need to be met from within the existing Council budget and delivery monitored carefully and reported to Cabinet.

- 2.13 Should there still be a residual overspend at year end, this will need to be funded by general balances and as part of the budget process for 2023/24 the Council will need increase these back to the previous level taking into account the risks faced by the Council and the assessment of their adequacy as described in the S151 Officer's Robustness report. As stated, further work will be carried out on the remedial plan and a detailed position will be reported in the next cycle.

3. **Medium Term Financial Planning**

- 3.1 The report to Cabinet in June / Council in July highlighted that the pressures in Children's Social Care, as well as increased Energy costs, would have a significant ongoing impact on the Council's budget in 2023/24 and 2024/25. Whilst some of this pressure was considered to be temporary, much would be permanent.
- 3.2 The report also highlighted that there would be additional pressures from 2023/24 as a result of potential increases in the National Living Wage and the impact that this would have on both the Council pay structure as well as external providers, particularly in Adult Social Care. In addition, the current high levels of inflation would lead to significant pressure on many areas of the Council.
- 3.3 The ongoing impact of the current 2022/2023 pay award offer will now also need to be met in 2023/24 given it has been funded from one-off resources in 2022/23. In addition, the Council will need to assess the ongoing impact of the additional pressures reported this month in Children's Social Care as well as other service areas.
- 3.4 Based on all of these issues, the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been refined and updated with the potential scale of the funding gap, in the absence of any further central government funding for this year being clear based on the information in this report. As a result, based on this update, budget proposals will need to be developed for implementation from April 2023 (pending further Central Government advice on future funding levels) in order that the Council maintains financial sustainability. This will not be easy with extremely tight financial constraints being in existence and demand for Council services increasing continually (and councils being asked to carry out more functions); however, it is essential that this planning commences from this point. The annual comprehensive Medium-Term Financial Plan update was presented to Cabinet and Council in November 2022.

4. **Council Tax Income – Update**

- 4.1 Council Tax income is shared between the billing authority (Sefton Council) and the three major precepting authorities (the Fire and Rescue Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Authority – Mayoral Precept) pro-rata to their demand on the Collection Fund. The Council's Budget included a Council Tax Requirement of £150.008m for 2022/23 (including Parish Precepts), which represents 84% of the net Council Tax income of £178.590m.
- 4.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of October 2022 is a surplus of -£2.559m. This variation is primarily due to: -
- The surplus on the fund at the end of 2021/22 being higher than estimated (-£0.517m).
 - Gross Council Tax Charges in 2022/23 being higher than estimated (-£0.364m).
 - Exemptions and Discounts (including a forecasting adjustment) being lower than estimated (-£1.678m).
- 4.3 Due to Collection Fund regulations, the Council Tax surplus will not be transferred to the General Fund in 2022/23 but will be carried forward to be recovered in future years.
- 4.4 A forecast surplus of £2.022m was declared on the 15 January 2022 of which Sefton's share is £1.699m (84.1%). This is the amount that will be recovered from the Collection Fund in 2022/23. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2023/24 and future years.

5. **Business Rates Income – Update**

- 5.1 Since 1 April 2017, Business Rates income has been shared between the Council (99%) and the Fire and Rescue Authority (1%). The Council's Budget included retained Business Rates income of £56.664m for 2022/23, which represents 99% of the net Business Rates income of £57.236m. Business Rates income has historically been very volatile making it difficult to forecast accurately.
- 5.2 The forecast outturn for the Council at the end of October 2022 is a surplus of -£5.293m on Business Rates income. This is due to:
- The deficit on the fund at the end of 2022/23 being lower than estimated (-£0.091m).
 - Increase in the gross charge on rateable properties (-£0.916m).
 - A number of reliefs announced for 2022/23 were assumed in the NNDR1 return with the loss of income as a result of these reliefs covered by Section 31 grant payments. It is now forecast that the value of these reliefs will be less than anticipated (-£5.392m).
 - Adjustments to the Appeals Provision relating to prior years (+£1.106m)

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- 5.3 When taking into account the lower Section 31 grants due on the additional reliefs, a net surplus of £1.151m is forecast.
- 5.4 Due to Collection Fund regulations, a Business Rates deficit will not be transferred to the General Fund in 2022/23 but will be carried forward to be recovered in future years.
- 5.5 A forecast deficit of £18.702m was declared in January 2022. Sefton's share of this is £18.515m. This is the amount that will be distributed from the Collection Fund in 2022/23. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2023/24 and future years.

6. **High Needs Budget**

- 6.1 A report was presented to Cabinet in July with regard to the High Needs budget and the changes that are proposed, details of sufficiency planning, the Council's engagement on the Delivering Better Value Programme and the current high needs deficit and the risk around future central government decision making in respect of this deficit.
- 6.2 In light of these factors, the SEND green paper, the commencement of the Delivering Better Value Programme and the potential changes to accounting treatment of these high needs deficits that exist in a substantial number of councils in England, it was proposed that a monthly financial forecast be presented to Cabinet each month that reflects financial performance against budget and remedial planning - this would be considered alongside the wider quarterly performance report that will be presented to Cabinet and Council.
- 6.3 The High Needs Quarterly Update report presented to Cabinet in July outlined that the overspend on the High Needs budget in 2021/2022 was £4.2m resulting in an accumulated deficit of £12.5m at the end of 2021/22. The report also highlighted that a deficit for 2022/23 was forecast to be between £2.3m - £4.0m.
- 6.4 Given the increase in placements in October 2022, the current forecast overspend will be at least £4.840m, despite the creation of additional in-house places at Sefton schools from September. Between April and September, there was an increase of 52 children placed at Sefton specialist schools / SEND resource units, 172 additional EHCPs (total now 2,437 with 150 in progress) and a further 18 out of borough placements. The position is exacerbated by the additional pressures from the approved pay awards for 2022/23 which are significantly higher than used for the new SEND Funding Model. Initial calculations show that the current pay awards have added at least an additional £0.900m cost pressure across Specialist SEND placements and although no additional funding has been allocated to schools in 2022/23 funding formula to reflect this increase it is something that will need to be addressed in 2023/24. There is also an additional cost pressure on non-specialist provision schools due to changes in non-teaching pay awards. Any additional pay uplift costs should be met from the High Needs budget as schools are only required to make a fixed contribution per qualifying pupil however currently no increased funding allocations have been provided to schools and this is currently an additional cost pressure to school budgets. The accumulative deficit position on the High Needs budget is estimated to be of £17.24m based on the current SEND numbers but this can change daily.

- 6.5 In light of the current position officers are reviewing all options available to the Council to mitigate this additional pressure during the current year and to reduce the impact on the High Needs deficit. This will include accelerating the proposals reported to members in the July Cabinet paper and determining new proposals to improve sufficiency. In addition, discussions as part of the Council's participation in the Delivering Better Value Programme will be assessed as to their impact on the forecast deficit position. An update will be provided to Cabinet as a separate report in January 2023.
- 6.6 In August the Council responded to central government's call for evidence on how High Needs deficits should be considered going forward, especially in respect of the potential for the ringfence of this deficit to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to come to an end from April 2023. Such a decision obviously presents significant financial risk to all councils if this moves from being a DSG issue to one that could impact on a council's General Fund. The response was shared with relevant Cabinet Members – at the current time there has been no announcement by the Government on this issue.

7. Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

Capital Budget

- 7.1 The Capital Budget and profile of expenditure for the three years 2022/23 to 2024/25 is as follows:

2022/23	£51.207m
2023/24	£42.512m
2024/25	£44.629m

- 7.2 The updates listed below have been made to the Capital Programme budget since the previous budget reported to Cabinet in November:

- **Adult Social Care** – the following projects have been reviewed and rephased into 2023/24:
 - Care Home Improvements £0.350m – it has been identified that projects originally highlighted for progression have been delayed due to the fact that there has been a heavy focus on preparing care homes in readiness for the roll out for the Digital Transformation Programme which has taken priority on a national level. The allocated £0.350m from the DFG Capital allocation has therefore been rolled over into 2023/24 when focussed planning can resume.
 - Retail Model within Health and Wellbeing Hubs £0.450m – this project is complex and detailed planning is now underway. Hub sustainability and revenue considerations are still significant and different models are being considered, with in depth consultation and analysis currently being undertaken. Therefore, the timeframe for 2022/23 spend has been revised and the allocation will be moved to 2023/24.

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- **Corporate Resources:**

- Green Homes Grant Local Delivery Scheme (LAD2) - £1m has been added to the capital programme following approval by Cabinet in November.

- **Education Excellence:**

- Grange Rewiring - £0.248m has been rephased to 2023/24 as the remaining works are to be retendered to commence summer 2023.
- Lydiate Primary Rewiring – £0.080m has been phased from 2023/24 to 2022/23 due to the expenditure of provisional sums and additional items of work being carried out earlier in the programme of works than originally envisaged.
- Formby High Conversion of Caretaker’s House – £0.190m has been rephased to 2023/24 as the scheme is still currently in the feasibility stage.

- **Operational In-House Services:**

- Ainsdale Coastal Gateway – £0.300m has been rephased to 2023/24. The full funding for the scheme has not yet been confirmed and as such it is unlikely that all the works will be completed in this year.

7.3 In addition to the above capital budgets the following capital grant allocations have been approved by Cabinet and Council for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2022/23 and 2023/24:

Capital Grant	2022/23 £	2023/24 £
Education Excellence		
Schools Condition Allocation	2,426,403	-
High Needs Provision Capital Allocation	2,062,067	2,908,641
Basic Needs Funding	-	878,823
TOTAL	4,488,470	3,787,464

7.4 Authority has been delegated to Cabinet Member – Education to assign funding to individual capital schemes for the school’s block allocations reported above. A list of schemes for the 2022/23 Schools Condition Allocation (SCA) has now been approved by Cabinet Member. The list below provides further detail of the approved schemes:

Location	Scope of Work	Estimated Budget Requirement £
General Planned Maintenance	General Maintenance	250,000
Condition Surveys	School condition surveys	50,000
Bedford CP	Replace flooring to Assembly hall	23,000
Birkdale CP	Roof repairs	60,000
Birkdale CP	Playground resurface/drainage	50,000
Crosby High	Install additional drainage	25,000
Daleacre	Supply power to gates	18,000

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Farnborough Road Juniors	Roof repairs	50,000
Forefield Infants	Land drains to field, high level windows, repoint brickwork	20,000
Freshfield Primary	Drainage issue/replace	20,000
Green Park	Fire compartmentation and tarmac to courtyard areas	20,000
Hatton Hill CP	Access ramps	20,000
Hatton Hill CP	Remaining flat roof	24,000
Hatton Hill CP	Drains Survey/Replacement	10,000
Hudson CP	Remaining flat roof	140,000
Hudson CP	Additional Drainage	15,000
Linacre Primary	Play area canopy	40,000
Lydiate CP	Remaining roof	115,000
Marshside CP	Playground repairs phase 2	36,000
Marshside CP	Upgrade existing Toilets and add new toilet block	32,000
Melling CP	Refurbish Toilets	10,000
Meols Cop HS	Piled foundations to link corridor	36,000
Merefield	Re-roof pitched roof flat roof and remove redundant AC units	120,000
Merefield	Resurface playground	40,000
Netherton Moss	Upgrade fire doors	25,000
Rowan Park	Replace roof	40,000
Rowan High	Replace flat roof	200,000
Redgate CP	Replace boundary fence	30,000
Redgate CP	Remaining repointing & Ramps	15,000
Summerhill CO	Expansion and Improvement Work linked with new development	250,000
St Philips	Re-roof flat roof including fascia's and chimney	62,000
Valewood CP	Playground, access road and drainage	60,000
Valewood CP	Ceilings and Replacement LEDs - additional rooms	15,000
Waterloo CP	Improve Drainage/provide level playing area extend canopy	50,000
Woodland CP	Structural supports	15,000
Kingsmeadow	Phase 2 rewire	160,000
The Grange	Phase 2 rewire	130,000
St Lukes Formby	Boiler replacement	100,000
Birkdale CP	Replace boiler in small boiler room	50,000
	Total (SCA) allocation	2,426,000

7.5 The list of schemes for the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation is being developed and will be presented to Cabinet Member for approval. A full list of the approved capital schemes will be presented in future reports to Cabinet.

Melling Primary School Expansion

7.6 The Sefton Local Plan was adopted in April 2017. This allocated housing land for over 11,000 new homes to 2030. During the preparation of the Local Plan, officers in the education and planning departments worked closely to ensure that the implications of the new housing on schools was explored and policies were in place to mitigate any impact. Melling village includes two housing allocations in the Local Plan that combined could accommodate over 300 homes.

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- 7.7 In order to increase primary education capacity in Melling Village as soon as possible, it was necessary to provide additional space that could be flexibly used. This would provide the space if there were a need to create school places in future years. A scheme was therefore approved in March 2021, funded by Section 106 contributions, to expand Melling Primary at a cost of £408,796.
- 7.8 Following further development of the scheme and successful tendering of works, the total costs increased (due to material shortages and industry related inflation, post Covid) to £548,936 and further funding will therefore be required to fully finance the project. Additional Section 106 contributions from planning applications in the wider Sefton East parishes area have now been agreed and Cabinet is therefore requested to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £140,140 for the expansion at Melling Primary.

Brownfield Fund for Housing Development

- 7.9 As part of the March 2020 Budget the Government launched a £400m Brownfield Land Fund (BLF) to be distributed to Combined Authority areas. The Liverpool City Region has received £45m which has been allocated over a five-year period.
- 7.10 The Council, through its Housing Development Company Sandway Homes Limited, has bid for BLF grant to help bring forward housing developments at two sites, one at the former site of Bootle High School, Netherton and one at Bentham's Way, Southport. This amounts to £338,570 and £693,711 respectively. Discussions are ongoing but subject to confirmation, and following receipt by the Council, these amounts will be transferred to Sandway Homes Limited to complete the works in accordance with the grant funding agreement. The Council is therefore the accountable body and supplementary capital estimates of £338,570 and £693,711 are required to support each scheme, which will be fully funded by the external grant (subject to final confirmation).
- 7.11 Within the grant agreement there is the provision for clawback should the site not progress as intended. In the unlikely event that the Council decided to cease development of this element of the programme then the Council would be liable for the clawback of funds received.

Budget Monitoring Position to October 2022

- 7.12 The current position of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of October 2022 is shown in the table below. It should be noted that budgets are profiled dependent upon the timing of when works are to be carried out and the anticipated spend over the financial year. The budget to date in the table below reflects the profiles of each individual scheme.

Service Area	Budget to Oct-22	Actual Expenditure to Oct-22	Variance to Oct-22
	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	2.044	1.862	-0.183
Children's Social Care	0.131	0.145	0.014

Communities	0.537	0.596	0.059
Corporate Resources	3.492	3.520	0.028
Economic Growth & Housing	5.238	5.155	-0.083
Education Excellence	2.153	2.318	0.165
Highways & Public Protection	5.208	5.394	0.187
In House Operational Services	0.823	0.769	-0.054
Total Programme	19.625	19.758	0.133

Capital Programme Forecast Outturn 2022/23

7.13 The current forecast of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of 2022/23 and the profile of budgets for future years is shown in the table below:

Service Area	Full Year Budget 2022/23	Forecast Out-turn	Variance to Budget	Full Year Budget 2023/24	Full Year Budget 2024/25
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	6.075	6.120	0.045	3.784	1.610
Children's Social Care	0.450	0.450	-	0.100	-
Communities	1.009	1.045	0.036	0.290	-
Corporate Resources	7.145	7.073	-0.072	1.008	-
Economic Growth & Housing	10.750	10.886	0.135	21.494	38.023
Education Excellence	3.783	3.682	-0.101	7.763	0.007
Highways & Public Protection	18.356	18.356	-	4.874	3.663
In House Operational Services	3.639	3.639	-	3.200	1.326
Total Programme	51.207	51.250	0.043	42.512	44.629

A full list of the capital programme by capital scheme is at **appendix A**.

7.14 The current 2022/23 budgeted spend is £51.207m with a budgeted spend to October of £19.625m. The full year budget includes exceptional items such as £2.033m for vehicle replacement, £5.439m for Green Homes and Sustainable Warmth schemes, £9.792m for Growth and Strategic Investment projects, previously approved amounts for essential repairs and maintenance (£1.916m) and a significant scheme to upgrade to LED Street Lighting (£3.887m).

7.15 The current perception is that the above projects could be fully delivered in 2022/23 and budget managers have confirmed the current forecast out-turn position shown above. In a typical year however, the capital programme spends in the region of £25m. Given this typical annual level of spend it is likely that reprofiling of spend into 2023/24 will occur as the year progresses.

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Programme Funding

7.16 The table below shows how the capital programme will be funding in 2022/23:

Source	£m
Grants	38.824
Prudential Borrowing	7.229
Capital Receipts	2.300
Contributions (incl. Section 106)	2.855
Total Programme Funding	51.207

7.17 The programme is reviewed on an ongoing basis to confirm the capital resources required to finance capital expenditure are in place, the future years programme is fully funded, and the level of prudential borrowing remains affordable.

7.18 The Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services will continue to manage the financing of the programme to ensure the final capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council.

APPENDIX A – Capital Programme 2022/22 to 2024/25

Capital Project	Budget		
	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
Adult Social Care			
Digitising Social Care	50,000	405,000	-
Core DFG Programme	2,000,000	-	-
Occupational Therapy Support for DFGs	603,774	-	-
ICT Development & Transformation	668,556	260,000	-
Care Home Improvements	437,559	550,000	-
Changing Places	92,507	-	-
Retail Model within Health and Wellbeing Hubs	-	450,000	-
Extra Care Housing	-	750,000	750,000
Short Term Assessment Unit	860,000	860,000	860,000
New Directions Programme	195,000	195,000	-
Technology Enabled Care	270,806	163,750	-
Sefton Carers Centre	30,000	-	-
Community Equipment Provision	300,000	-	-
Double to Single Handed Care Equipment	150,000	-	-
Community Equipment Stores	250,000	100,000	-
Programme Support	166,625	50,000	-
Children's Social Care			
Support for Fostering Placements	100,000	100,000	-
Community Equipment – Children's	250,000	-	-
Springbrook Refurbishment	100,000	-	-
Communities			
Dunes Splashworld – Essential Repairs	463,133	101,874	-
Dunes Splashworld – Health and Safety Works	270,000	-	-
Libraries - Centres of Excellence	90,000	188,019	-
Section 106 Funded Projects	185,990	-	-
Corporate Resources			
Council Wide Essential Maintenance	1,051,028	1,007,707	-
STCC Essential Maintenance	54,650	-	-
Victoria Baths Essential Works	76,960	-	-
Bootle & Southport Town Hall Retrofit Energy Saving	29,950	-	-
Green Homes Grant Sustainable Warmth Schemes	5,438,882	-	-
ICT Transformation	493,281	-	-
Economic Growth & Housing			
Strategic Acquisitions - Bootle	17,620	-	-
Cambridge Road Centre Development	53,930	-	-
Crosby Lakeside Development	1,715,913	-	-
Town Centre Commission Bootle Canal Side	240,263	-	-
Bootle Canal Side Business Plan	556,862		
Southport Market Redevelopment	47,335	-	-
Strategic Acquisitions - Ainsdale	90,600	836,423	-
Marine Lake Events Centre	6,369,392	13,268,773	37,948,199

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	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
Enterprise Arcade	660,000	834,000	-
Transformations De Southport	-	2,500,000	-
Strand Business Plan	40,000	375,000	75,000
Strand Repurposing Project	-	680,000	-
Housing Investment	33,960	-	-
Brownfield Fund for Housing Development	537,790	-	-
Social Housing Allocations Scheme	65,000	-	-
Southport Pier	321,822	3,000,000	-
Education Excellence			
Schools Programme	3,223,085	7,572,638	7,055
Planned Maintenance	179,902	-	-
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	380,083	190,000	-
Highways and Public Protection			
Accessibility	989,402	-	-
Healthy Lifestyles	790,000	-	-
Road Safety	120,000	-	-
A565 Route Management Strategy	2,349,041	-	-
A59 Route Management Strategy	839,000	-	-
Strategic Planning	1,510,634	-	-
Traffic Management & Parking	55,000	-	-
Highway Maintenance	5,600,454	-	-
Bridges & Structures	517,921	-	-
Drainage	337,340	-	-
Street Lighting Maintenance	327,400	-	-
LED Street Lighting Upgrade	3,886,920	3,605,580	3,662,630
Urban Traffic Control	902,830	-	-
Transport Growth Schemes	-	1,268,620	-
Completing Schemes / Retentions	130,000	-	-
In House Operational Services			
Burials & Cremation Service – Vehicles & Equipment	47,713	-	-
Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management	908,473	2,252,701	1,306,000
Parks Schemes	101,671	102,989	-
Tree Planting Programme	134,505	19,769	19,769
Golf Driving Range Developments	9,988	280,280	-
Ainsdale Coastal Gateway	27,712	300,000	-
Crosby Marine Lake Improvements – Phase 1	30,339	-	-
Green Sefton – Plant & Machinery	-	131,152	-
Vehicle Replacement Programme	2,033,329	113,000	-
Wheeled Bins	345,000	-	-
TOTAL PROGRAMME	51,206,930	42,512,275	44,628,653

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Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date of Meeting:	1 December 2022 19 January 2023
Subject:	Programme of Meetings – 2023/24 Municipal Year		
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	Wards Affected:	All
Cabinet Portfolio:	Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
Is this a Key Decision:	No	Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To seek approval of a Programme of Meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Recommendation:

Cabinet

That the Programme of Meetings for the Cabinet, Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, Safer Sefton Together and the Health and Wellbeing Board for 2023/24 as set out in Annexes A and D of the report be approved.

Council

- (1) the Programme of Meetings for the Council, Member Briefing Sessions; Regulatory Committees; and Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2023/24 as set out in Annexes B and C of the report be approved; and
- (2) the Programme of Meetings for the Cabinet, Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, Safer Sefton Together and the Health and Wellbeing Board for 2023/24 as set out in Annexes A and D of the report be noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation:

To enable the business of the Council and its various Committees/bodies to be conducted during the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None. The Council is required to produce a programme of meetings.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs – None

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(B) Capital Costs – None

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): None	
Legal Implications: None	
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
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Not applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Not applicable
Commission, broker and provide core services: Not applicable
Place – leadership and influencer: The Programme of Meetings for 2023/24 will be published on the Council's website for the benefit of the residents of Sefton and the wider general public. This will raise awareness of the Council's political management system and allow the opportunity for the public to engage in the Council's democratic processes.
Drivers of change and reform: Not applicable
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

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD7002/22) has been consulted and notes there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5202/22) is the author of this report.

Chief Executive
Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services
Assistant Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services (Strategic Support)
Assistant Director of People (Communities)
Director of Public Health / Head of Health & Wellbeing
Chief Planning Officer

(B) External Consultations

Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner

Implementation Date for the Decision

In respect of the Programme of Meetings for the Cabinet, Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, Safer Sefton Together and the Health and Wellbeing Board the implementation date will be upon the expiry of the call-in period of the minutes of the Cabinet meeting.

In respect of the Programme of Meetings for the Council, Member Briefing Sessions; Regulatory Committees; and Overview and Scrutiny Committees immediately following the Council meeting.

Contact Officer:	Paul Fraser
Telephone Number:	0151 934 2068
Email Address:	paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

Annex A - Programme of Meetings for the Cabinet in 2023/24
Annex B - Programme of Meetings for the Council, Members' Briefing Sessions and Regulatory Committees in 2023/24
Annex C - Programme of Meetings for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in 2023/24
Annex D - Programme of Meetings for the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, Sefton Safer Communities Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board in 2023/24
Calendar of meetings 2023/24

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

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1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The Council is required to establish a programme of meetings for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.
- 1.2 Annexes are attached to the report setting out the suggested programme.
- 1.3 Similar to the arrangements put in place last year once the programme of meetings have been approved, an “in-house” diary will be produced for Members of the Council.

2. Programme of Meetings 2023/24

- 2.1 The key principles of the Programme of Meetings are as follows:
 - Five Ordinary Council Meetings to be held every 8 weeks on a Thursday commencing at 6.30 p.m. plus the Budget Council Meeting to be held on 29 February 2024.
 - Council will not meet on the same day as Cabinet.
 - Members’ Briefing Sessions to be held at 5.00 p.m. prior to the five Ordinary Council Meetings.
 - No meetings will be held:
 - In the period between Christmas and New Year (December 2023/January 2024)
 - In April 2024 except for the meetings of the Planning Committee, Cabinet and Council.
 - As far as possible no meetings will be held during the school half term holiday weeks.
 - The programme of meetings indicates that all meetings will alternate between Bootle and Southport Town Halls.
 - Cabinet Meetings to be held on a Thursday at 10.00 a.m. The first meeting to be held on 25 May 2023.
 - Planning Committee to meet every four weeks on a Wednesday.
 - Planning Visiting Panel to meet 2 days prior to each meeting of the Planning Committee to undertake site visits as agreed by the Committee.
 - Each of the 4 Overview and Scrutiny Committees to meet bi-monthly, 5 times during the year commencing at 6.30 p.m. – the main Overview and Scrutiny work will be done by Working Groups established on an ad hoc basis.
 - Special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) to be held on 6 February 2024 to scrutinise the Cabinet budget process.
 - Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to meet 5 times per year, commencing at 4.30 p.m.
 - Licensing and Regulatory Committee to meet quarterly on a Monday commencing at 6.30 p.m.
 - Meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee to be convened as and when required.
 - Audit and Governance Committee to meet every quarter (4 meetings per year) on a Wednesday commencing at 3.00 p.m. in order to meet

statutory requirements etc. A special meeting of the Committee will be scheduled to be held on 27 September 2023 to approve the audited Statement of Accounts

- Pay and Grading Committee to be convened as and when required.
- Health and Wellbeing Board to meet 4 times per year.
- The dates for the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, which are not public meetings are included in the Corporate Calendar.

3. Calendar of Meetings

- 3.1 A copy of the Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24 and associated annexes are attached.

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ANNEX A
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SEFTON
PROGRAMME OF CABINET MEETINGS - 2023/2024

Meeting	Day	Time	Venue	2023								2024					
				May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	
CABINET	Thur.	10.00 a.m.	B	25		27				5		7		1	7		23
			S		22				7		2		4	→8		4	

→ Budget Meeting

Key to Venues:

B - Bootle Town Hall

S - Southport Town Hall

ANNEX B
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SEFTON
PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL, MEMBERS' BRIEFING SESSIONS AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETC. - 2023/2024

Meeting	Day	Time	Venue	2023								2024						
				May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	
COUNCIL	Thur.	6.30 p.m.	B	18←					14				18	29→			14↓ Tue	
			S	16↑			13				16					18	16°	
MEMBERS' BRIEFING SESSIONS Prior to each Ordinary Council Meeting. Confirmation that Briefing Sessions will be held will be notified to Members nearer the time	Thur.	5.00 p.m.	B					14				18						
			S			13				16					18			
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE	Wed.	3.00 p.m.	B		21				27			13						
			S						6						20			
EVALUATIONS (FOR PERSONNEL RESOURCES) - as and when required	Thur.	-																
LICENSING AND REGULATORY COMMITTEE	Mon.	6.30 p.m.	B		12							8						
			S						4						11			
LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE - as and when required			B															
			S															
PLANNING COMMITTEE	Wed.	6.30 p.m.	B	↓24	28					18		13		7		10	↓22	
			S	31		26			20		15		17		13			
PLANNING VISITING PANEL	Mon	10.00 a.m.	B	30	26	24		18	16	13	11	15	5	11	8			
PAY AND GRADING COMMITTEE - as and when required																		

↑ Annual Meeting 2023/24 - commences at 6.00 p.m. (Tuesday) (Venue to be determined)
 ← Adjourned Annual Meeting - Appointment of Committees etc. for 2023/24
 → Budget Meeting
 †Mandatory Planning Committee

↓ Annual Meeting 2024/2025 - commences at 6.00 p.m. (Tuesday) (Venue to be determined)
 ° Adjourned Annual Meeting - Appointment of Committees etc. for 2024/2025

ANNEX C
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SEFTON
PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES - 2023/2024
(Tuesday)

Meeting	Venue	2023								2024				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Adult Social Care) (6.30 p.m.) (Tue)	B		20				17					20		
	S					5				2				
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) (Tue) (6.30 p.m.)	B					12				9	*6			
	S		13				31				27			
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Regeneration and Skills) (6.30 p.m.) (Tue)	B		27						7			5		
	S					19				16				
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Children's Services Safeguarding) (6.30 p.m.) (Tue)	B			4					14			12		
	S					26				23				
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Management Board) (4.30 p.m.) (Tue)	Remote Meetings		20			12			7		9		12	

* Special meeting to consider Budget proposals.

ANNEX D
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF SEFTON
PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS- 2023/2024

Meeting	Day	Time	Venue	2023								2024				
				May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL ^	Fri	10.00 a.m.	B	26		14		8		10		19		8		
			S													
SAFER SEFTON TOGETHER	Thu	10.00 a.m.	B		8			14		30				14		
			S													
HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD	Wed.	2.00 p.m.	B		7			13			6			6		
			S													

Meetings video conferenced to Southport Town Hall

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SEFTON COUNCIL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023/24

MAY 2023		
MON	1	MAY BANK HOLIDAY
TUE	2	
WED	3	
THU	4	COUNCIL AND PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS
FRI	5	
SAT	6	
SUN	7	
MON	8	KING'S CORONATION BANK HOLIDAY
TUE	9	
WED	10	
THU	11	
FRI	12	
SAT	13	
SUN	14	
MON	15	
TUE	16	6.00 ANNUAL COUNCIL (VENUE TO BE DETERMINED)
WED	17	
THU	18	6.30 ADJOURNED ANNUAL COUNCIL (B)
FRI	19	
SAT	20	
SUN	21	
MON	22	
TUE	23	
WED	24	6.30 MANDATORY PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING SESSION (B)
THU	25	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	26	10.00 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL (B)
SAT	27	
SUN	28	
MON	29	SPRING BANK HOLIDAY SCHOOL HALF-TERM HOLIDAY WEEK
TUE	30	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
WED	31	6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (S)
MAY 2023		

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JUNE 2023		
THU	1	
FRI	2	
SAT	3	
SUN	4	
MON	5	
TUE	6	
WED	7	2.00 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (B)
THU	8	10.00 SAFER SEFTON TOGETHER (B)
FRI	9	
SAT	10	
SUN	11	
MON	12	6.30 LICENSING AND REGULATORY (B)
TUE	13	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) (S)
WED	14	
THU	15	
FRI	16	
SAT	17	
SUN	18	
MON	19	
TUE	20	4.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (RM) 6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ADULT SOCIAL CARE) (B)
WED	21	3.00 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE (B)
THU	22	10.00 CABINET (S)
FRI	23	
SAT	24	
SUN	25	
MON	26	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	27	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) (B)
WED	28	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (B) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (B)
THU	29	
FRI	30	
JUNE 2023		

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JULY 2023		
SAT	1	
SUN	2	
MON	3	
TUE	4	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) (B)
WED	5	
THU	6	
FRI	7	
SAT	8	
SUN	9	
MON	10	
TUE	11	
WED	12	
THU	13	5.00 MEMBERS' BRIEFING – TBC (S) 6.30 COUNCIL (S)
FRI	14	10.00 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL (B)
SAT	15	
SUN	16	
MON	17	
TUE	18	
WED	19	
THU	20	
FRI	21	
SAT	22	
SUN	23	
MON	24	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	25	
WED	26	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (S) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (S)
THU	27	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	28	
SAT	29	
SUN	30	
MON	31	
JULY 2023		

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AUGUST 2023		
TUE	1	
WED	2	
THU	3	
FRI	4	
SAT	5	
SUN	6	
MON	7	
TUE	8	
WED	9	
THU	10	
FRI	11	
SAT	12	
SUN	13	
MON	14	
TUE	15	
WED	16	
THU	17	
FRI	18	
SAT	19	
SUN	20	
MON	21	
TUE	22	
WED	23	
THU	24	
FRI	25	
SAT	26	
SUN	27	
MON	28	SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY
TUE	29	
WED	30	
THU	31	
AUGUST 2023		

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SEPTEMBER 2023		
FRI	1	
SAT	2	
SUN	3	
MON	4	6.30 LICENSING AND REGULATORY (S)
TUE	5	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ADULT SOCIAL CARE) (S)
WED	6	3.00 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE (S)
THU	7	10.00 CABINET (S)
FRI	8	10.00 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL (B)
SAT	9	
SUN	10	
MON	11	
TUE	12	4.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (RM) 6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) (B)
WED	13	2.00 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (B)
THU	14	10.00 SAFER SEFTON TOGETHER (B) 5.00 MEMBERS' BRIEFING - TBC (B) 6.30 COUNCIL (B)
FRI	15	
SAT	16	
SUN	17	
MON	18	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	19	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) (S)
WED	20	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (S) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (S)
THU	21	
FRI	22	
SAT	23	
SUN	24	
MON	25	
TUE	26	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) (S)
WED	27	3.00 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE (B) (SPECIAL MEETING FOR APPROVAL OF 2022/23 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS)
THU	28	
FRI	29	
SAT	30	
SEPTEMBER 2023		

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OCTOBER 2023		
SUN	1	
MON	2	
TUE	3	
WED	4	
THU	5	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	6	
SAT	7	
SUN	8	
MON	9	
TUE	10	
WED	11	
THU	12	
FRI	13	
SAT	14	
SUN	15	
MON	16	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	17	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ADULT SOCIAL CARE) (B)
WED	18	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (B) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (B)
THU	19	
FRI	20	
SAT	21	
SUN	22	
MON	23	SCHOOL HALF-TERM HOLIDAY WEEK
TUE	24	
WED	25	
THU	26	
FRI	27	
SAT	28	
SUN	29	
MON	30	
TUE	31	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) (S)

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NOVEMBER 2023		
WED	1	
THU	2	10.00 CABINET (S)
FRI	3	
SAT	4	
SUN	5	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
MON	6	
TUE	7	4.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (RM) 6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) (B)
WED	8	
THU	9	
FRI	10	10.00 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL (B)
SAT	11	
SUN	12	
MON	13	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	14	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) (B)
WED	15	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (S) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (S)
THU	16	5.00 MEMBERS' BRIEFING- TBC (S) 6.30 COUNCIL (S)
FRI	17	
SAT	18	
SUN	19	
MON	20	
TUE	21	
WED	22	
THU	23	
FRI	24	
SAT	25	
SUN	26	
MON	27	
TUE	28	
WED	29	
THU	30	10.00 SAFER SEFTON TOGETHER (B)
NOVEMBER 2023		

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DECEMBER 2023		
FRI	1	
SAT	2	
SUN	3	
MON	4	
TUE	5	
WED	6	2.00 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (B)
THU	7	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	8	
SAT	9	
SUN	10	
MON	11	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	12	
WED	13	3.00 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE (B) 5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (B) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (B)
THU	14	
FRI	15	
SAT	16	
SUN	17	
MON	18	
TUE	19	
WED	20	
THU	21	
FRI	22	SCHOOL CHRISTMAS BREAK COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED
SAT	23	
SUN	24	
MON	25	CHRISTMAS DAY
TUE	26	BOXING DAY
WED	27	COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED
THU	28	COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED
FRI	29	COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED
SAT	30	
SUN	31	
DECEMBER 2023		

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JANUARY 2024		
MON	1	NEW YEAR'S DAY
TUE	2	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ADULT SOCIAL CARE) (S)
WED	3	
THU	4	10.00 CABINET (S)
FRI	5	
SAT	6	
SUN	7	
MON	8	6.30 LICENSING AND REGULATORY (B)
TUE	9	4.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (RM) 6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) (B)
WED	10	
THU	11	
FRI	12	
SAT	13	
SUN	14	
MON	15	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	16	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) (S)
WED	17	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (S) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (S)
THU	18	5.00 MEMBERS' BRIEFING – TBC (B) 6.30 COUNCIL (B)
FRI	19	10.00 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL (B)
SAT	20	
SUN	21	
MON	22	
TUE	23	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) (S)
WED	24	
THU	25	
FRI	26	
SAT	27	
SUN	28	
MON	29	
TUE	30	
WED	31	
JANUARY 2024		

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FEBRUARY 2024		
THU	1	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	2	
SAT	3	
SUN	4	
MON	5	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	6	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) BUDGET MEETING (B)
WED	7	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (B) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (B)
THU	8	10.00 CABINET (BUDGET) (S)
FRI	9	
SAT	10	
SUN	11	
MON	12	SCHOOL HALF-TERM HOLIDAY WEEK
TUE	13	
WED	14	
THU	15	
FRI	16	
SAT	17	
SUN	18	
MON	19	
TUE	20	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ADULT SOCIAL CARE) (B)
WED	21	
THU	22	
FRI	23	
SAT	24	
SUN	25	
MON	26	
TUE	27	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES) (S)
WED	28	
THU	29	6.30 BUDGET COUNCIL (B)
FEBRUARY 2024		

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MARCH 2024		
FRI	1	
SAT	2	
SUN	3	
MON	4	
TUE	5	6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (REGENERATION AND SKILLS) (B)
WED	6	2.00 HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD (B)
THU	7	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	8	10.00 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PANEL (B)
SAT	9	
SUN	10	
MON	11	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B) 6.30 LICENSING AND REGULATORY (S)
TUE	12	4.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (RM) 6.30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING) (B)
WED	13	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (S) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (S)
THU	14	10.00 SAFER SEFTON TOGETHER (B)
FRI	15	
SAT	16	
SUN	17	
MON	18	
TUE	19	
WED	20	3.00 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE (S)
THU	21	
FRI	22	
SAT	23	
SUN	24	
MON	25	
TUE	26	
WED	27	
THUR	28	
FRI	29	GOOD FRIDAY
SAT	30	
SUN	31	EASTER SUNDAY
MARCH 2024		

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APRIL 2024		
MON	1	EASTER MONDAY SCHOOL SPRING HOLIDAY
TUE	2	
WED	3	
THU	4	10.00 CABINET (S)
FRI	5	
SAT	6	
SUN	7	
MON	8	10.00 PLANNING VISITING PANEL (B)
TUE	9	
WED	10	5.00 PLANNING TRAINING SESSION (B) 6.30 PLANNING COMMITTEE (B)
THU	11	
FRI	12	
SAT	13	
SUN	14	
MON	15	
TUE	16	
WED	17	
THU	18	5.00 MEMBERS' BRIEFING - TBC (S) 6.30 COUNCIL (S)
FRI	19	
SAT	20	
SUN	21	
MON	22	
TUE	23	
WED	24	
THU	25	
FRI	26	
SAT	27	
SUN	28	
MON	29	
TUE	30	
APRIL 2024		

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MAY 2024		
WED	1	
THU	2	COUNCIL, MERSEYSIDE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER AND LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY MAYORAL ELECTIONS
FRI	3	
SAT	4	
SUN	5	
MON	6	MAY BANK HOLIDAY
TUE	7	
WED	8	
THU	9	
FRI	10	
SAT	11	
SUN	12	
MON	13	
TUE	14	6.00 ANNUAL COUNCIL (VENUE TO BE DETERMINED)
WED	15	
THU	16	6.30 ADJOURNED ANNUAL COUNCIL (S)
FRI	17	
SAT	18	
SUN	19	
MON	20	
TUE	21	
WED	22	6.30 MANDATORY PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING SESSION (B)
THU	23	10.00 CABINET (B)
FRI	24	
SAT	25	
SUN	26	
MON	27	SPRING BANK HOLIDAY SCHOOL HALF-TERM HOLIDAY WEEK
TUE	28	
WED	29	
THU	30	
FRI	31	
MAY 2024		

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Report to:	Member Development Steering Group	Date of Meeting:	1 November 2022
	Cabinet		1 December 2022
	Council		19 January 2023
Subject:	Member Development in Sefton - The Next Steps		
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 outlines the purpose and benefits of the North-West Employers Member Development Charter and the various steps to be taken in the process for achieving accreditation.

Recommendations:

Member Development Steering Group

- (1) That the Cabinet be requested to submit a recommendation to the Council that approval be given for the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive signing the Declaration of Commitment to the principles included in the North-West Member Development Charter and its intention to achieve Level 1 Member Development Charter Status, as shown at Appendix 1 to the report.
- (2) That the Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) undertake a self-assessment exercise at its next meeting using the North-West Employers Self-Assessment Framework, identifying what the Council already has in place in supporting Member Development and what it needs to develop it further.
- (3) That a draft Members Learning and Development Needs questionnaire and revised elected member roles and person specifications be submitted to the next Member Development Steering Group meeting for consideration prior to its circulation to all Members of the Council.
- (4) That the results of the Members questionnaire exercise and the self-

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assessment exercise be utilised by Officers in the production of the draft Members Handbook 2023/24, Elected Member Learning and Development Plan 2023/24 and Member Learning and Development Strategy for consideration by the MDSG and approval by full Council on 20 April 2023.

Cabinet

- (1) That the Cabinet note the content of the report.
- (2) That the Council be requested to give approval for the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive signing the Declaration of Commitment to the principles included in the North-West Member Development Charter and its intention to achieve Level 1 Member Development Charter Status, as shown at Appendix 1 to the report.

Council

- (1) That the Council note the content of the report.
- (2) That approval be given for the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive signing the Declaration of Commitment to the principles included in the North-West Member Development Charter and its intention to achieve Level 1 Member Development Charter Status, as shown at Appendix 1 to the report.

Reasons for the Recommendations:

The NWMDC will provide an established framework enable the Council to undertake a self-assessment and review good practice in supporting and developing Sefton's elected members to help them fulfil the vital role they play in working with and supporting local communities.

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

To not sign up for and work towards the North-West Member Development Charter would mean that the Council would lose the benefit of an established framework for assessing, reviewing and developing good practice in the development of its Councillors which could mean that they might be less equipped to fulfil their vital role in working with and 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):

There are currently no direct financial implications – the Council is a Member of NW Employers. Staffing would be from Democratic Services with support from other Council Departments (CLC, Strategic Support).

The Council will demonstrate that there are designated financial resources to support councillor learning and development that are used in a cost-effective way.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications

Equality Implications:

The Council's work towards the Member Development Charter will actively help to promote equality in the Council.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will

Have a positive impact	Yes
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

The Terms of Reference for the Member Development Steering Group states that 'the development of a training plan(will be) based on an analysis of Members' needs and which reflects the needs and priorities of the Council as set out in the 2030 Vision and Council's Core Purpose'.

Protect the most vulnerable:

The current Member Development Programme offers a number of courses to help Councillors fulfil their role in protecting the vulnerable in our community – some of these are mandatory courses – i.e. Safeguarding Adults Awareness, Safeguarding Children and Young People, Corporate Parenting and Equality and Diversity Awareness; also non-mandatory courses – Hate Crime Awareness; Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

Working towards the Member Development Charter (MDC) will enable the Council (Steering Group) to monitor and identify further ways in which Councillors can enhance skills and knowledge to help protect the most vulnerable.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities:

The current Member development programme helps provide Councillors with the requisite skills and knowledge help them effectively lead and support their local residents to help facilitate confident and resilient local communities

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Working towards the MDC the Steering Group will monitor and identify further ways in which Councillors can develop in this respect.

Commission, broker and provide core services:

A critical role of the Councillors is to make decisions on the Council's Revenue Budget and Capital Programme. The Member Development Programme, currently offers 2 courses on – 'Introduction to Local Government Finance' and 'Treasury Management' to help Members gain an understanding of the financial environment in which the Council operates.

Working towards the MDC will help the Council (Steering Group) to monitor current provision and identify further member development to enhance Members' understanding and knowledge in commissioning, brokering and provision of core services.

Place – leadership and influencer:

A crucial role of Councillors is to positively lead and influence change both in their communities and across Sefton and the current Member Development Programme and also courses provided by North-West Employers and the Local Government Association provide guidance and advice to support Councillors in this.

Working towards the MDC will help the Council (Steering Group) monitor and enhance the training and development of Sefton's Councillors as Place leaders and influencers.

Drivers of change and reform:

A critical aspect of the work of Councillors is to be drivers of both in their communities and across Sefton and the Member Development Programme and also courses provided by North-West Employers and the Local Government Association provide guidance and advice to support Councillors in this.

Working towards the MDC will help the Council (Steering Group) monitor and enhance the development of Sefton's Councillors as effective drivers of change and reform.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:

The current Member Development Programme offers courses on 'Introduction to Local Government Finance' and 'Treasury Management' providing Councillors with information to help Members when making decisions which help to support sustainable economic prosperity.

In working towards the MDC the Steering Group will monitor existing provision and identify further ways and courses to enhance the development of elected Members in this respect.

Greater income for social investment:

The current Member Development Programme offers courses on 'Introduction to Local Government Finance' and 'Treasury Management' providing the Councillors with increased knowledge and insight when taking decisions relating to Council expenditure and investment.

In working towards the MDC the Steering Group will monitor existing provision and identify further ways and courses to enhance the development of elected Members in contributing to this core purpose.

Cleaner Greener

Councillors are able to access an e-learning course on Climate Change via Me-Learning.

In working towards the MDC the Steering Group will consider further ways and courses to help Councillor development in achieving a cleaner greener Sefton.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 6991) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 5191) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Initial consultations with North-West Employers have begun and will continue for the foreseeable future in working towards the achievement of the NW Member Development Charter.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Council meeting.

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

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – North West Charter for Elected Member Development - Declaration of Commitment form.

Appendix 2 – North West Charter for Elected Member Development – The Process

Background Papers

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1.0 Introduction Background

The Council on 21 April 2022 considered a report which reviewed the Member Development Programme 2021-2022 and the proposed Member Development Programme 2022-2023 and gave approval for the establishment of a Member Development Steering Group to comprise representation from the respective political groups.

The Council also endorsed the intention to work towards achievement of the North-West Member Development Charter for Sefton which will be the main focus of the Steering Group.

2.0 **Benefits of the North West Development Charter (NWMDC)**

2.1 The core principle underpinning the NWMDC is that at the heart of any Council dedicated to meeting the needs of its community there will also be a commitment to the development of its Councillors.

2.2 The NWMDC provides an established framework to enable councils to undertake a self-assessment and review good practice in supporting and developing Councillors to fulfil the vital role they play in working with and supporting local communities.

2.3 Signing up for and working towards achievement of NWMDC can lead to the following benefits:

Impact on Councillors

- 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

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3.0 **Process/Steps to be taken in working toward Level 1 of the North West Member Development Charter**

- 3.1 To start the accreditation process, the Leader and Chief Executive would be required to sign a declaration (shown at Appendix 1 to the report), to demonstrate the Council's commitment to the principles included in the Charter.

This is an important first step as it is intended to promote a healthy discussion on the Council's needs and intention in terms of member development. The Council's signed **Declaration of Commitment** would then be forwarded for signature by the Chair of North-West Employers and returned to the Council.

- 3.2 Using the Charter framework, the Council would build a portfolio to practically demonstrate this commitment and that it has met all the requirements. This would be followed by an external assessment before being awarded the charter. Appendix 2 sets out **The Process** for applying for Level 1 of the Charter.

- 3.3 It is proposed that the MDSG undertake a self-assessment exercise at its next meeting using the NWE Self-Assessment Framework, identifying what the Council already has in place in supporting Member Development and what it needs to develop further in respect of:

1. A clear commitment to councillor development across the whole of the Council
2. Promoting Member learning and development opportunities
3. A Councillor led approach to learning and development
4. A strategy that includes impact measures within a continuous improvement framework

- 3.4 The Member Development Handbook 2023/24 and a Member Learning and Development Plan for 2023/24 will need to be produced by mid-April 2023 and to assist in that process, it is proposed that a questionnaire be sent to all Members of the Council to seek their views and to identify any future learning and development needs. A copy of the draft questionnaire and revised elected member roles and person specifications will be submitted to the next meeting of the MDSG for consideration.

- 3.5 The results of the Members questionnaire exercise and the self-assessment exercise will be utilised by Officers in the production of the draft Member Development Handbook 2023/24, Elected Member Learning and Development Plan 2023/24 and Member Learning and Development Strategy for consideration by the MDSG and approval by full Council on 20 April 2023.

NORTH WEST CHARTER
for
***Elected Member Development
Declaration***

Council name:

We declare we will:

- Commit to councillor development.
- Promote learning and development opportunities.
- Have a councillor-led approach to developing learning and development.
- Create a strategy that includes impact measures within a continuous improvement framework.

Signed by Chief Executive:

Signed by Leader:

Signed by Chair of North West Employers:

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**North West
Employers**

Date:

North West Charter for Elected Member Development



The Process

Charter Level 1

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Are You Ready?

Before applying for Level 1, reflect on the following questions that link with the criteria, to gauge whether you and the council are ready to begin the process of the Charter assessment.

- Is the council committed to supporting councillor development and can you evidence this?
- Do you have a development strategy that includes impact measures within a continuous improvement framework?
- Do you have a designated group that lead and inform councillor development?
- Do you have a councillor led approach to developing learning and development?
- Do you address the personal development needs of individual councillors with at least half of all councillors being involved in identifying their development needs?
- Do you use this information to help establish your learning and development strategy?
- Do you evaluate all learning together with impact measures and use this to inform improvements in your learning and development strategy?
- Are councillors informed who to contact for information on development opportunities?
- Are you able to show how councillor development is scrutinised?

Level 1 Process

Step 1- Sign the Declaration of Commitment

Authorities need to sign the Declaration of Commitment to the principles included in the Charter; both the Leader of the council and Chief Executive must sign the Declaration. This is an important first step as it is intended to promote a healthy discussion on the council's needs and intention in terms of member development. When you return your signed Declaration, it will be signed by the Chair of North West Employers and returned to you.

To request a Declaration of Commitment, or for a discussion around the principles of the Charter, please contact us [here](#).



Step 2- Register to the online tool

To request access to the online tool please email support@nwemployers.org.uk. A project for your council will then be set up and you will receive instructions on how to access the tool.

As follows:

- You will receive an email with your password and link
- Go to the link then enter your email address and the password provided
- Once logged on you can change your password by clicking on your name at the top right-hand corner of the screen which will then take you to the user settings screen.

Step 3- Procedure to access the framework and your assessments

1. Enter your email address and password
2. This will take you to the home page and your Council's projects, Level 1 and Level 1 Review
3. Select Go to assessments to access the level you are working towards
4. This will take you to the 4 stages of the framework, the criteria for each framework is detailed within each stage. Click on the section heading to see each stage in detail
5. To return to the summary of your assessments use the button at the bottom of the page labelled back to home page

Working through the process

There are four key functions of the tool:

A) **Self-Assessment** – council describe how their organisation meets the standard and upload evidence that link to this, where they can mark themselves against the criteria:

- criteria not met; if they have more evidence to upload
- criteria met; when they deem, the criteria has been met

All evidence is saved automatically, together with any changes or deletions.

B) **Action Planning** – In the description box, further actions can be recorded as reminders. The home page provides an online planning and reporting function using a pie chart. The status describes your self-assessment rating against all criteria, helping to focus on criteria not met and prioritise activity.

C) **Interactive Feedback and Discussion** – is provided through a two-way communication function via the discussion box on the assessment site, to facilitate feedback and questions with the assessment team.

D) **Peer Assessment** – To oversee progress and undertake assessment,

The assessment team from North West Employers will provide support as detailed above, both face to face and remotely via the tool.

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Step 4 - Complete Pre-Assessment and Verification Visit

Once you have met the criteria and uploaded your evidence then contact:

E: support@nwemployers.org.uk

T: 016 1214 7104

Your access will be removed on a temporary basis while we explore the evidence you have uploaded. Once feedback has been given, we shall then support your needs and how best to complete the assessment process on an individual basis. An assessment visit will then be arranged with a councillor from the Executive Board and an officer from North West Employers. The visit will be in part to check that the council meets the standards, but also an opportunity to discover different approaches which can be shared as good practice.

Step 5 - Outcomes and Completion of Report

Following on from the assessment, the assessment team will write up their report and make a recommendation on the charter award. This recommendation will be ratified by the Executive Board at North West Employers

Step 6 - The Executive Board Meeting

The Board will either:

- Confirm successful attainment against the standards
- Defer awarding status and suggest a plan of action to meet the Level 1 standard

Once awarded, you will be notified of the outcome and receive a written report and your award.

How the Assessment Visit Will Run

1. Each visit will include one Councillor from North West Employers Executive Board and an officer from North West Employers
2. The visit will be arranged in advance and will last for approximately half a day. An officer from North West Employers will liaise with the relevant officer from the council to make the arrangements
3. A room and refreshments will be required for the assessment team.
4. During the visit the assessment team will want to speak to:
 - The Leader (or Deputy)
 - The Chief Executive / Chief Officer
 - Leader of the Opposition Group
 - Chair or Portfolio Holder
 - Chair or Councillor of the Training Group

- A Newly Elected Councillor
- Three Randomly Selected Councillors
- Officer/s responsible for Councillor Learning and Development

5. The interviews are timetabled in 30-45-minute slots. The interviews can be conducted individually or in small groups based on your requests

6. Following on from the assessment, the assessment team will write up their report and make a recommendation on the charter award. This recommendation will be ratified by the Executive Board at North West Employers and you will be notified of the outcome and receive a written report and your award

7. If the assessment team or Executive Board feels that some elements of the evidence are incomplete, then the council will be advised and will be given the opportunity to complete the evidence and be assessed again

8. If the council is successful, they will be awarded the Charter

What We Will Look for in the Level 1 Assessment

During the assessment visit, there are some key areas that we shall look for, take examples and draw best practice from:

- Commitment to councillor development demonstrated at all levels across the council
- An appropriate communication process in place to publicise development opportunities
- Councillors actively engage in development available and consider their developing role, its requirements and how to meet them
- Individual's needs are considered and fed into the overall development strategy with at least half of all councillors involved in identifying their development needs
- There are financial resources available to support the development strategy and they are used in a cost-effective way
- Development activities are evaluated and include impact measures with feedback into the overall strategy
- A process in place to scrutinise councillor development opportunities

What next?

Level 1 Charter has a lifespan of three years, after which authorities are able to submit evidence to demonstrate how they have sustained and further developed their commitment to councillor development by undertaking Level 1 Review.

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Charter Level 1 Review

Note: This links to the criteria from Level 1 and is required to show that there has been a continuous improvement since achieving Level 1

- Is there still clear commitment to continuously improve councillor development, and have continuous improvements been made since Level 1 was awarded?
- Are councillors actively involved in leading and informing on councillor development?
- Have at least three quarters of councillors engaged in identifying their development needs?
- Are councillors clear on the development opportunities available to meet their learning needs and developing role?
- Is there a process in place to measure the impact of learning?
- Have councillors been actively involved in reviewing the strategy?
- Is there a designated group in place that scrutinise councillor development?

Level 1 Review Process

Step 1- Re-Sign the Declaration of Commitment

Authorities need to sign the Declaration of Commitment to the principles included in the Charter; both the Leader of the council and Chief Executive must sign the Declaration. This is an important first step as it is intended to promote a healthy discussion on the council's needs and intention in terms of member development. When you return your signed Declaration, it will be signed by the Chair of North West Employers and returned to you.

To request a Declaration of Commitment, or for a discussion around the principles of the Charter, please contact us [here](#).

Step 2- Register to the online tool

To request access to the online tool please email support@nwemployers.org.uk A project for your council will then be set up and you will receive instructions on how to access the tool.

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1. Enter your email address and password
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3. Select Go to assessments to access the level you are working towards
4. This will take you to the 4 stages of the framework, the criteria for each framework is detailed within each stage. Click on the section heading to see each stage in detail
5. To return to the summary of your assessments use the button at the bottom of the page labelled back to home page

Working through the process

There are four key functions of the tool:

A) **Self-Assessment** – council describe how their organisation meets the standard and upload evidence that link to this, where they can mark themselves against the criteria:

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All evidence is saved automatically, together with any changes or deletions.

B) **Action Planning** – In the description box, further actions can be recorded as reminders. The home page provides an online planning and reporting function using a pie chart. The status describes your self-assessment rating against all criteria, helping to focus on criteria not met and prioritise activity.

C) **Interactive Feedback and Discussion** – is provided through a two-way communication function via the discussion box on the assessment site, to facilitate feedback and questions with the assessment team.

D) **Peer Assessment** – To oversee progress and undertake assessment,

The assessment team from North West Employers will provide support as detailed above, both face to face and remotely via the tool.

Step 4 - Complete Pre-Assessment and Verification Visit

Once you have met the criteria and uploaded your evidence then contact:

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T: 016 1214 7104

Your access will be removed on a temporary basis while we explore the evidence you have uploaded. Once feedback has been given, we shall then support your needs and how best to

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complete the assessment process on an individual basis. An assessment visit will then be arranged with a councillor from the Executive Board and an officer from North West Employers. The visit will be in part to check that the council meets the standards, but also an opportunity to discover different approaches which can be shared as good practice.

Step 5 - Outcomes and Completion of Report

Following on from the assessment, the assessment team will write up their report and make a recommendation on the charter award. This recommendation will be ratified by the Executive Board at North West Employers

Step 6 - The Executive Board Meeting

The Board will either:

- Confirm successful attainment against the standards
- Defer awarding status and suggest a plan of action to meet the Level 1 standard

Once awarded, you will be notified of the outcome and receive a written report and your award.

How the Assessment Visit Will Run

1. Each visit will include one Councillor from North West Employers Executive Board and an officer from North West Employers
2. The visit will be arranged in advance and will last for approximately half a day. An officer from North West Employers will liaise with the relevant officer from the council to make the arrangements
3. A room and refreshments will be required for the assessment team.
4. During the visit the assessment team will want to speak to:
 - The Leader (or Deputy)
 - The Chief Executive / Chief Officer
 - Leader of the Opposition Group
 - Chair or Portfolio Holder
 - Chair or Councillor of the Training Group
 - A Newly Elected Councillor
 - Three Randomly Selected Councillors
 - Officer/s responsible for Councillor Learning and Development
5. The interviews are timetabled in 30-45-minute slots. The interviews can be conducted individually or in small groups based on your requests

6. Following on from the assessment, the assessment team will write up their report and make a recommendation on the charter award. This recommendation will be ratified by the Executive Board at North West Employers and you will be notified of the outcome and receive a written report and your award
7. If the assessment team or Executive Board feels that some elements of the evidence are incomplete, then the council will be advised and will be given the opportunity to complete the evidence and be assessed again
8. If the council is successful, they will be awarded the Charter

What We Will Look for in the Level 1 Review Assessment

During the assessment visit, there are some key areas that we shall look for, take examples and draw best practice from:

- Continued commitment to councillor development demonstrated at all levels across the council
- Councillors actively involved in leading and informing on councillor development
- An established councillor development strategy which reflects corporate aims and objectives, that is annually refreshed to reflect the current climate and reviewed by councillors
- Councillors' development needs continue to be considered and fed into the overall development strategy with at least three quarters of councillors engaged in identifying their development needs.
- A clear communication strategy that supports councillor development and activity encourages councillor engagement
- A method of evaluating the impact of learning and development activities that shows continuous improvement
- Development opportunities meet councillors preferred learning methods and learning styles and have been adapted in response to external, national and local drivers e.g. 21st Century Councillor research
- A designated group that scrutinise councillor development.

What next?

Level 1 Review Charter has a lifespan of three years, after which authorities can renew their application.

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Charter Level 2 (Application Form)

This Level differs to Level 1 and Level 1 Review, in that it is a more advanced review and in-depth evaluation of a particular issue that addresses a need and shows how the development has impacted on the councillors and the local community.

Are You Ready?

Before applying for Level 2, reflect on the following questions to gauge whether you and the council are ready to begin the process of Level 2 Charter assessment.

- Does the council have an embedded culture in the organisation that is supportive of councillor development?
- Has the council looked at the level and quality of available evidence before choosing the topic for the application?
- Has the council considered whether it will have sufficient evidence of outcomes available by the assessment date?
- Are other departments, services and partners involved?
- Is there political buy-in from all parties?

Level 2 Process

Step 1- Evidence for Level 1 Review: Self-Assessment

If, at the time of your Level 2 application it has been more than three years since your Level 1 or Level 1 Review, you will be required to undertake a self-assessment using the online tool.

There will be a pre-assessment visit to verify this evidence. This will be a meeting for three councillors and an officer from the council and will take around 1½ hours (preferably councillors who are not directly involved in councillor development or part of the Executive/Cabinet).

If your council was re-accredited for Level 1 or Level 1 Review within the last three years then this self-assessment stage is not necessary, please jump to Step Two.

Step 2- Evidence for Level 2: Application Form

Complete the Charter Review Application Form

Does your entry show:

- **Section 1** The impact of councillor development on the work of the council and the community
- **Section 2** That the council is committed to continuous improvement in councillor development?



Section 1: Provide evidence of impact of councillor development on the work of the council

There are three main sections on the application form:

- **Issue for the council and community:** what was the community issue that you decided to tackle e.g. Corporate Parenting, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), Meeting Citizens' Expectations, Changes to Austerity, Working with Citizens to Develop New Solutions, Neighbourhood Working, communicating with hard to reach groups using technology and the Transformation Agenda.
- **Councillor learning and development:** what took place and how did this link to the issue? Did the learners' learn what was expected,
- **Overall impact on the community, the councillors and the council:** what changed in the community because of the councillor learning and development? What did the council learn from the whole process?

Section 2: Show commitment to continuous improvement

The council will also be expected to show their commitment to **continuous improvement** in councillor learning and development.

- Demonstrate progress on the 'continuous improvement' issues identified at the original assessment - evidence from Level 1 or Level 1 Review Award
- Review processes for member development e.g. Member Development Group to review strategy and agree new priorities
- Can clearly articulate where the council wants to improve their practice in the future.

Step 3- Complete Application Process

For an application form please contact us at support@nwemployers.org.uk

We will work with you build up your case study and help to ensure that the scope of the project has enough depth and can clearly link the councillor development to the community impact.

An assessment visit will be arranged to verify the evidence provided in the application form. An officer and a councillor from North West Employers will act as assessors. The assessors may ask to interview members of the public or people from outside bodies as well as councillors and staff. Each assessment process will be agreed with the council and will be designed around the specific project.

Step 4 **Agenda Item 9**

The assessors will write a report that will go to North West Employers Executive Board for approval.

Step 5- The Executive Board Meeting

The Board can:

- Confirm successful attainment against the original standards
- Defer awarding status and suggest a plan of action to meet the Level 2 standards.

Support Offered by North West Employers

Throughout your Charter process we are dedicated to providing support and guidance. We offer guidance prior to application to assess 'readiness' for progressing your project to Level 2 Charter Status

If you require any further support or have any ideas that would be useful for the whole region, then please do let Sharon Senior know by emailing sharons@nwemployers.org.uk

What We Will Look for in the Level 2 Assessment

Charter Level 2 does not have set criteria like Charter Level 1. Level 2 looks at whether the council can demonstrate that the community has benefited from councillor development on a specific area. Each application for Level 2 is different, and therefore the assessment will be tailored in each case. However, there are three areas that the assessors are looking for in Level 2.

What we are looking for with the project or example

The application demonstrates that:

- The work done relates to an issue that directly affects the community, and (ideally) is recognised by the community
- Development of councillors has been explicitly targeted to address the councillor development needs identified around the community issue
- Councillors recognise which elements of learning and development were directly related to the issue
- Councillors can identify changes in their skills, knowledge and expertise on the issue before and after member development took place.
- There has been an improvement on the community issues, and there are clear links between the member development done, and the outcomes, which are recognised by councillors themselves.



What we are looking for with the use of evidence

- Statements and assertions must be backed up by evidence, including references for the sources of evidence
- A range of different types of evidence is provided from a range of different sources e.g. a mix of examples or case studies, statistics, and documentary evidence, including material from councillors, officers, residents, and partners
- Evidence is provided for the situation for the council and the community before the work took place, and afterwards
- All evidence provided stands up to a reasonable challenge from someone not involved in the work.

What we are looking for in the community and council impacts

- Community and council outcomes have been experienced by the community, and (ideally) are recognised by the community
- Any changes to strategy, policy, procedures and structures have led to a practical difference for the community
- The impacts are advanced enough to have resolved the original issues or can be shown to have achieved significant milestones
- Outcomes described in the application are recognised by a range of stakeholders.



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