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Sefton Council 

MEETING: CABINET
DATE: Thursday 2nd February, 2023
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		(Pages 5 - 18)
	Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2023		
* 4	Adoption of the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy Report of the Assistant Director of People (Communities)	All Wards	(Pages 19 - 52)
* 5	Adoption of the Safer Sefton Together Strategy Report of the Assistant Director of People (Communities)	All Wards	(Pages 53 - 74)

* 6	<p>Pre-Procurement Report for Land Based, Coastal Remote Sensing Services</p> <p>Report of the Assistant Director of People (Operational In-House Services)</p>	<p>Ainsdale; Blundellsands; Cambridge; Church; Dukes; Harington; Linacre; Manor; Ravenmeols</p>	<p>(Pages 75 - 80)</p>
* 7	<p>Sandbrook Way, Ainsdale – Acquisition and Development Brief</p> <p>Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing)</p>	<p>Ainsdale</p>	<p>(Pages 81 - 96)</p>
* 8	<p>Financial Management 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2022/23 – February Update</p> <p>Report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services</p>	<p>All Wards</p>	<p>(Pages 97 - 148)</p>

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THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2023.

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 5TH JANUARY, 2023

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Sir Ron Watson

97. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cummins, Moncur and Veidman.

98. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

99. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

100. BEDFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND MEOLS COP HIGH SCHOOL - APPROVAL OF LEGAL DOCUMENTATION FOR ACADEMY CONVERSIONS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) which provided details of the decision by the Governing Bodies of Bedford Primary School and Meols Cop High School to convert to the Southport Learning Trust in accordance with statutory requirements and sought authorisation for officers to sign the documentation required to by the academy conversion process. The Education and Skills Funding Agency has indicated that the date of conversion has still to be confirmed but the earliest this will be is 1 April 2023.

Decision Made: That

- 1) the statutory requirements regarding the (academy conversion be noted;

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- 2) the financial implications to the Council of the academy conversion be noted;
- 3) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services and the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Children's Social Care) be authorised to complete the necessary agreements required as part of the academy conversion process as outlined in the report; and
- 4) It be noted that the proposal was a Key Decision but had not been included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions. Consequently, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) had been consulted under Rule 27 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution, to the decision being made by the Cabinet as a matter of urgency on the basis that it was impracticable to defer the decision until the commencement of the next Forward Plan because both conversions are voluntary conversions and the schools have only confirmed the proposed conversion date in the last few weeks.

Reason for the Recommendations:

The Cabinet needs to authorise appropriate officers to enter into the agreements required as part of the academy conversion process.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None. The Secretary of State has the powers to direct that the academy conversion process can continue if the agreements are not signed.

101. SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE FOR EDUCATION CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which provided details of the support and maintenance contract for the existing Case Management System used to support Education functions within the Children's Services Directorate. The report also provided details the associated procurement route available to the authority to renew the support and maintenance as the contract novated from Arvarto had expired.

Decision Made: That

- (1) approval be given to the use of the KCS (Kent Commercial Services) Framework Y20023 to award a contract for the support and maintenance of the Capita One System used to support Education functions within the Children's Services Directorate; and
- (2) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customers Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regulatory,

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Compliance and Corporate Services be granted delegated authority to award the Contract under this framework, for an initial three years, with an option to extend for a further two years and to award any such extensions.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure that this critical system is still supported and maintained by the software supplier and that the Council continues to receive statutory changes and upgrades.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The option to explore an alternative product to support the Education functions was rejected. The current solution used by teams across the Council is a market leader in this space, and although it is recognised there are alternatives in the market the cost of change at this time in terms of resource and capital investment required would be prohibitive and would not represent best value to the authority and could potentially dilute the progress of the ongoing improvement plan across this Directorate.

102. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME, COUNCIL TAX BASE 2023/24

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which provided details of the review of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the current year, 2022/23, and recommended that there was no change to the scheme for 2023/24 for working age claimants.

The report also proposed an increase in the Long-term Empty Homes Premium from 200% to 300% on dwellings that have been empty for 10 years or more from 1 April 2023 and provided an updated Council Tax Base for Sefton Council and each Parish area for 2023/24.

Decision Made: That

- (1) the content of the review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the current financial year, 2022/23 be noted;
- (2) the Council be recommended to make no changes to the existing Scheme for 2023/24 for working age claimants;
- (3) the Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme at Annex C of the report be noted;
- (4) the Council be recommended to approve an increase in the Long-term Empty Homes Premium on dwellings that have been left empty for 10 years or more, from 200% to 300%, from 1 April 2023; and

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- (5) the Council be recommended to approve the relevant Council Tax Base for Sefton Council and each Parish Area for 2023/24 as set out in Annex A of the report.

Reasons for the Decision:

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Each financial year, the Council must consider whether to revise or replace its local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Council must approve and adopt the 2023/24 Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 11 March 2023, as set out in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2017.

The report provides an update on key aspects of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. An Equalities Impact Assessment has also been produced that details how the Council meets both its equalities duties and the Council's principles set out for the scheme. After consideration of the factors outlined in the report, and in the Equalities Impact Assessment, it was proposed that the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24 remains unchanged for working age claimants.

Increasing Premium on dwellings left empty for 10 years or more

Increasing the long-term empty homes premium on dwellings left empty for 10 years or more is intended to encourage owners of these homes to bring them back into use. Any additional income raised from the premium will help support the provision of Council services.

Council Tax Base

In accordance with Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended, the Council is required to set a tax base for both Sefton Council and for each Parish Area for 2023/24 before 31st January 2023.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was last revised in 2018/19 following a public consultation process. The Scheme continues to be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose by addressing the Council's priorities to meet its equalities duties, minimise the impact on vulnerable residents whilst striking a balance with Council financial priorities. For these reasons, no alternative options have been considered for 2023/24.

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Increasing Premium on dwellings left empty for 10 years or more

The Council could choose not to increase the long-term empty homes premium; however, this would not provide any additional incentive for owners of long-term empty homes to bring them back into use or any additional income to help meet budget pressures in 2023/24.

Council Tax Base

None.

103. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION INITIATIVES FOR COUNCIL STAFF

Further to Minute No. 4 of the meeting of the Pay and Grading Committee held on 28 November 2022, the Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services which sought approval of three elements in respect of payments to employees of the Council. Two of these elements are applicable to all Council employees and relate to staff travel, whilst one is applicable only to staff employed within Children's Social Care and relates to retention payments.

Decision Made: That

- (1) approval be given to the removal of the 50% reduction in the Out of Borough car mileage rate;
- (2) approval be given to the introduction of Essential Car Mileage which attracts a lump sum payment and to it only being applied to posts that meet the criteria as set out in the report.
- (3) approval be given to the increase in the annual retention payment for social workers within the Children's Social Care Locality Teams from £2,000 to £5,000 in accordance with the criteria detailed within the report; and
- (4) for any services impacted by the changes contained within the report, the costs must be fully funded and vired from existing budgets in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules before any offer or change is proposed to employees.

Reasons for the Decision:

The measures will support the recruitment and retention of staff within the Council and also reflect the additional cost of running a vehicle for use on council business at this time.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No alternative options have been considered

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104. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2022/23 TO 2024/25 AND FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE 2020 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2022/23 – JANUARY 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; and
3. The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of November 2022:
 - 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.

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 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) the current position relating to the High Needs budget be noted 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;

Additional Adult Social Care Grant Funding

- (5) the Council be recommended to give approval to a supplementary revenue estimate of £1.2m to be fully funded by the Better Care Fund Discharge Grant;
- (6) it be noted that of the three grants received for Improving Technology in Care Settings totalling £2.171m, Sefton has been initially allocated £0.222m (Digitisation of Social Care Records £0.147m and SITT (Supporting Independence Through Technology) £0.075m);

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- (7) the Council be recommended to approve that Sefton Council passports grants for Improving Technology in Care Settings to partner agencies in line with agreed allocations;
- (8) the Council be recommended to approve a supplementary revenue estimate of £2.171m to be fully funded by the grants outlined within the report;

Capital Programme

- (9) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 8.1) be noted;
- (10) the latest capital expenditure position as at 30 November 2022 of £22.639m (paragraph 8.16); and the latest full year forecast of £47.141m (paragraph 8.17) be noted;
- (11) approval be given to a supplementary capital estimate of £0.779m for additional devolved formula grant funding for schools to improve energy efficiency in 2022-23 (paragraph 8.5);
- (12) the Council be recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.540m for the Ainsdale Coastal Gateway funded by £0.490m of capital receipts and £0.050m of external grant funding (paragraph 8.12);
- (13) approval be given to a supplementary capital estimate of £0.861m for the Sustainable Warmth Programme funded by grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (paragraph 8.15); and
- (14) it be noted 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 8.20-8.22).

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.

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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:

None.

105. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director (People) which provided details of the Government's approval of the Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) allocations to the Liverpool City Region; outlined the allocations of funding to Sefton Council for local authority led elements of that Investment Plan; and sought approval for the acceptance of the grant funding identified herein, and the delegation of the finalisation of delivery plans to the appropriate Cabinet Members and Executive Officers.

Decision Made: That

- (1) the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills, and the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be granted delegated authority to approve the Grant Funding Agreements for the allocations herein totalling £1,195,770
- (2) it be noted that any variations to these allocations will be approved in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules; and
- (3) the Executive Director (People) and Executive Director (Place), according to the funding strands identified, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills be granted delegated authority to approve and submit the associated delivery plans to meet the UK Shared Prosperity Fund submission requirements. All schemes will be approved in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules.
- (4) the Council be recommended to approve a supplementary revenue estimate of £1,195,770 which will be fully funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as outlined in the report.

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Reasons for the Decision:

Sefton Council has worked with other local authorities in the Liverpool City Region (LCR), as well as the Combined Authority and a range of external stakeholders, to develop and submit the Investment Plan for use of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation to the LCR. While some aspects of the delivery plan are to be delivered at a regional level, there will also be elements of the plan to be delivered by each individual local authority, and this report and its recommendations relate to these funding allocations to Sefton Council, and the delivery plans to be developed and submitted by the Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The alternative of not accepting the UK Shared Prosperity Fund was not considered.

106. NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET) REDUCTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE RE-CONTRACTING

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) which sought approval to undertake an open procurement exercise to secure suitable provision to discharge the Council's duties for the tracking and participation of young people, together with a range of other measures designed to reduce the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and Not Knowns (NK) in the borough.

Decision Made: That

- (1) approval be given to a procurement exercise being undertaken, subject to a satisfactory and compliant tender process, to enable a contract to be entered into for three years plus one duration with effect from June 2023 with a qualified and suitable provider to deliver a range of services for young people to secure their participation in education, training or employment; and
- (2) the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills be granted delegated authority to award the contract to the winning applicant following completion of a satisfactory and compliant tender process and any extension.

Reasons for the Decision:

The current arrangements for the delivery of the NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service in Sefton are due to come to an end in June 2023. There is a need therefore to procure a new contract to ensure there is continuity of provision and there is sufficient time to conduct an open and transparent process, ensuring that the new arrangements are

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commenced seamlessly so as not to disadvantage any young people receiving support in the handover period.

The Council has accepted that investment in this service aims to create resilience and independence for young people to enable them to enter the adult world of work and maximise their potential. Access to such provision reduces the likelihood of young people becoming permanently disengaged, reduces the impact of social and economic exclusion and minimises the risk of requiring more intensive public sector assistance later in life.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Option 1

The service could be ceased with effect from June 2023. This would mean that the Council would need to rapidly identify other means for ensuring its statutory duty in relation to the tracking of NEET young people aged 16 and 17 and for ensuring the Participation Duty up to the age of 19 are met. Given the complexity of these requirements and the fact there are no staff resources within the Council with the necessary skills and expertise to undertake this work and the Council has no track record of designing and implementing suitable destination tracking systems, this option is likely to deliver lower quality outcomes and yield less favourable value for money for Sefton. In terms of quality, there would be a severely deleterious impact upon service delivery for young people. For these reasons this option has been rejected.

Option 2

A Service could be run in conjunction with three of the neighbouring Councils within the Liverpool City Region as part of a joint outsourcing arrangement. Four of the local authorities (LAs) within the Liverpool City Region (LCR) work together to procure suitable contractors to undertake some similar work to that carried out in Sefton. However, since Sefton has pursued a standalone option over many years, it is not synchronised with this joint contracting cycle. If Sefton were to join this model, it would still need to source alternative provision for an interim period and enter an agreement with the other LAs in line with their timescales, risking further costs and disruption to services. Furthermore, Sefton has developed a localised methodology for reducing NEETs since 2019 that is not in use across the LCR, so there would be impacts on degrees of control, quality and discretion currently held if joint agreements to cover this wider area were entered into, to the potential detriment of Sefton residents. For these reasons, this option has been rejected.

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107. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To comply with Regulation 5(2) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, notice had been published regarding the intention to consider the following matters in private for the reason set out below.

Decision Made:

That, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favours exclusion of the information from the Press and Public.

108. BOOTLE STRAND SHOPPING CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23 TO 2024/25 - EXEMPT APPENDICES

The Cabinet considered exempt information provided by the Executive Director (Place) in relation to the Bootle Strand Shopping Centre Business Case. (Minute No. 110 below refers).

Decision Made:

That the exempt information be considered as part of the report in relation to the Bootle Strand Shopping Centre Business Plan. (Minute No. 110 below refers).

Reasons for the Decision:

The exempt information is required to be considered with the information in the public domain in order that an informed decision may be made.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

109. PUBLIC SESSION

Decision Made:

That the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

110. BOOTLE STRAND SHOPPING CENTRE - BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23 TO 2024/25

Further to Minute No. 108 above, the Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director (Place) which provided details of the three-year Business Plan for the fiscal years 2022/23 to 2024/25 for the Strand

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Shopping Centre, Bootle. Given the current economic climate, the Business Plan included an overview of impacts on the retail sector and the challenging environment in which the centre is operating. However, the acquisition of the Strand was for regeneration purposes, and these external factors (which have a greater impact in an area such as Bootle, for reasons outlined within the report) reinforce the importance of delivering the vision for the future of Bootle town centre and the Strand.

The report therefore included a recommendation to agree to the early surrender of the lease on a unit that has been vacant for several years, to enable progression of this vision in a manner that delivers best value to both the Council and the town centre. Nevertheless, some uncertainty remains to the Business Plan at the time of writing, not only given the pressures of inflation and the cost-of-living crisis, but also the absence of feedback on the Council's bid submission for Levelling Up funding, which will be vital to progression of the next steps.

Decision Made: That

- (1) approval be given to the three-year Business Plan for the Strand Shopping Centre, noting the uncertainties of the current economic climate and the availability of Levelling Up funds;
- (2) any material variations to the financial forecast be presented back to Cabinet for further decision;
- (3) approval be given to the early surrender of the current lease of units 28-34, 259-273 The Esplanade and 283-289 Stanley Road, for a surrender premium with delegation of the final surrender agreement and associated premium being granted to the Cabinet Members for Regeneration and Skills and Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services and subject to them receiving the opinion of the Council's External Auditor on the appropriateness and Value for Money of the transaction to support their decision; and
- (4) an updated Business Plan for the three years from the financial year 2024-25 be brought to the Cabinet for approval in advance of the start of that financial year.

Reasons for the Decision:

The Council's objectives for the acquisition of The Strand in 2017 were to ensure that it was supported to continue its role in the local community, as a key asset at the heart of Bootle critical to the town's physical, economic and social regeneration. This remains the Council's priority in relation to the centre.

Despite continued uncertainties given the current economic climate and its impacts on the retail sector and on Bootle, as well as given the absence of feedback on the Council's Levelling Up funding bid submission, this report and Business Plan provide updated forecasts for the coming years,

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recognising the impact that the absence of progression of the repurposing vision will have on that Business Plan. However, operational decision-making must be made within the context of an approved Business Plan.

The proposed accounting treatment of the receipt for the lease surrender, detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, has been agreed with the Council's External Auditor. The Executive Director (Place) will lead an annual review with the External Auditor of the Value for Money case for the lease surrender, as part of the annual audit.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No alternatives to the publication of an updated three-year Business Plan were considered.

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Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date of Meeting:	2 February 2023 2 March 2023
Subject:	Adoption of the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy		
Report of:	Assistant Director of People (Communities)	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (DA) places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to

- Form a Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAPB)
- Conduct a Local Needs Assessment
- Develop and Publish a Strategy
- Give effect to the Strategy
- Monitor Strategy effectiveness
- Report back to government via the Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office.

Sefton has had a Domestic Abuse Strategy for several years. We have taken the opportunity, following the statutory duty placed on the LA following the DA Act, to refresh the existing strategy to not only meet our statutory requirements but to reach much further in addressing such an important issue.

Recommendation:

Cabinet:

That Cabinet recommend to Council, as per the Constitution, the adoption of the 5-year Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy as part of its statutory responsibilities.

Council:

That Council approve the adoption of the 5-year Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy as part of its statutory responsibilities.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

By adopting the strategy, the Council can bid for additional funding streams that will serve to address the priorities contained within. The strategy will also ensure compliance

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with statutory requirements and prevent any intervention from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner.

By adopting the strategy, the Council, and wider partnership, will have an overarching strategic document to inform the delivery of services and can bid for additional funding streams that will serve to address the priorities contained within .

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

The alternative option is to not adopt the strategy which will leave the Council vulnerable to future funding allocations and risk Domestic Abuse Commissioner intervention.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The Council will receive **£619,418** in New Burdens Funding for 2023/24 in order to discharge its duty under Part 4 of the DA Act.

The Council also funds the following Domestic Abuse related activity :-

- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
- Management oversight
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Coordinator
- Commit to Change Coordinators and facilitators
- Services from Sefton Women and Children's Aid (SWACA)

£737,920 Total

(B) Capital Costs

None

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
None	
Legal Implications:	
None	
Equality Implications:	
Equality Impact Assessment Included at Appendix 2	
Climate Emergency Implications:	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes

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

In adopting the strategy this will have a neutral effect on the climate emergency.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

<p>Protect the most vulnerable:</p> <p>The delivery of the strategy aims to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from the impacts of living within a household experiencing domestic and sexual abuse.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities:</p> <p>The delivery of the strategy will ensure a wide range of services are in place to support and protect victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, including children.</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Drivers of change and reform:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Greater income for social investment:</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Cleaner Greener</p> <p>N/A</p>

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7091/23) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5291/23) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

External consultations with stakeholders has taken place.

Implementation Date for the Decision

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

Contact Officer:	Steve Martlew
Telephone Number:	07973 988996

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Sefton Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2028
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 The DA Act came into force in April 2021 and is the biggest piece of DA legislation ever. It introduced several new measures that can be broadly broken down into 3 categories

- Governance
- Support for victims/survivors, their children, and families
- Strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators

1.2 The statutory responsibility placed on the LA by the Act are:

- Formation of Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAPB). Sefton's LDAPB was formed in March 2021 with Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing as Chair.
- Conduct a Needs Assessment. An external consultant was appointed to complete this work and this was completed and signed off in September 2022.
- Develop & Publish a Strategy. Sefton has a published strategy and has done for several years. The purpose of this report is to adopt the refreshed version which meets the requirements of our statutory responsibilities but reaches much further.
- Give effect to the Strategy. Once adopted the New Burdens funding will be used to commission services to address the gap in service provision for DA victims, their children, and their families.
- Monitor Strategy effectiveness. We are developing a data dashboard to support the work of the board.
- Report back to government via the Domestic Abuse Commissioners Office. We are required to submit an annual report to the Commissioner and engage with their regional office.

2. Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2028

2.1 The Sefton Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2028 is a multi-agency partnership document developed by Sefton's Domestic Abuse Partnership Board following the completion of a comprehensive local domestic abuse needs assessment which helped identify what we need in Sefton and builds on work of the previous local Domestic Abuse Strategies. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that all key stakeholders in Sefton have a consistent understanding of the issues surrounding domestic abuse and their roles and responsibilities in addressing them. Domestic abuse cannot be tackled in isolation. It requires joint

working across a wide range of departments, agencies, and partnerships, including those beyond the usual statutory and specialist organisations associated with domestic abuse. The Strategy is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2 At its core is the need to ensure the voices and experiences of domestic abuse survivors shapes Sefton's approach to the development and delivery of services so that they provide what is needed. This includes ensuring there are a range of specialist support services available to address a wide variety of needs. It means really listening to what it feels like for victims of domestic abuse and understanding the challenges and barriers they face across all services and not just related to specialist domestic abuse support. It includes being able to challenge perpetrator behaviours safely and working to hold them to account.

2.3 This strategy sets out how we will do this in Sefton over the next five years. It outlines the key themes partners will focus on and identifies priorities which will be translated into practical areas for action which will be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. The strategy is based around three strategic themes:

- **Prevent** – Early intervention and prevention to reduce the cycle of abuse.
- **Protect** - Keeping victims and their families' safe whilst challenging the behaviour of perpetrators.
- **Repair** - providing ongoing support beyond crisis intervention and developing resilience for the future.

It also incorporates the elements of Sefton's Safe Accommodation Strategy for victims of domestic abuse which the local authority is required to have as part of the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

2.4 Domestic abuse is a key element of the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWG) agenda. However, it is acknowledged that VAWG also includes a range of other linked but separate subjects, such as human trafficking and modern slavery, honour-based violence harmful practices and child exploitation. These areas will be covered in the Safer Sefton Together Strategy 2023-2026.

2.5 Domestic Abuse cannot be addressed in isolation and therefore the strategy also includes a list of boards, partnerships and strategies, together with a list of other legislation where the work of the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board overlaps and a strategic link needs to be maintained.

2.6 Sefton's Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will be responsible for the monitoring of the Strategy and will oversee the development of a Strategy Action Plan and Performance Framework which will set out the detail of how the priorities will be delivered.

The Partnership will also review the strategy on an annual basis and will consider:

- Progress made against the strategy's objectives.

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- The overall impact and effectiveness of the strategy measured through the strategy outcomes
- New legislation or government directives for incorporation in the strategy.
- Local need and any other emerging priorities.

Sefton Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy

2023- 2028

Approved November 2022

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1. Foreword



Cllr Trish Hardy
Chair of Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

November 2022

Welcome to Sefton's 2023-2028 Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy. This is the third version of this strategy and it reiterates our commitment and priority for tackling domestic and abuse at all levels across Sefton. It builds on the previous partnership work we have been doing over the past 7 years and includes the duties outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act (2021).

The issue of domestic and sexual abuse has rightly continued to grow in recognition both locally and nationally, including additional resources via the Government and the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner role. These resources are welcome but we know more needs to be invested in services to ensure those affected by domestic and sexual abuse get the support they need.

Sefton's Domestic Abuse Partnership Board is responsible for overseeing Sefton's strategic approach to tackling domestic and sexual abuse. One of its key priorities over the past year has been to complete a local Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment so we have an up to date picture of what we already have in place and what areas we need to develop. This piece of work has helped inform the update of this strategy. An important part of the needs assessment was to hear directly from local victims and survivors of domestic abuse so their voice and experiences are an integral element within the development and delivery of all services and systems associated with tackling domestic abuse. On behalf of the Board I would like to thank all the victims and survivors who took part and shared their views. We will continue to look at how we can develop the ways victims and survivors can continue to be involved in this work.

2. Introduction

The Sefton Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2028 is a multi-agency partnership document developed by Sefton's Domestic Abuse Partnership Board following the completion of a comprehensive local domestic abuse needs assessment which helped identify what we need in Sefton and builds on work of the previous local Domestic and Sexual Abuse strategies. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that all key stakeholders in Sefton have a consistent understanding of the issues surrounding domestic and abuse and their roles and responsibilities in addressing them. Domestic and sexual abuse cannot be tackled in isolation. It requires joint working across a wide range of departments, agencies, and partnerships, including those beyond the usual statutory and specialist organisations associated with domestic and sexual abuse.

At its core is the need to ensure the voices and experiences of domestic and sexual abuse victims and survivors shape Sefton's approach to the development and delivery of services so that they provide what is needed. This includes ensuring there are a range of specialist support services available to address a wide variety of needs. It means really listening to what it feels like for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and understanding the challenges and barriers they face across all services and not just related to specialist domestic and sexual abuse support. It includes being able to challenge perpetrator behaviours safely and working to hold them to account.

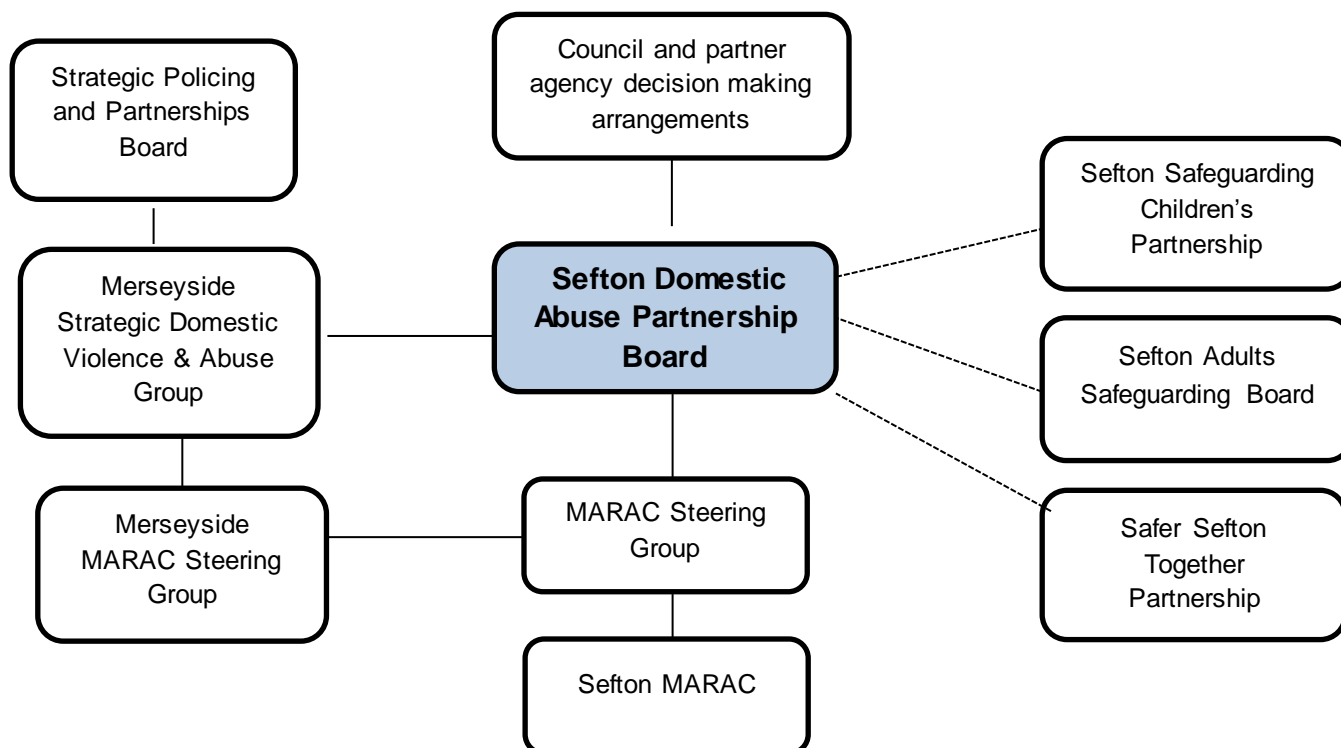
This strategy sets out how we will do this in Sefton over the next five years. It outlines the key themes partners will focus on and identifies priorities which will be translated into practical areas for action which will be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. The strategy is based around three strategic themes:

- **Prevent** –Early intervention and prevention to reduce the cycle of abuse.
- **Protect** - Keeping victims and their families' safe whilst challenging the behaviour of perpetrators.
- **Repair** - providing ongoing support beyond crisis intervention and developing resilience for the future.

It also incorporates the elements of Sefton's previous Safe Accommodation Strategy for victims of domestic abuse which the local authority is required to have as part of the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

Domestic and sexual abuse is a key element of the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWG) agenda. However, it is acknowledged that VAWG also includes a range of other linked but separate subjects, such as human trafficking and modern slavery, honour based violence harmful practices and child exploitation. These areas will be covered by Safer Sefton Together's approach to VAWG.

3. Governance



The links between the Partnership Board and other strategic partnership arrangements are maintained through joint membership, shared sub-groups established around specific subjects (eg training and workforce development) as well as shared action plans.

Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board is made up of representatives from the following agencies:

- Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (Elected Member, Communities, Adult Social Care, Children’s Social Care, Public Health and Housing and Investment Services.)
- Sefton Women’s and Children’s Aid (SWACA)
- Rape and Sexual Assault Merseyside (RASA)
- Merseyside Police
- Probation Service
- Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust
- Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Partnership
- Mersey Care
- One Vision Housing
- Sefton Council for Voluntary Services (CVS)
- Venus
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue
- Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner Merseyside

4. Our Vision

That domestic and sexual abuse is viewed and challenged as an unacceptable form of behaviour by all our communities.

That victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and their families in Sefton feel safer in their communities, are protected from harm, and are able to move forward positively with their lives as a result of receiving the support and interventions they need.

That the behaviour of perpetrators is effectively challenged, and perpetrators are fully held to account.

5. Objectives

- To prioritise a strategic partnership approach to the reduction of domestic and sexual abuse in our communities.
- To improve the prevention, early identification and response to domestic and sexual abuse.
- To increase the reporting of domestic and sexual abuse through awareness raising and access to support services.
- To work with commissioners to ensure a wide range of services are in place to support and protect victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, including children.
- To hold perpetrators to account through appropriate criminal justice sanctions and effective interventions that promote long term behaviour change.
- To safeguard children and vulnerable adults from the impacts of living within a household experiencing domestic and sexual abuse.

6. What is Domestic and Sexual Abuse?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides a definition of domestic abuse which is provided in full in Appendix A at the end of this document. In summary, it includes the following key points

The behaviour of a person towards another person is defined as “domestic abuse” if:

- both people are aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other and
- the behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is defined as “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.

Two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies:

- they are, or have been, married to each other
- they are, or have been, civil partners of each other
- they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- they are relatives

It should be noted behaviour considered as abusive towards a victim can also include conduct directed at another person eg the victim’s child/children

Children are also explicitly included within the Act as direct victims of domestic abuse. This includes circumstances where a child:

- sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse,
and
- is related to either the victim or perpetrator of the abuse

There is no one set definition of sexual violence or abuse; however, it is widely accepted as being any unwanted sexual act or activity. There are many different kinds of sexual violence and abuse, including rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by a stranger or by someone known.

7. The Domestic Abuse Act

In April 2021 the new Domestic Abuse Act was signed into law in England. The Act is designed to raise awareness of domestic abuse and provide a range of further protections for victims/survivors of domestic abuse as well as strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators. This includes:

- the creation of a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic abuse.

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Sefton Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-28

- the establishment in law of the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and the functions and powers within this role.
- provision for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order (*currently known as Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs)*).
- placing a duty on local authorities in England to provide accommodation based support to victims/survivors of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.

prohibition of perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the civil and family courts in England and Wales.

- the creation of a statutory presumption that victims/survivors of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts.
- clarifying the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989 to prevent family proceedings that can further traumatise victims/survivors.
- extending the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse.
- extending the offence of disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress (known as the “revenge porn” offence) to cover threats to disclose such material.
- the creation a new offence of non-fatal strangulation or suffocation of another person.
- clarifying by restating in statute law the general proposition that a person may not consent to the infliction of serious harm and, by extension, is unable to consent to their own death.
- extending the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences.
- providing for a statutory domestic abuse perpetrator strategy.
- Enabling domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody.
- placing the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing.
- providing that all eligible homeless victims/survivors of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance.

- ensuring that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured shorthold tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy.
- prohibiting GPs and other health professionals in general practice from charging a victims/survivor of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid.
- providing for a statutory code of practice relating to the processing of domestic abuse data for immigration purposes.

The Safe Accommodation Duty

Part 4 of the Act places a statutory duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation. Local authorities must:

- Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board
- Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victims or their children, including those who come from outside the area.
- Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment.

The Government's statutory guidance defines Safe Accommodation as:

Refuge accommodation

Single gender or single sex accommodation and domestic abuse support which is tied to that accommodation. The address will not be publicly available. Victims, including their children, will have access to a planned programme of therapeutic and practical support from staff. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing, but in both cases the service will enable peer support from other refuge residents.

Specialist safe accommodation

Single gender or single sex accommodation, alongside dedicated domestic abuse support which is tailored to also support those who share particular protected characteristic(s) and / or who share one or more vulnerabilities requiring additional support. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing, and the address will not be publicly available.

Dispersed accommodation

1. Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse), self-contained accommodation with a similar level of specialist domestic abuse support as provided within a refuge but which may be more suitable for victims who are unable to stay in a refuge with communal spaces, and/or where peer support from other residents may not be appropriate, due to complex support needs, or where older teenage sons cannot be accommodated in a women only refuge, for

example. Where two or more units share any part of the accommodation, including shared hallways or access routes, provision should be single gender or single sex.

2. Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse), self-contained 'semi-independent' accommodation which is not within a refuge but with support for victims who may not require the intensive support offered through refuge, but are still at risk of abuse from their perpetrator/s. Where two or more units share any part of the accommodation, including shared hallways or access routes, provision should be single gender or single sex.

Sanctuary Schemes

Provision of enhanced physical security measures to a home or the perimeter of the home. A Sanctuary Scheme is a survivor centred initiative which aims to make it possible for victims of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes, where it is safe for them to do so, where it is their choice, and where the perpetrator does not live in the accommodation.

Second stage accommodation

Accommodation temporarily provided to victims, including their children, who are moving on from other forms of relevant accommodation and/or who no longer need the intensive level of support provided in a refuge, but would still benefit from a lower level of domestic abuse specific support for a period before they move to fully independent and settled accommodation. Where second stage accommodation is in shared housing it should be single gender or single sex.

Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation

A safe place (single gendered or single sex, secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse) with domestic abuse support tied to the accommodation to enable victims to make informed decisions when leaving a perpetrator and seeking safe accommodation. For example, short term (e.g. 2-3 weeks) accommodation providing victims with the space and safety to consider and make informed decisions about the options available to them.

Accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast accommodation is not considered relevant safe accommodation and for this reason are specifically excluded in the Regulations.

Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation

The Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance describes Domestic Abuse Support within Safe / relevant Accommodation as:

- Overall management of services within relevant accommodation – including, the management of staff, payroll, financial and day to day management of services and maintaining relationships with the local authority.
- Support with the day-to-day running of the service, for example scheduling times for counselling sessions, group activities (such functions may often be undertaken by administrative or office staff)
- Advocacy support – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services.
- Domestic abuse prevention advice – support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to help them remain safe (including online), and to prevent re-victimisation.
- Specialist support for victims:
 - Designed specifically for victims with relevant protected characteristics (also known as by and for), such as faith services, translators and interpreters within BAME-led

- refuges, immigration advice, interpreters for victims identifying as deaf and / or hard of hearing, and dedicated support for LGBTQ+ victims [not limited to].
- Designed specifically for victims with unique and / or complex needs such as, mental health advice and support, drug and alcohol advice and support, including sign posting accordingly.
- Children's support – including play therapy and child advocacy.
- Housing-related support – providing housing-related advice and support, for example, securing a permanent home, rights to existing accommodation and advice on how to live safely and independently.
- Advice service – financial and legal support, including accessing benefits, support into work and establishing independent financial arrangements; and,
- Counselling and therapy (including group support) for both adults and children, including emotional support.

8. Links to Other Legislation, Strategies, Boards and Partnerships

In addition to the Domestic Act 2021, certain elements of domestic abuse are also covered by other existing Acts:

- The Serious Crime Act 2015: coercive control is an offence under Section 76.
- The Care Act 2014: local authorities are responsible for promoting individual wellbeing, including ensuring their freedom from abuse.
- The Health and Social Care Act 2012: Regulation 13 covers safeguarding service users from abuse.
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002: "seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person" is a form of harm under Section 120. This clarifies the definition of harm in the Children Act 1989.
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003 outlaws causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent.
- Housing Act 1996 Section 177
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

There are a number of local and national strategies, examples of practice learning evidence, research and guidance that also tie into this strategy. Locally, this includes the following:

- Safer Sefton Together Strategic Plan 2023-2026
- Children and Young People's Plan 2020-2025
- Sefton Integrated Early Help Strategy for Children, Young People and Families 2020-2025
- Sefton Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2026
- Sefton Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Strategic Plan 2022-2024
- Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023
- Sefton Housing Strategy 2022-2027

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- Working in partnership to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) across Merseyside. Delivery Plan 2022-2025. Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner.

Supporting the delivery of these strategies and the wider domestic and sexual abuse agenda are a number of multi agency partnerships. These are an integral link to the work of the Domestic abuse Partnership Board and this Strategy.

- Safer Sefton Together Partnership
- Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Sefton Safeguarding Adults Partnership
- Health & Wellbeing Board
- Merseyside Strategic Domestic Violence and Abuse Group (SDVAG) and Sexual Violence Group

The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board supports the recognition domestic abuse is being given nationally by the government, as well as the ongoing work of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and will ensure this strategy is reviewed to incorporate any further new legislation, programmes, or best practice as required.

9. Information and Data

Domestic and sexual abuse are national issues that have an enormous impact on the lives of those it affects. Data does not accurately reflect the true scale of the issue and it is widely accepted that any figures will be an underrepresentation. However, they do provide some context on the extent and nature of the problem. Current statistics and research highlighted in Sefton's Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment include:

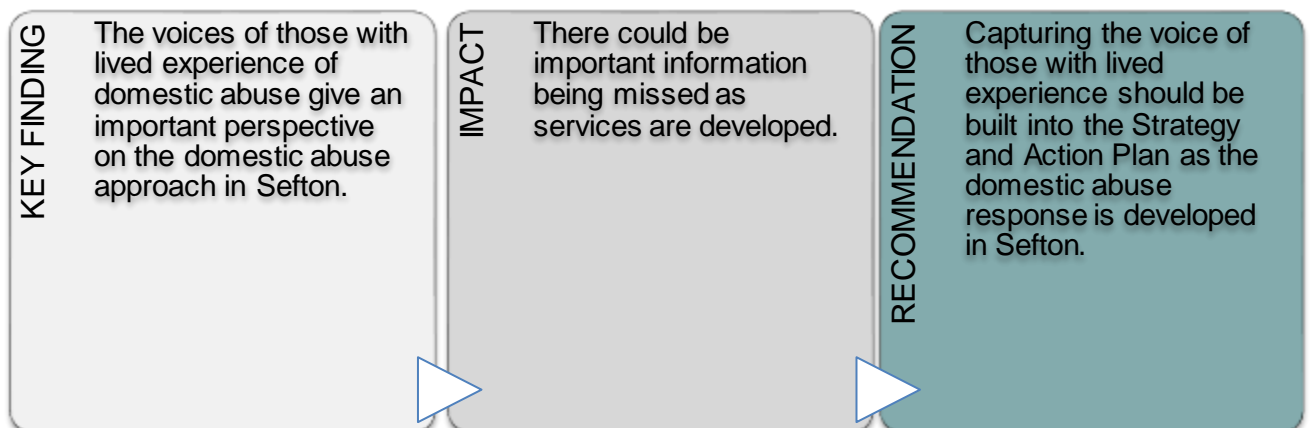
National context

- It is estimated 5.5% of adults in England and Wales aged 16 to 74 years (2.23 million people) experienced domestic abuse in 2019/20 (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2020, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).
- In 2020/21, the police recorded 1,459,663 domestic abuse related incidents of which 845,744 were recorded as domestic abuse related crimes. This increased to 1,500,369 incidents in 2021/22 of which 910,980 were recorded as domestic abuse related crimes. (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2021 and November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).
- Female victims accounted for 73% of domestic abuse related crimes recorded by the police 2020/21 and 74% in 2021/22 (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2021 and November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).
- There were 373 victims of domestic homicide aged 16 and over in England and Wales between March 2019 and March 2021. 72% of these victims (269) were female. (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).
- Police in England and Wales made almost 245,000 referrals to social services for domestic abuse in 2020/21, with an average of 669 child protection referrals a day. (NSPCC [Record numbers of children and young people affected by domestic abuse | NSPCC](#)).

- The new Domestic Abuse Act has introduced compulsory Relationships Education for all primary school pupils and Relationship and Sex Education for all secondary school pupils in England (Sefton Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment).
- Rape Crisis England and Wales states 1 in 4 women have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult, 1 in 6 children have been sexually abused, and 1 in 20 men have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult ([rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/statistics-sexual-violence](https://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/statistics-sexual-violence)).
- Rape Crisis England and Wales states 1 in 2 rapes against women are carried out by their partner or ex partner. 5 in 6 rapes against women are carried out by someone they know. ([rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/statistics-sexual-violence](https://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/statistics-sexual-violence)).

Survivor Voice

The most important element of this Strategy is ensuring victim/survivor voices and experiences are clearly captured, listened to, and enacted upon to ensure Sefton's response to tackling domestic abuse is based on their needs. This was clearly highlighted in Sefton's Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment and is an area the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will continue to develop and work on.



The stories told by victims/survivors through the community survey and survivor interviews and group sessions highlight the difficulties and complexities involved in cases of domestic abuse and the importance of practitioners and first responders having an understanding of these complexities.

Some of the key findings from this consultation include:

- Experience of having an IDVA to provide support through the Court process was helpful, though earlier support would have been beneficial.
- Experiences of feeling unsupported by the police and the criminal justice process following reports of abuse meaning survivors felt let down and that there was no accountability for the perpetrator's actions.

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- Experiences of feeling ashamed of what had happened, fear they wouldn't be believed if they told someone, and fear of what their abuser would do that stopped them from telling anybody.
- Experiences of there being a lack of support put in place for their children.

Initial findings from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Mapping of Domestic Abuse Services across England and Wales (August 2022) also highlights some of the challenges faced by survivors of domestic abuse. These include:

- support services help victims/survivors to cope and to recover from the abuse they've experienced. Of those who expressed a view in the survey, there were significant differences between the two groups, with those who had accessed support more likely to report that they felt safer and more in control
- The majority of respondents stated that they wished to access a form of community-based service rather than an accommodation-based service, and it was forms of community-based services that victims/survivors were most likely to have been unable to access despite wishing to.
- The lack of support for children was particularly noteworthy. Almost all survivors who had children said that they would have wanted their children to have specific support, but just 29% said that their children had been able to access this type of support.
- Overall victims and survivors struggled to get help. Equally, they survey found significant regional variations and significant differences by sex and gender. People in the North West of England reported finding it most difficult to access help, with 45% of respondents saying it was 'quite difficult' or 'very difficult' to access help, Over two-thirds of men and over half of non-binary survivors found it 'quite difficult' or 'very difficult' to get help, in comparison to a third of women survivors.
- Victims/survivors with learning disabilities said often it was harder to recognise what was happening to them as domestic abuse, and that even where they did recognise this, they struggled to disclose the abuse. It was difficult to know how to report it, know where to get information or advice, or understand that they could contact the police.
- Victims/survivors also talked about the lack of counselling services that had an understanding of how to work with autistic or neurodiverse domestic abuse survivors.

10. A Coordinated Community Response

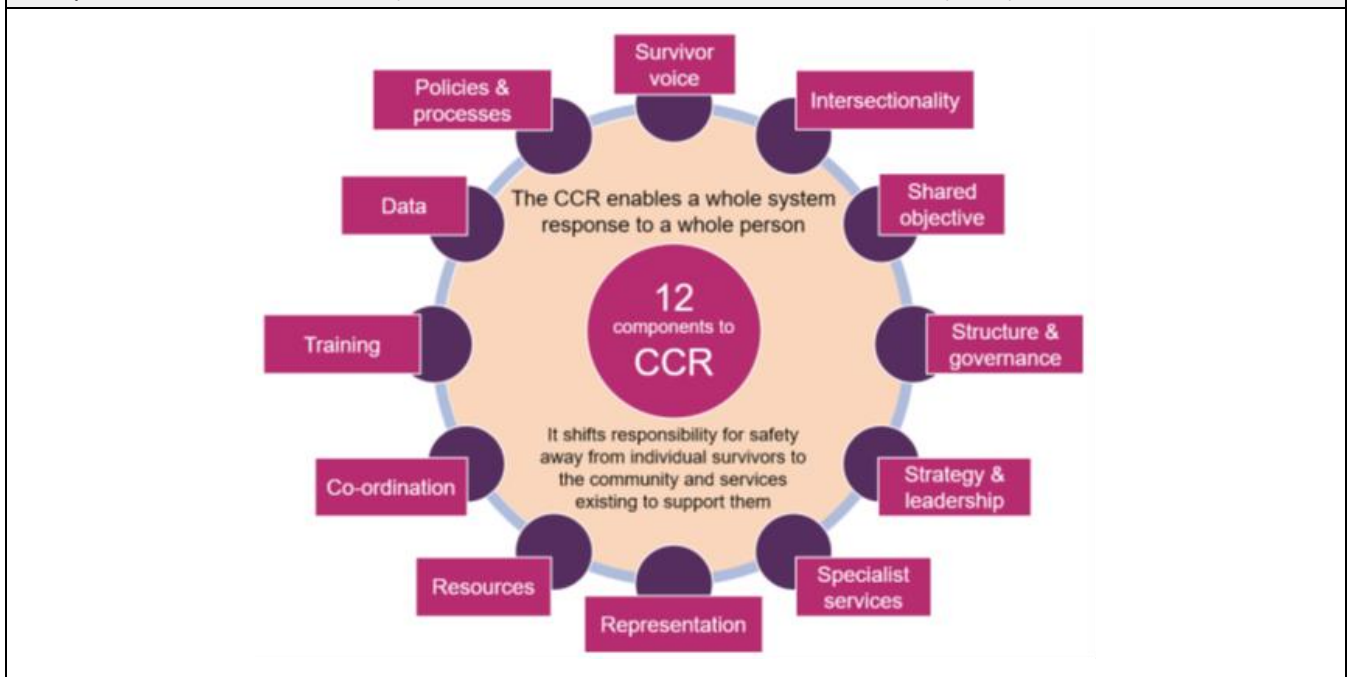
The co-ordinated community response (CCR) model encourages collaborative working with other agencies. The CCR is a collaborative multi-agency effort to change the culture of tolerance of domestic abuse by embedding practices and procedures which integrates victim/survivor safety and holds the perpetrator to account for abuse.

The CCR encompasses the broadest possible response to domestic abuse addressing prevention, early intervention, dealing with crisis, risk fluctuation, and long-term recovery and safety, working with a wide range of services, pathways, agencies, and systems. The

fundamental premise of the CCR is that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a family or individual within that family, but all may have insights and can provide interventions that are crucial to their safety and wellbeing. The CCR enables a whole-system response to a whole person. It shifts responsibility for safety away from individual survivors to the community and services existing to support them.¹

Victims/survivors of domestic and sexual abuse – adult or child – require a coordinated, multi-agency response with all agencies working collaboratively to provide a response that is effective in meeting their needs and making them safer. The model guides coordinators to build interventions within systems that are aligned with the lived experience of victims/survivors.

components of the CCR model (From Guidance: In Search of Excellence 2020 (ISOE))



For the CCR to be effective, the responsibility for support and intervention must be spread across agencies, rather than held with a single agency or person. This approach is an integral part of this strategy and the key priority themes it includes.

11. Strategic Themes

These are the overarching strategic themes the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will focus on over the next 5 years. These themes will form the basis of a partnership action plan which will detail how these priorities will be delivered.

1. Prevent

Early intervention provision, including improving public knowledge on domestic and sexual abuse to drive a cultural shift, intervening earlier to prevent and reduce the impact of longer term poor outcomes, and breaking the cycle of abuse across generations.

- There is clear and consistent information is available to the public on domestic and sexual abuse, including practical tools, advice and the support services available.
- There is a need for all services and practitioners to be aware of the signs of domestic and sexual abuse, how to respond to these initially, and where to signpost to for more comprehensive specialist support.
- Promotional campaigns reinforce both what constitutes domestic and sexual abuse and what support services are available and ensuring links are made to appropriate regional and national campaigns.
- Educational programmes are available for children and young people focusing on healthy relationships and developing resilience to help prevent future abusive behaviours.
- There is a quality assured offer of support for children and young people causing harm to help prevent this behaviour escalating.
- Domestic abuse is considered as a routine enquiry by a wide range of agencies and practitioners across Sefton, using a trauma informed approach.
- Activities that focus on supporting positive mental wellbeing to help prevent self-harm and suicide.

2. Protect

Keeping victims/survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and their children safe in a consistent and coordinated way, providing safe and quality assured support services, and challenging the behaviour of perpetrators whilst also offering opportunities to change.

- Victims/survivors and their families have a consistent and effective response from agencies to disclosures of domestic and sexual abuse that helps protect them from further harm.
- Agencies are consistent and effective in recognising and identifying risks associated with domestic and sexual abuse; workers proactively use professional curiosity and take action.
- Organisations have clear and easily accessible policies on domestic abuse to support their employees.

- There are a range of quality assured, evidence-based support services for victims/survivors to ensure work is delivered safely, responds to need, reduces risk and is in partnership with other agencies.
- This includes ensuring victims/survivors with additional vulnerabilities and specific needs can access support that meets their needs – specifically around those with protected characteristics, older people and those with complex lives.
- There is a range of specific support available for children and young people affected by domestic and sexual abuse.
- There is a range of safe accommodation options for victims/survivors of domestic abuse to enable them to leave abusive relationships safely and access the ongoing support they need.
- The behaviour of perpetrators is proactively challenged and held to account in a consistent and appropriate way and there are a range of interventions available to support behaviour change.
- There are effective and efficient multi agency risk management processes, including MARAC and MAPPA, that are regularly reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose.

3. Repair

Supporting the development of resilience for families and individuals to move on and deal with future life challenges, providing ongoing support beyond crisis intervention.

- Provision of a range of ongoing support for victims/survivors and children to reduce the impact of abuse and to recover from trauma.
- Provision of wider support opportunities for perpetrators of domestic abuse to sustain positive behaviour change long term.
- Criminal justice interventions achieve positive outcomes for victims/survivors to support them to move on with their lives.
- A wide range of organisations that can provide ongoing community based support for individuals and families based on their needs.

12. Outcomes

Based on the objectives outlined above, this strategy seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Service providers and front line staff are equipped to recognise and respond to domestic and sexual abuse.

- Information about the support available for domestic and sexual abuse victims/survivors is clear, consistent, and accessible.
- Our community is educated as to what domestic and sexual abuse is, and what services are available in Sefton.
- Sefton residents feel confident and able to report incidents of domestic and sexual abuse.
- Consistent processes and systems are in place to respond appropriately to domestic and sexual abuse.
- Victims/survivors and their children are offered person centred support to address their specific needs.
- Perpetrators of domestic and sexual abuse are dealt with appropriately.
- Repeat incidents of domestic and sexual abuse are reduced.

13. Monitoring and Measuring the Impact

Sefton's Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will be responsible for the monitoring of the Strategy and will oversee the development of a Strategy Action Plan and Performance Framework which will set out the detail of how the priorities will be delivered.

The Partnership will also review the strategy on an annual basis and will consider:

- Progress made against the strategy's objectives.
- The overall impact and effectiveness of the strategy measured through the strategy outcomes
- New legislation or government directives for incorporation in the strategy.
- Local need and any other emerging priorities.

14. Further Information

Local Strategies and Plans

Sefton Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment August 2022

Safer Sefton Together Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Safeguarding Sefton's Children: Level of Need Guidance
[sefton_level_of_need_guidance_july_2020.pdf](https://seftoncp.org.uk/sefton_level_of_need_guidance_july_2020.pdf) (seftoncp.org.uk)

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Sefton Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-28

Children and Young People's Plan 2020-2025

[Microsoft Word - Children and young people's plan 2020-2025 \[5\].docx \(sefton.gov.uk\)](#)

Sefton Integrated Early Help Strategy for Children, Young People and Families 2020-2025

[sefton-early-help-strategy-2019-2025-final.pdf](#)

Sefton Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26

[www.sefton.gov.uk/media/4575/emotional-wellbeing-strategy-2021-2026-85.pdf](#)

Sefton Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Strategic Plan 2022-24

[board vision and strategic plan oct 21.pdf \(seftonsab.org.uk\)](#)

Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025

[the-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2020-2025.pdf \(sefton.gov.uk\)](#)

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023

[Microsoft Word - Draft Sefton Homelessness Strategy 2018 - 2023 \(1\).docx](#)

Sefton Housing Strategy 2022-2027

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/media/6063/sefton-housing-strategy-2022-2027.pdf>

Appendix A - Definition of domestic abuse as outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Section 1: Definition of “domestic abuse”

- (1) This section defines “domestic abuse” for the purposes of this Act.
 - (2) Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if— (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other, and (b) the behaviour is abusive.
 - (3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—
 - (a) physical or sexual abuse;
 - (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
 - (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
 - (d) economic abuse
 - (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;
- and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.
- (4) “Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to —
 - (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
 - (b) obtain goods or services.
 - (5) For the purposes of this Act, A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).
 - (6) References in this Act to being abusive towards another person are to be read in accordance with this section.
 - (7) For the meaning of “personally connected”, see section 2.

Section 2: Definition of “personally connected”

- (1) Two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies —
 - (a) they are, or have been, married to each other;
 - (b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
 - (c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
 - (d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
 - (e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
 - (f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));
 - (g) they are relatives.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(f) a person has a parental relationship in relation to a child if —
 - (a) the person is a parent of the child, or;
 - (b) the person has parental responsibility for the child.
- (3) In this section —

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Sefton Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-28

“child” means a person under the age of 18 years;

“civil partnership agreement” has the meaning given by section 73 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004;

“parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989;

“relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

Section 3: Children as victims of domestic abuse (1) This section applies where behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is domestic abuse. (2) Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who – (a) sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse, and (b) is related to A or B. (3) A child is related to a person for the purposes of subsection (2) if – (a) the person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child, or (b) the child and the person are relatives. (4) In this section – “child” means person under the age of 18 years; “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act); “relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted?msclid=de30bb11b4ea11ecab99844c5b3e2ec2>

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Equality Impact Assessment – Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-2028

Details of proposal:

Sefton is looking to adopt a revised Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy for 2023-2028. The Strategy has been revised following the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The strategy also includes the Council's statutory responsibilities under the Safe Accommodation duty. The Strategy has been written and approved by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board following the completion of Local Strategic Needs Assessment.

Ramifications of Proposal:

The Strategy will look to address issues of Domestic Abuse broken down into 3 main themes:

- **Prevent** – Early intervention and prevention to reduce the cycle of abuse.
- **Protect** - Keeping victims and their families' safe whilst challenging the behaviour of perpetrators.
- **Repair** - Providing ongoing support beyond crisis intervention and developing resilience for the future.

The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will develop an action plan to accompany the lifetime of the strategy in order to deliver the priorities identified in a realistic timeframe. Accompanying this will be a commissioning plan to provide new or enhanced services to address need and any identified gaps in provision.

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Are there any protected characteristics that will be disproportionately affected in comparison to others?

It is accepted that Domestic Abuse can affect anyone irrespective of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity. This is an important message to impart. Domestic Abuse does not happen to a certain type of person. Just because someone does not look like a “typical victim” does not mean s/he is not suffering from domestic abuse.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- *Age*
- *Disability*
- *Gender Reassignment*
- *Marriage and Civil Partnership*
- *Race*
- *Religion or Belief*
- *Sex*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *Pregnancy and Maternity*

Activities to prevent Domestic Abuse, support victims and deal with perpetrators need to be designed to meet the legitimate and particular considerations of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity.

Sex

The Domestic Abuse strategy recognises that it affects men as well as women. There is a risk that victims are portrayed only as women. The activities proposed in the strategy will, wherever possible, cover both genders in terms of victims and perpetrators. The local refuge is only available to females. It has been recognised that there is a lack of services for males in Sefton. This is a concern the strategy aims to address. There are real differences in how the genders experience Domestic Abuse and this will lead to variation in the approach taken towards men and women. Women do seem to experience the most serious physical and repeated assaults

Female victims accounted for 73% of domestic abuse related crimes recorded by the police 2020/21 and 74% in 2021/22 (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2021 and November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).

There were 373 victims of domestic homicide aged 16 and over in England and Wales between March 2019 and March 2021. 72% of these victims (269) were female. (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).

Sexual Orientation

The DA Act 2021 applies to same sex relationships in the same way as heterosexual relationships. This strategy also applies to people suffering from domestic abuse in same sex relationships. Training packages and publicity will stress this. The Local Domestic Abuse Partnership may consider it worthwhile to target our LGBT+ community to encourage victims to seek help.

Disability

The Domestic Abuse Partnership recognises the additional problems faced by victims with a disabling condition. The local refuge is accessible for people with mobility problems. The problems faced by disabled people are not seen as different, but over and above those facing people without a disability. Regarding mental health, this is complex. As a rule of thumb, all victims of domestic abuse (and their children) will have a reduced level of mental well-being as a result of the abuse. This needs to be taken into consideration by those offering them services. For someone who is depressed, making major changes can seem too daunting despite the risks of staying in a relationship. The strategy recognises the role of counselling for victims and their children. Risk assessments for victims must include the risk of suicide and self-harm. It can also be argued, that the perpetrators of Domestic Abuse have mental health problems expressed by the need to feel power and control. Sometimes this stems from experiencing abuse in the home as a child. This again emphasises why work with children in violent homes is so important as it can help break patterns of abusive behaviour. There is a link between mental health problems and drug and alcohol misuse for both the perpetrators and victims of Domestic Abuse. It is important for substance misuse treatment services to respond to Domestic Abuse and work closely with partners on the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

Age

There is no upper age limit to being a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse. Organisations representing older people will be made aware of this strategy. Domestic abuse has a detrimental impact on children, as this strategy has emphasised. The strategy aims to deal with concerns about:

- The impact on children in violent homes
- Young people adopting violent/victims patterns in dating relationships or towards other family members.

There will be a focus on work in schools, especially with primary age children.

The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board will include amongst publicity campaigns messages, as part of its VAWG Strategy aimed at young women regarding dating violence, date rape and sexual assaults.

Race

The strategy has covered the lack of culturally sensitive services for victims from ethnic minorities. There is concern at the lack of reporting from certain communities. This may mean that current data in relation to offenders and victims does not present an accurate picture of domestic violence within ethnic minority communities. Safer Sefton Together's approach to VAWG also covers so called Honour Based Abuse such as Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). This issue has both an age and gender bias as problems are faced most by young people and are most detrimental to young women. However, it will not be overlooked that Forced Marriage affects men. Raising awareness of forced marriage will need to be done sensitively with the aim of working with local communities.

Pregnancy & Maternity

We know that the risk of domestic abuse increases during pregnancy and therefore the strategy will ensure that women who are pregnancy will be able to access the help they need as well as their unborn child.

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Gender Reassignment

Whilst not revealed during the needs assessment there may be issues to take into account around trans or non-binary victims of domestic violence and how to provide for their needs while maintaining safe single sex spaces.

Consultation:

The needs assessment carried out a number of focus group engagement sessions with victims/survivors as well as collection of views through interviews and questionnaires. The views of victims/survivors in Sefton has shaped the strategy. We are keen to further develop the victim / survivor voice and it be at the heart of all strategic decisions. This will be regularly reviewed.

Is there evidence that the Public Sector Equality Duties will be met?

The Equality Act 2010 requires that those subject to the Equality Duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*
- *Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- *Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.*
- *Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.*
- *Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.*

The purpose of the strategy is to provide Domestic & Sexual Abuse support services for victims of Domestic and Sexual Abuse/Violence no matter what their background. Indeed, the strategy aims to protect the most vulnerable in our society and provide support to increase their resilience in order to break the cycle of abuse.

What actions will follow if proposal accepted by cabinet & Council?

Include details of any mitigating action and ongoing monitoring to address any of the equality impacts highlighted above

Next steps will include the completion of an action plan to accompany the priorities identified within the Strategy and from the Needs Assessment. Accompanying the Action Plan will be a commissioning plan. The strategy and action plan will be reviewed regularly throughout its lifespan.

One of the first priorities will be develop a stronger survivor voice. Whilst survivors are represented on the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board by agencies that support them, we are keen to develop a survivor forum that will have representatives on the Partnership Board.

Once established regular engagement with the survivor forum (s) as representatives of victims / survivors will take place throughout the lifespan of the strategy and beyond.

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Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date of Meeting:	2 February 2023 2 March 2023
Subject:	Adoption of the Safer Sefton Together Strategy		
Report of:	Assistant Director of People (Communities)	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

Safer Sefton Together (SST) Partnership have produced a 3-year strategy. The strategy reflects the priorities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the priority themes contained within the annual Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment (SSNA) as well as local knowledge gained from staff, elected members and community groups.

Recommendation:

Cabinet:

That Cabinet recommend to Council, as per the Constitution, the adoption of the 3-year Safer Sefton Together Strategy as part of its statutory Community Safety responsibilities.

Council

The Council approve the adoption of the 3-year Safer Sefton Together Strategy as part of the Council's statutory Community Safety responsibilities.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

By adopting the strategy, the Council can bid for additional funding streams that will serve to address the priorities contained within. The strategy places the priorities for Community Safety on a more realistic 3 year timetable that allow for longer term projects, that will affect significant change, to be commissioned.

By adopting the strategy, the Council, and wider partnership, will have an overarching strategic document to inform the delivery of services and can bid for additional funding streams that will serve to address the priorities contained within .

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

The alternative option is to not adopt the strategy which will leave the Council vulnerable to future funding allocations.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The Council currently receives **£332k** Crime & Disorder Reduction Grant per year.

The Council currently spends **£154,290** on posts linked to Community Safety Outcomes

- Anti-Social Behaviour Officers
- Hate Crime Coordinator
- Management oversight

(B) Capital Costs

None

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):	
None	
Legal Implications:	
None	
Equality Implications:	
The Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 2	
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
In adopting the strategy this will have a neutral effect on the climate emergency.	

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:

The strategy will support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities that are affected by crime

Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The strategy will be a major contributing factor to developing and supporting our communities to become more confident and resilient.
Commission, broker and provide core services: N/A
Place – leadership and influencer: N/A
Drivers of change and reform: N/A
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: N/A
Greater income for social investment: N/A
Cleaner Greener N/A

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7086/23.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5286/23) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

External consultations with stakeholders have taken place.

Implementation Date for the Decision

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

Contact Officer:	Steve Martlew
Telephone Number:	07973 988996
Email Address:	steven.martlew@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Safer Sefton Together – Strategic Plan 2023-2026
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

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1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 22 June 2022, the Safer Sefton Together Partnership (SST) received a report outlining the intention of refreshing its strategy from an annual plan to a longer term 3-year strategy. The strategy would take into account the priorities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the priority themes contained within the annual Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment (SSNA) as well as local knowledge gained from staff, elected members and community groups.
- 1.2 Partners were invited to comment on the priorities as well as contribute to work already being undertaken as well as comment on gaps that should be addressed in the future. Furthermore, partners were asked to comment on where strategic connection with other boards, partnership and strategies existed as well as what metrics could be used to measure success of the strategy.

2. Safer Sefton Together – Strategic Plan 2023-2026

- 2.1 The Strategy contains 6 themed priorities
 - Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls
 - Vulnerable People
 - Child Exploitation
 - Community Engagement
 - Serious Organised Crime & Serious Acquisitive Crime
- 2.2 The strategy outlines the success we have achieved for each theme so far but sets out the priorities for activity over the next 3 years. Many of the areas for development involve a public health approach to long term generational, behaviour change. The strategy also includes a list of boards, partnerships and strategies where the work of the SST overlaps and a strategic link needs to be maintained. The strategy is included at Appendix 1
- 2.3 Safer Sefton Together Partnership will be responsible for the monitoring of the Strategy and will oversee the development of a Strategy Action Plan and Performance Framework which will set out the detail of how the priorities will be delivered.

The Partnership will also review the strategy on an annual basis and will consider:

- Progress made against the strategy's objectives.
- The overall impact and effectiveness of the strategy measured through the strategy outcomes
- New legislation or government directives for incorporation in the strategy.
- Local need and any other emerging priorities.

Safer Sefton Together – Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Foreword by Councillor Trish Hardy

Welcome to Safer Sefton Together Strategy 2023-2026. Creating strong, safe, and resilient communities is a key priority for the Council and I am proud to chair the Safer Sefton Together partnership in delivering effective crime prevention and reduction programmes.

The past three years has seen significant unheralded challenges such as the pandemic, Welfare Reforms, severe reductions in public sector funding and significant ongoing change to criminal justice policy. With the cost-of-living crisis beginning to take effect in our communities it is essential that we work together effectively and flexibly as a partnership in order to meet the changing environment in which we work.

This strategy outlines our priorities over the next 3 years, but we are also mindful of the need to be flexible to meet new challenges should they emerge as well as respond to changing demographics and more culturally diverse communities. We will review this strategy and the work we do annually to ensure we are delivering against our priorities and those of the Merseyside Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

We have achieved so much as a partnership over recent years but there is so much more to do.

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Introduction

Safer Sefton Together, in its capacity as the local statutory Community Safety Partnership (CSP), brings together the key agencies involved in crime prevention and community safety work. It includes Sefton Council, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, National Probation Service, Sefton's Integrated Care Partnership and a range of other public, private and third sector delivery partners. Together these partners address issues associated with crime reduction and community safety.

The aim of the partnership is to ensure that Sefton is a safe place to live, work and visit. Each year we undertake a Community Safety Strategic Needs Assessment (SSNA) where we analyse local, regional, and national data as well as listen to feedback from our communities to identify local needs and priorities for our communities that helps with strategy and service planning.

This document identifies the priorities for Safer Sefton Together over the next 3 years, what work the partnership is already undertaking in these areas and what work is planned. Many of our priorities do not change substantially from year to year as they follow long term trends and whilst our strategic priorities will be established for a three-year period we recognise that we may, however, need to re-focus our priorities in response to emerging or changing trends in crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), the impact of previous interventions, emerging external national or local factors, and learning gained through delivery of existing priorities. We may also need to respond to changing demographics and changes to the culturally diverse nature of our communities. Such requirements will be identified via our annual Community Safety Needs Assessment and through an annual review of this plan to ensure that work-plans and outcomes are appropriately delivered.

It is also important to recognise that our 6 priorities are not mutually exclusive of each other and as such there is significant cross over between all of the priorities.

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Safer Sefton Together Priorities 2023-2026

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- Youth ASB
- Scrambler bikes / E-Scooters/bikes
- Fear of ASB
- Prevention & Early Intervention around parks and coastal areas

Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)

- Links to Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAPB) & Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Oversight
- Sexual offences
- Safe Travel
- Modern Slavery
- Night Time Economy

Vu

Child Exploitation

- Prevent
- Hate Crime
- Migration
- Perpetrator
- County Lines
- Multi Agency Childhood Exploitation (MACE)
- Exploitation Team Around the Child (ETAC)
- Early Intervention & Prevention

Community Engagement

- Neighbourhood Teams
- Youth Engagement
- Violence Reduction Partnership

Serious Organised Crime (SOC) & Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)

- Violence Reduction Partnership
- Partnership working with Police
- Muti Agency Response to Threat Harm & Risk (MARTHUR)

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Priority 1 - Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

We recognise the corrosive effect of anti-social behaviour on victims' health and wellbeing and the negative impact on the wider community. As a partnership we have strong multi-agency arrangements and interventions which are making a difference.

We know that there are seasonal fluctuations in anti-social behaviour, in particular levels rise in the summer holidays and around Halloween and Bonfire Night and we plan specific operations and events at these times. We also work closely with partners including Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service with Operation Banger and Operation Beachsafe initiatives.

Anti-social behaviour is not at the same levels around the borough. We share information between agencies so that we can respond to emerging issues in neighbourhoods and deliver local responses with place-based delivery models. We use a problem-solving approach to tailor our responses to the issue at hand, whether this is caused by an individual or by groups of people causing nuisance. Using this problem-solving approach, we are able to respond appropriately with a number of interventions.

Aside from legal powers, partner agencies work together to deliver culturally sensitive mediation interventions, including restorative justice approaches, which guide the offender to address their behaviour and the impact this has on their victims.

What have we achieved so far?

- Manage children through an out of court process to prevent further offending, including coordinating support or providing information about what is on offer.
- Operation Banger – providing diversionary activities for young people around mischief night (Halloween) and Bonfire Night.
- Scrambler bike operations & education for young people using scrambler bikes.
- Park Nights – providing diversionary activities for young people during the summer months.
- Operation Beachsafe – providing a high visibility presence around the coastline throughout summer.
- Creation of a coastwide Public Space Protection Order to provide additional powers to prevent ASB
- Sefton Young Advisors have conducted consultation work with young people about community safety
- Support provided to Asylum seekers who have experienced ASB

Areas for Development for 2023-2026

- We will fully utilise powers contained within the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 to tackle behaviours which have a negative effect on communities and individuals. This will include providing mechanisms for people to report such behaviour and where appropriate bringing action against perpetrators.
- We will use a range of approaches with offenders and those at risk of offending, including early intervention and support, prevention, diversion and enforcement. We will monitor the effectiveness of our interventions and continually seek to develop and improve on our practice.
- We will involve communities, individuals, businesses and schools using a range of schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch, Crimestoppers & Pubwatch. We will work with Sefton Youth

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Service to promote a robust preventative / educational programme that runs across the borough. Our approach will include education within our schools and looking to identify area based “Champions” within communities.

- Our approach will be the early identification and implementation of actions to tackle new and emerging issues such as on-line based crime and harassment. There are often certain areas which have a higher level of ASB and we will share information and use the measures available to all partners, including Registered Providers of housing to address any “hotspots” of ASB in particular locations. We will work with partners to reduce and prevent ASB which arises seasonally during school holidays and around Bonfire Night and Halloween night.
- There is a wealth of evidence available on the impact of crime and ASB on the quality of life of individuals and communities as a whole. We will ensure that we treat victims with respect and place them at the centre of our interventions. We will ensure that victims have access to support services including Victim Support, support from landlords and other third sector groups.

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Priority 2 - Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act received Royal Assent in April 2021 and became the largest piece of legislation in history in relation to Domestic Abuse (DA). The Act placed a responsibility on Local Authorities to create a Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (LDAPB). The role of the partnership board is to drive the strategic direction for Domestic Abuse in its area. In Sefton the LDAPB is chaired by Cllr Hardy who also chairs the Safer Sefton Together (SST). There is also significant cross over in membership between both partnership boards. Therefore, the strategic direction and the response to DA will be driven by the LDAPB. However, the SST will retain the overview of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and ensure there is a strategic line of sight between both boards.

Violence Against Women & Girls

Safer Sefton Together is committed to ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and is determined to ensure that Sefton is a place where women and girls are safe and feel safe to pursue their lives free from fear and harassment. We believe that with effective earlier intervention, joint working and a drive to challenge the culture and attitudes that give rise to all forms of abuse, we can make Sefton a safe place for women and girls to live, work and enjoy their leisure time.

What have we achieved so far?

- Effective strategic links between SST & Sefton LDAPB
- Effective commissioning of local services such as Sefton Women's and Children's Aid (SWACA), Sefton Women's Centre (SWAN), Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Independent Domestic & Sexual Violence Adviser (IDSVA) at Southport & Ormskirk Hospital.
- Increase of Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) cohort by 100% over the last 3 years
- Linked in with VCF organisations, such as Parenting2000, who deliver "The Girls Impression" course to build self-esteem, confidence and learn self-defence.
- The Diverse Ethnic Background Service (DEBS) is supporting asylum seekers at risk of honour-based violence and sexual harassment of East European females in the workplace.
- Coordination of Home Office "Street Safe" referrals.

Areas for Development for 2023-2026

- Education for Girls that violence towards them is not acceptable in any circumstance also covering issues such as consent and healthy relationships
- Education for Boys that VAWG is not acceptable in any circumstance also covering issues such as consent and healthy relationships
- Training for Teaching and support staff in spotting violence issues (sexual harassment, sexual violence and online sexual abuse) and delivering anti-misogyny training as well as such as consent and healthy relationships
- All responses to VAWG should be victim-led and that further roll out of trauma informed training for front line practitioners and delivering intervention programmes such as A Diverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) is critical.
- A culture of safe disclosure is created, and frontline staff exercise robust professional curiosity where abuse is suspected.

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- Training for staff on public transport and taxi drivers to recognise signs of sexual harassment and violence
- Providing well-lit routes
- Providing an adequate and robust CCTV network
- Developing the learning from completed DHRs and ensuring this reaches frontline workers across the partnership workforce.

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Priority 3 – Vulnerable People

Partners in Sefton have developed effective practice to support our most vulnerable residents including effective use of multi-agency information sharing, risk assessment and case conferencing processes. Although our approach to addressing the needs of our most vulnerable residents is strong, partners recognise that more can be done in terms of early intervention and prevention to ensure victims do not suffer re-victimisation.

What have we achieved so far?

- Merseyside Offender Mentoring Service supports the Building Better Relationships programme by supporting ex-offenders with this and referring ex-offenders to the course.
- Developed a relationship with Liverpool Pride to help explore needs and gaps for LGBTQ+ people in Sefton.
- Operation Lamprey (cuckooing) work with partners.
- Hate Crime Joint Action Group
- The Development of Safe Spaces and Hate Crime Reporting Centres
- Use of civil orders such as Domestic Violence Protection Orders, Stalking Protection Orders, Police Protection Orders and Stalking Protection Orders.
- Repeat victim reviews & action plans with partners.
- Merseyside Offender Mentoring Service delivers mentoring support as part of the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) programme to prevent offending and reduce re-offending while working with violent offenders and those involved in organised crime aged between 18 to 30.
- Commission health services for those involved in the criminal justice system
- Coordinate Learning from the Lives and Deaths for those with Learning Disability and autistic people (LeDeR)
- Sefton Multi Agency Partnership

Areas for Development for 2023-2026

- The population of people over the age of 64 continues to rise in Sefton. Evidence shows as well as being susceptible to exploitation, older people are less likely to report. We will ensure the stigma of being victim to such exploitation is challenged and enable people to speak out and feel protected. We will work with partners to raise awareness around this issue and how to access help and support.
- This will include people who have mental health problems, learning disabilities, physical disability, are homeless and/ or from a range of ethnic backgrounds or the refugee community. This will include promotion of reporting mechanisms where there is evidence of under reporting from within some of these groups.
- We will develop a Prevent action plan in order to work with partners to safeguard and support those people most at risk of radicalisation to stop them becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- We will develop, in association with the LDAPB a range of perpetrators and behaviour change programmes – not just for those involved as DA perpetrators but for wider more harmful behaviour.
- Take appropriate enforcement action and ensure victims have access to support. We will use all powers and resources at our disposal including taking action through the Criminal Justice

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system where appropriate. We will make sure we adopt a victim centred approach, and that support is available.

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Priority 4 – Childhood Exploitation

We know that Children and Young people make up a significant proportion of both victims of crime and offenders in Sefton. We know that there is a clear relationship between members of Organised Criminal Groups (OCGs) and younger associates in street gangs. As well as childhood criminal exploitation (CE) Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is an area that has gained national prominence over the last few years and work has been undertaken over the last year to further develop our local understanding of the nature and prevalence of this form of exploitation.

What have we achieved so far?

- Support vulnerable children through a variety of means including direct work and intervention, coordinate other services to support including stat and voluntary agencies
- Develop safeguarding, welfare and management discussions as a partnership as part as the Multi Agency Childhood Exploitation (MACE) safeguarding framework. Sefton Children’s Services will be introducing a team that will focus solely on children who are victims of exploitation. This is known as Exploitation Team Around the Child (ETAC)
- Commission health service for young people under youth justice team and criminal justice liaison.
- Home Office funding for County Lines work
- Carry out investigation, disruption and safeguarding activity around CE & CSE
- Commissioning GANGS project as part of the Early Intervention & Prevention approach.

Areas for Development for 2023-2026

- Invest in early intervention and prevention services, to ensure young people are identified sooner and offered services to prevent them from being drawn into antisocial behaviour, exploitation, and criminal behaviour.
- Educate children and young people on the risks and dangers of criminal and sexual exploitation, violence, and being drawn into terrorism.
- Continue to offer young people access to specialist services, such as Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service (CAMHS), which provides much-needed wellbeing and treatment services for young people. Offer a whole-family approach to support those who have witnessed or been subjected to violence or exploitation.
- Ensure that, during all transition stages (for instance primary to secondary school, child to adult), young people have access to the support they need to prevent them from being excluded from education and becoming at risk of being drawn into criminality.
- Increase the awareness and understanding of the threats from cyber-crime and online abuse, criminal and sexual exploitation, and bullying and hate crime, by working with parents and carers to raise awareness of the dangers of these types of crime

Priority 5 – Community Engagement

Working with our Communities to understand the issues they are facing with regards to Community Safety and how the partnership can support them to become more resilient is a priority that underpins all of the other priorities within this strategy.

We need effective engagement mechanisms to be able to communicate with a wide range of groups such as young people, local leaders, friends of groups, tenants and resident's groups among many others. This will help us understand how our communities feel about living in Sefton.

What have we achieved so far?

- Safer Schools Officers supporting schools throughout the borough.
- Community activities such as bike marking, mobile police station deployments, participatory budgeting programmes.
- Youth service involvement in youth engagement.
- Supported the development of a new Sefton Youth Voice Strategic Steering Group
- Working with Violence Reduction Partnership on Hope for Sefton with Young Advisors.
- Diverse Ethnic Background Service (DEBS) working with the hate crime Joint Action Group (JAG) to target hot spots of criminality towards non-White British people and also with local schools when incidents of hate crime are reported.

Areas for Development for 2023-2026

- Work with Councillors and residents to build Neighbourhood plans that will support partnership working and ensure the voice of the resident is heard.
- Establish, where requested, local operational groups that can offer a forum for Councillors, partners and officers to problem solve local issues
- Continue to support community groups to develop and react to emerging issues. Encouraging collaborative working and a cooperative approach to funding applications and bid writing
- Ensuring newly elected councillors are supported during their induction into their wards, and offering advice and guidance

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Priority 6 – Serious Organised Crime (SOC) & Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC)

Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) presents a significant national threat due to links to drug trafficking, fraud, firearms offences, and other forms of serious violence. The changing nature of the threat posed by Serious and Organised Crime in Sefton and the links to child exploitation (CE) has focussed partnership attention in recent years on the relationship between child exploitation and serious organised crime in the Borough.

Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) presents a more local threat with both domestic and commercial burglary, robbery, theft of and from motor vehicles all linked to the supply of drugs and is intrinsically linked to SOC. It has an equally harmful impact to victims and our communities.

What have we achieved so far?

- Weekly Multi Agency Response Threat Harm & Risk (MARTHUR) meetings
- Home Office funding around County Lines / Serious Violence, Organised Crime Group (OCG) Management
- Overt and Covert policing operations.
- Reassurance around victims & neighbours of burglary including burglary prevention kits.
- Operation Pelican - Proactive SOC work.
- Partnership attendance at Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

Areas for Development for 2023-2026

- Further develop Sefton's multi-agency response to Serious and Organised Crime in order to deliver against regional and local priorities in this area.
- Improve use of data through development of a Local Organised Crime Profile
- Develop a common understanding among local partners of the threats, vulnerabilities and risks relating to serious and organised crime
- Provide information on which to base local programmes and action plans
- Support the mainstreaming of serious and organised crime activity into day-to-day policing, local government and partnership work
- Allow a targeted and proportionate use of resources
- Improving the use of data to improve understanding of the nature and prevalence of SOC & SAC
- Continue work with the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership in embedding a public health approach to violence reduction through early intervention.

Strategic Coordination

The SST world does not and cannot operate in isolation from other strategies and boards. How this strategy links into these other strategies and boards is integral in its delivery. Other strategies and boards are:

- Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board & Sefton's Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Sefton's Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP)
- SSCP Contextual Safeguarding sub-group
- Sefton Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board
- Sefton Multi Agency Partnership
- Merseyside VRP Steering Group
- Health & Well Being Board
- Strategic Domestic Violence and Abuse Group
- Merseyside Criminal Justice Board
- Safer Merseyside Partnership
- Youth Justice Partnership Board
- Children and Young People Partnership Board
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

Outcomes

Based on the objectives outlined above, this strategy seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- A reduction in serious violent crime (youths and adults, including Child Exploitation)
- A reduction in violence against women and girls (including domestic abuse and sexual violence)
- A reduction in all property crime
- A reduction in repeat offending (Crime and ASB)
- An effective response to anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- An increase in public engagement, confidence and satisfaction
- A reduction in the fear of crime
- A reduction in repeat victimisation, especially of vulnerable people

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Monitoring & Measuring the Impact

Safer Sefton Together Partnership will be responsible for the monitoring of the Strategy and will oversee the development of a Strategy Action Plan which will set out the detail of how the priorities will be delivered.

The Partnership will also review the strategy on an annual basis and will consider:

- Progress made against the strategy's objectives.
- The overall impact and effectiveness of the strategy measured through the strategy outcomes
- New legislation or government directives for incorporation in the strategy.
- Local need and any other emerging priorities.

Summary & Next Steps

Tackling and reducing crime and the fear of crime is a long-term aspiration and will not be achieved overnight. Crime is often linked to other social issues such as poverty, lack of education, substance misuse amongst others. It is important therefore that the Safer Sefton Together Partnership work strategically across other partners and with our Sefton communities in order to achieve long term, sustainable, positive behaviour change.

The action plan that will accompany this strategy will be ambitious yet realistic with key milestones contained within. We still have a lot to learn and we need to be flexible enough to respond to opportunities and challenges as they emerge. Most importantly we need to work together, now more than any time before, in order to make Sefton a better place to live, work or visit.

Equality Impact Assessment – Safer Sefton Together Strategy 2023-2026

Details of proposal:

Safer Sefton Together (SST) Partnership have produced a 3-year strategy. The strategy reflects the priorities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the priority themes contained within the annual Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment (SSNA) as well as local knowledge gained from staff, elected members and community groups.

Ramifications of Proposal:

By adopting the strategy, the Council can bid for additional funding streams that will serve to address the priorities contained within. The strategy places the priorities for Community Safety on a more realistic 3 year timetable that allow for longer term projects, that will affect significant change, to be commissioned.

The Strategy contains 6 themed priorities

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women & Girls
- Vulnerable People
- Child Exploitation
- Community Engagement
- Serious Organised Crime & Serious Acquisitive Crime

Are there any protected characteristics that will be disproportionately affected in comparison to others?

It is accepted that crime can affect anyone irrespective of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity. This is an important message to impart. Crime does not happen to a certain type of person.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- *Age*
- *Disability*
- *Gender Reassignment*
- *Marriage and Civil Partnership*
- *Race*
- *Religion or Belief*
- *Sex*
- *Sexual Orientation*
- *Pregnancy and Maternity*

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Activities to prevent and reduce crime, support victims and deal with perpetrators need to be designed to meet the legitimate and particular considerations of Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity.

Sex

The Safer Sefton Together Strategy recognises that both men and women can be both victims and perpetrators of crime. The Strategy has a particular focus around Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and there is a particular synergy with the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

Female victims accounted for 73% of domestic abuse related crimes recorded by the police 2020/21 and 74% in 2021/22 (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2021 and November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).

There were 373 victims of domestic homicide aged 16 and over in England and Wales between March 2019 and March 2021. 72% of these victims (269) were female. (Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview November 2022, Office for National Statistics (ONS)).

Age

There is no upper age limit to being a victim or perpetrator of crime. We know that the fear of crime is more prevalent in older people and those that have been victims before. Organisations representing older people will be made aware of this strategy. Crime has a detrimental impact on children, as this strategy has emphasised. The strategy aims to deal with concerns about:

- The impact on children in organised crime / county lines / childhood exploitation
- Young people become involved in gangs and violence including carrying knives and guns.

There will be a focus on work in schools, especially with primary age children.

Race

The strategy has a particular section on dealing with hate crime as we know ethnic minority communities are particularly vulnerable to this sort of crime.

A recent Crime Survey for England and Wales revealed that minority ethnic communities have a greater fear of physical attack because of their skin colour than white communities, and that victims of hate crime overall are more likely to say that they are emotionally affected by the incidents than victims of many other types of crime.

Sexual Orientation

The hate crime section also covers the LGBT+ community who are particular susceptible to this sort of crime.

Religion & Belief

The hate crime section also covers those that may suffer hate crime due to religion or belief.

Gender Reassignment

The hate crime section also covers those that may suffer hate crime due to gender reassignment.

Is there evidence that the Public Sector Equality Duties will be met?

The Equality Act 2010 requires that those subject to the Equality Duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*
- *Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- *Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.*
- *Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.*
- *Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.*

It is the intention of the strategy to make a positive impact across the protected characteristics in terms of experiences of crime and fear of crime.

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What actions will follow if proposal accepted by cabinet & Council?

Include details of any mitigating action and ongoing monitoring to address any of the equality impacts highlighted above

Next steps will include the completion of an action plan to accompany the priorities identified within the Strategy. Part of the wider Merseyside Strategic work will be to engage with Communities around their experiences of crime and the fear of crime. We will use this information to further understand if the needs of any particular group are not being met.

The annual review of the Community Safety Strategic Needs assessment will be another tool we will use to engage with Sefton Communities about their experiences of Crime and the fear of crime. Any groups whose need are not being met will be identified and their needs addressed.

Agenda Item 6

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 2 February 2023
Subject:	Pre-Procurement Report for Land Based, Coastal Remote Sensing Services		
Report of:	Assistant Director of People (Operational In-House Services)	Wards Affected:	Ainsdale; Blundellsands; Cambridge; Church; Dukes; Harington; Linacre; Manor; Ravenmeols;
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary: To seek Cabinet approval of this pre-procurement report, as the total contract value (c£5m) exceeds the relevant threshold, to invite tenders through an open procurement procedure, for the provision of a land based coastal remote sensing services to collect a range of datasets to support sustainable coastal management decisions.

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet :

- (1) Approves the tender process to procure the provision of land based coastal remote sensing services, to be published on The Chest using an open tender procedure, as outlined in this report.
- (2) Authorises the awarding of a core contract period of 4 years from 1st May 2023 to 31st March 2027, with an option to extend by 3 x 12-month option periods available following the core period.
- (3) Gives delegated authority to the Assistant Director of People (Operational In-House Services), in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Health and Wellbeing to award the Contract resulting from the procurement and any extension.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

There are a number of existing radar systems across the north west region under contract through the existing framework. To enable the continued use of these and establishing new deployments a framework supplier is required. As this technology is relatively new there are a limited number of suppliers who can provide this service as such national frameworks have yet to be established and an open tender is the most appropriate manner in which to establish a new framework.

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Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)
 Deployments could be considered on a case by case basis, but this would significantly increase the number of procurement exercises and associated officer time. It could also result in several different systems being introduced that would reduce the efficiencies and compatibility across the region.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no direct revenue costs.

(B) Capital Costs

The Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme is within the approved Capital Programme, funded through an external grant from the Environmental Agency - a funding package of £5.6million from 2021-2027. A budget of £1.5million has been allocated in the programme 2021-2027 for this workstream.

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): Funding for the system up to 2027 can be met out of the existing regional monitoring capital programme. Funding post 2027 will subject to grant being allocated, if funding is not secured a budget is available to decommission the existing systems. The contract will make more staff time available for data analysis rather than survey work. All other requirements are met with existing IT equipment.</p>									
<p>Legal Implications: The contract will be openly tendered through the Chest portal and as determined by the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, the contract will need to be sealed as its total value will be in excess of £100,000.</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"> <tr> <td>Have a positive impact</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a neutral impact</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a negative impact</td> <td>N</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td>Y</td> </tr> </table> <p>The installation of the radar masts has small impact through the construction of a concrete footing for a lighting column upon which the radar is fitted. In some instances, they can be fitted to existing lighting columns. However, once operational their power demand is very small – equivalent of a couple of desktop pcs. A version of the deployment can run of its own solar panel and/or wind turbine. It can also offset the need for other remote surveys or ground based surveys. The main value of the system is the information it provides regarding coastal dynamics which feeds directly into coastal risk management plans and future coastal protection schemes. The data will make future plans more sustainable and enable decisions to</p>		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
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								

work with nature.
On balance these systems have a positive impact on the climate emergency.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: not applicable'
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The information collected will improve decisions made in relation to coastal protection and erosion. Support those communities at risk in those areas enabling them to better understand and prepare for the risks.
Commission, broker and provide core services: not applicable'
Place – leadership and influencer: This cutting edge technology can put the authority at the forefront of coastal monitoring and decision making. This will enable us to confidently participate in discussions relating to the coast.
Drivers of change and reform: Improve our understanding of the coastal system enabling challenge of standard practice to maximise our budgets and assets and ability to adapt o climate change risks.
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 (FD.7079/23) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5279/23) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

The North West and North Wales Coastal Group receive regular reports from the coastal monitoring programme and are supportive of the deployment of this survey method.

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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:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Sefton Council has been the lead authority for the North West Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme since 2007, collecting and analysing data to inform decisions relating to coastal erosion and flood risk management issues and support the delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan.
- 1.2 A nationally coordinated grant application was made to the Environment Agency in November 2019, and an indicative grant allocation of £5.6million, for the period 2021-2027 has been allocated to the North West programme (with the amounts for 2021 and 2022 being confirmed as programmed). Sefton Council manages the grant on behalf of all the North West Maritime Authorities.
- 1.3 Several frameworks were set up nationally at the start of the programme in 2021. Sefton Council has been using these to procure services for: Topographic Surveys Hydrodynamic Surveys, Analytical Services, Aerial Photography Surveys, Ecological Mapping and Bathymetric Surveys. These frameworks do not include provision for land based remote sensing technology.
- 1.4 Sefton Council established a framework that covered the period 2019-2021 with the optional 2yr extension being utilised to take the current framework up to 31st April 2023. Four systems have been deployed by Sefton using this framework. To continue to operate these systems to the end of the monitoring programme (2027) and establish new ones a new framework needs to be established.
- 1.5 The existing framework has been used by the Environment Agency to install a number of systems in East Anglia to support beach management activities.

2 Procurement Process

- 2.1 In consultation with the procurement team, it is proposed to establish a Framework Agreement, with individual pieces of work let on a 'call-off / direct award' basis and where the total value over the framework period would not exceed £5m. The programme's budget is £1.5m but other authorities would be able to use the framework (as set out in 2.6). The result of the procurement exercise would be the appointment of a single Framework provider.
- 2.2 A single framework provider will be procured via The Chest using an open tender process in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The basis of evaluation will be MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) taking into consideration a balance between Quality and Cost, with costs based on an agreed set of service rates.
- 2.3 The performance of the provider will be reviewed annually, and the Council will include a provision to terminate the contract if the performance of the provider does not meet the agreed performance indicators.
- 2.4 The Framework Agreement is proposed to run for a three-year core period, from 1st May 2023 to 31st March 2027. Subject to the satisfactory performance of the provider and, if there are schemes in development where further work is required, it is proposed to include 3 x 12-month option periods available following the core period. On completion of the procurement process, it is proposed that the Assistant Director of People (Operational In-House Services), in consultation with

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the relevant Cabinet Member – Health and Wellbeing, be delegated to award the Contract resulting from the procurement.

2.5 The range of data products that are expected to be included in the contract are as follows:

- topographical elevations in the intertidal region
- subtidal bathymetry
- surface current directions and magnitudes
- wave direction and period
- tidal elevations
- video camera data
- bird movements and congregations
- provision of bespoke training

2.6 The Framework would be available to Local Authority members of the North West and North Wales Coastal Group and the lead partners from the National Network of Regional Coastal monitoring Programmes as well as national organisations such as the Environment Agency.

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Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 2nd February 2023
Subject:	Sandbrook Way, Ainsdale – Acquisition and Development Brief		
Report of:	Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing)	Wards Affected:	Ainsdale;
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Skills		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

Report to update Cabinet on progress with the acquisition of leasehold interests in property at Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre and provide an update on the delivery of the Sandbrook Way Neighborhood Centre project including agreement to progress market testing the site development opportunity to identify market interest in the site.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) The content of the report be noted, in particular progress on the acquisition of outstanding lease interests.
- (2) Members note the Development Brief for this site and agree officers progress market testing of the site to identify developer interest in this site.
- (3) The Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) report to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills on the outcome of the market testing process.
- (4) The Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) be authorised to undertake preparatory work for use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers, if required, to assemble any remaining outstanding interests in this site and bring forward comprehensive development of this site.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

In order to bring forward comprehensive development of this site the whole site needs to be within Council ownership. Considerable progress has been made (through negotiation by agreement) with a number of the leasehold interest for site however there remain a

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number of leaseholders with which Sefton Council has been unable to yet reach agreement. Sefton Council is considering using compulsory acquisition powers to conclude these negotiations and in order to do this, the Council needs to be able to demonstrate it has a viable and deliverable development proposal for the site. Sefton Council therefore needs to market the opportunity and establish market interest. This recommendation will enable market testing to be undertaken based on a development brief prepared for the site.

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

Do not acquire leasehold interests – risk is the continued physical deterioration of the property in Ainsdale and associated problems for the local community. Not acting now simply risks delaying the inevitable requirement for the Council to intervene at a point in the future with higher cost to the public purse.

The Council could continue to negotiate by agreement with the existing owners and not consider using its compulsory acquisition powers. Given the time taken to date and reluctance of the outstanding leaseholders to agree terms for buying them out, officers are of the view that the use of compulsory acquisition powers is needed to draw these negotiations to a conclusion.

Do not progress marketing exercise - If the Council wish to use compulsory acquisition powers it needs to demonstrate that a viable scheme can be delivered. Establishing market interest at this point is required to have confidence that a viable scheme is capable of being delivered. Market demand for the site needs to be established before proceeding with any formal process and the market testing will establish what interest there is in this site. In order to progress through the CPO process, the Council has to secure a developer partner capable of delivering a scheme for this site and demonstrate that there is a credible and sustainable development which will deliver the overall site development.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

None directly arising from this report - All revenue costs to date are provided for within the budget allocation agreed for this project in 2020 to fund acquisition guidance and advice.

(B) Capital Costs

None directly arising from this report. Capital budget allocation approved and provided for within the current Growth Budget for £1.3m to purchase leasehold interests. A further report will be needed to agree formal use of compulsory purchase powers following evaluation of the market testing.

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): The project is being progressed using Council staff and external specialist advice and support funded from existing Council budget allocation agreed in 2020.</p>								
<p>Legal Implications: The legal process for using compulsory acquisition powers is clearly set out and established. Whilst there are no direct legal implications in this report the actions within this report form a key component of the Council's case for using acquisition powers available to it.</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; margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a positive impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a neutral impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Have a negative impact</td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">No</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;">Yes</td> </tr> </table> <p>The project is anticipated to have a positive impact on the area by addressing an issue of dereliction, helping to address issues associated with antisocial behaviour and enhancing the wider area. The proposals for comprehensive redevelopment of the site will bring forward a new development and investment and uses into the area that will help support this community at a local level, reducing the need to travel and enable access on foot to local services.</p>	Have a positive impact	Yes	Have a neutral impact	No	Have a negative impact	No	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Have a positive impact	Yes							
Have a neutral impact	No							
Have a negative impact	No							
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes							

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

<p>Protect the most vulnerable: Support is being given to any vulnerable residents currently in premises that require the Council's assistance is required to rehouse them. This has been a condition of any lease surrender by landlords. The development of the site will assist reducing antisocial behaviour particularly for more vulnerable residents in the area and encourage more activity and footfall in the vicinity.</p>
<p>Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The purchase of the leasehold interests and development of the site will improve the physical appearance of the area, as well complimenting the nearby residential development scheme of Sandway Homes helping with wider regeneration aims.</p>
<p>Commission, broker and provide core services: Not applicable</p>
<p>Place – leadership and influencer: Sefton Council is taking progressive and direct action to address a longstanding issue</p>

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for this area and is using powers available to facilitate and effect change for the local community.
Drivers of change and reform: Sefton Council is being progressive in taking action to acquire the outstanding leasehold interests and seeking a development partner to help facilitate a positive outcome for this area which has been subject of blight and anti-social behaviour for many years.
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The Council will be able to formulate and move forward with development of this site which will bring new uses, jobs and investment into the Ainsdale area.
Greater income for social investment: Sefton Council is using its land ownership to facilitate change and bring forward new locally accessible uses which will help support the local community and make it more resilient.
Cleaner Greener Regeneration of an area of blight

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7088/23.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5288/23) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Consultation has been undertaken with the local community representatives in the area to inform the option appraisal for the site.

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:

Appendix 1 - Development Brief for the site

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In February 2020 Cabinet approval was obtained to address the longstanding antisocial and environmental blight caused by the properties in Ainsdale by acquiring all of the existing leasehold interests in the site, bringing it all back into Council ownership and control.
- 1.2 Previous attempts to secure a development partner were unable to progress due to one of the leasehold owners failing to agree terms for disposal of their interest in the site. Members consequently agreed to try and negotiate by agreement all of the leasehold interests in the site and that has been a focus for the Council since 2020.
- 1.3 The acquisition process with owners through negotiation and agreement has progressed with approximately 50% of current interests agreeing to or having already disposed of their interest to Sefton Council. In order to securing the remaining outstanding interests the strategy is to progress through a legal process of Compulsory Purchase (CPO).
- 1.4 In order to progress through the CPO process, the Council has to secure a developer partner to demonstrate that there is a credible and sustainable development which will deliver the overall site development.

2 Securing a Development Partner

- 2.1 In order to secure a developer partner, an Options Appraisal report was undertaken by local property consultants on behalf of the Council which identified that the most deliverable use for the site would be a food retail-based scheme. In order to confirm the demand for this use, it is recommended that the Council go out to the market to identify interest in the site through an 'Expressions of Interest' (EoI) process. Consultation with local community representatives was undertaken as part of the option appraisal process and agreeing the preferred option for this site.
- 2.2 The process for undertaking an EoI exercise would be to issue detailed site particulars to the market with reference to an approved Development Brief for the site.
- 2.3 A Development Brief has now been prepared for the site and is attached to this report for information. The brief covers all matters and issues relating to the site development including :
 - Purpose of the development brief
 - The Council's vision for the site
 - Detailed information relating to the site (size, ownership etc)
 - Links to relevant council policies and procedures (planning/highways etc)
- 2.4 The Brief sets out the broad planning and development issues relevant to the site and the key issues that a developer will need to address as part of any redevelopment proposals for the site.

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- 2.5 Council Officers have a list of organisations who are active in the food retail sector and the EoI document will be targeted to them. They will typically be food discounters along with other interests who are more flexible in their size and format and developers and agents who act on behalf of a range of related development types.
- 2.6 It is anticipated that the final development proposal would be primarily retail with associated minor development, depending on market interest.

3 Timescales

- 3.1 The Development Brief and Marketing EoI process will include advertising the site and issuing the development brief for consideration by the market. This will be advertised for approximately 8 weeks and responses will then be considered by officers and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills.
- 3.2 Each submission will be assessed and presented to Members for consideration. Negotiations will continue with market interests during this process.

4 Acquisitions Programme

Whilst the above process is progressing, the Council and its agents will continue to negotiate with those parties who have not yet committed to disposal of their leasehold interests. The EoI process will also alert those owners to the fact that the Council are actively seeking a partner to deliver a development, and this will assist in moving forward the negotiations. Assistance through the Council's Housing and Business Support teams has been provided throughout this process.

5 CPO Process

- 5.1 It was always anticipated that if the Council get to the stage where the acquisition progress by agreement has stalled, it would need to consider undertaking compulsory purchase of the remaining properties through using the statutory Compulsory Purchase Order procedures. The first phase at this stage is to present an update report to Cabinet and that is the purpose of this report. The importance of completing this stage is to secure Member support for the principle and allow the Council representatives to re-approach the outstanding interested parties and confirm that formal CPO legal proceedings will be instigated should no agreement on sale be reached.
- 5.2 The steps for making the CPO is as follows:
 - 1. **CPO Report to Cabinet** – (this report) to allow for all discussions to take place with relevant colleagues and external parties. The importance of completing this stage is to secure Member agreement to the next stages, and this will allow the Council to re-approach the outstanding interested parties and confirm that legal proceedings will be instigated should no agreement on sale be reached.

2. **Marketing of the Site** - This will done in parallel to the CPO report preparation work. The market testing is a requirement of the CPO process to demonstrate a scheme is capable of being delivered on the site. This will be done through appointment of external agents. This is likely to take at least approximately 8 weeks and discussions are informally underway with retail sector experts to alert them to this opportunity.
3. **Land Referencing** – this is required to confirm outstanding ownerships and occupations and to draft up the formal CPO schedule of interests.
4. **Acquisition by private treaty** – Ongoing - Officers will continue to try to achieve in parallel with the CPO process.
5. **Planning Statement / Statement of Reasons** – effectively the justification for the CPO – what is proposed, what the public benefits are, why the CPO is needed.
6. **CPO Resolution** – the formal Council decision to make the CPO, once a development partner has been identified.
7. **Make the CPO** – effectively serving the CPO on interested parties
8. **Objections / public inquiry** – if there are landowner objections then there will need to be a public inquiry to consider those objections.
9. **Confirmation of the CPO** – by the Secretary of State
10. **Implementation of the CPO** – i.e. taking the land interests

6 Conclusions

In light of the above report, it is recommended that officers progress with seeking to acquire the outstanding lease interests in this site. In addition, and in parallel, officers progress with market testing of the site to identify developer interest based on the attached development brief appended to this report.

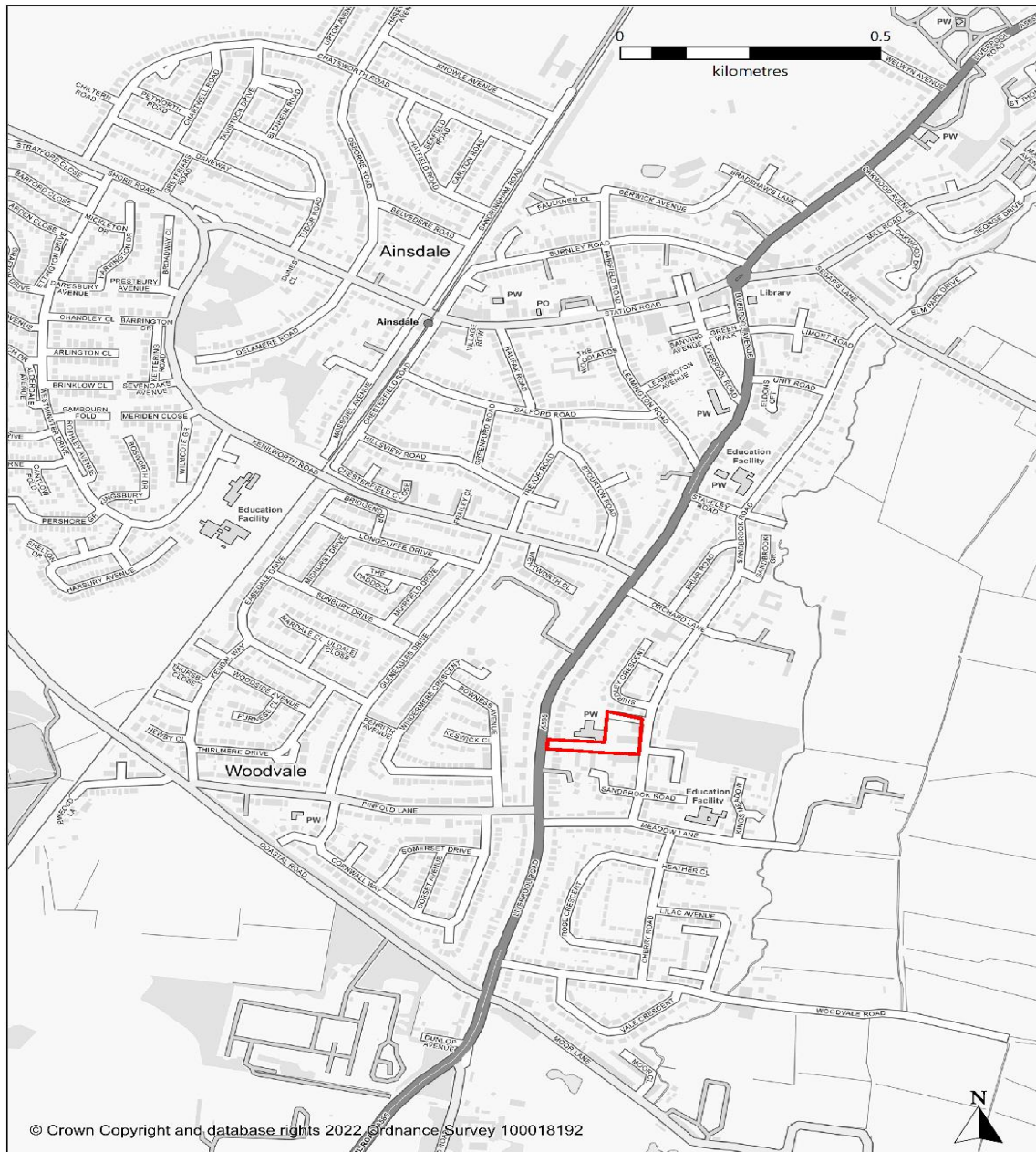
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Appendix 1

Sandbrook Way – Development Brief – Jan 2023

1.0 Purpose of Brief

This Brief has been produced in order to provide guidance for the redevelopment of the site at Sandbrook Way, Ainsdale. The Brief sets out the broad planning and development issues relevant to the site and the key issues that a developer will need to address as part of any redevelopment proposals for the site.



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This guidance is not exhaustive and there are likely to be other issues that will need to be addressed as part of a planning application. This guidance represents informal advice only to assist prospective developers and will not prejudice any decision by the Council should an application be submitted.

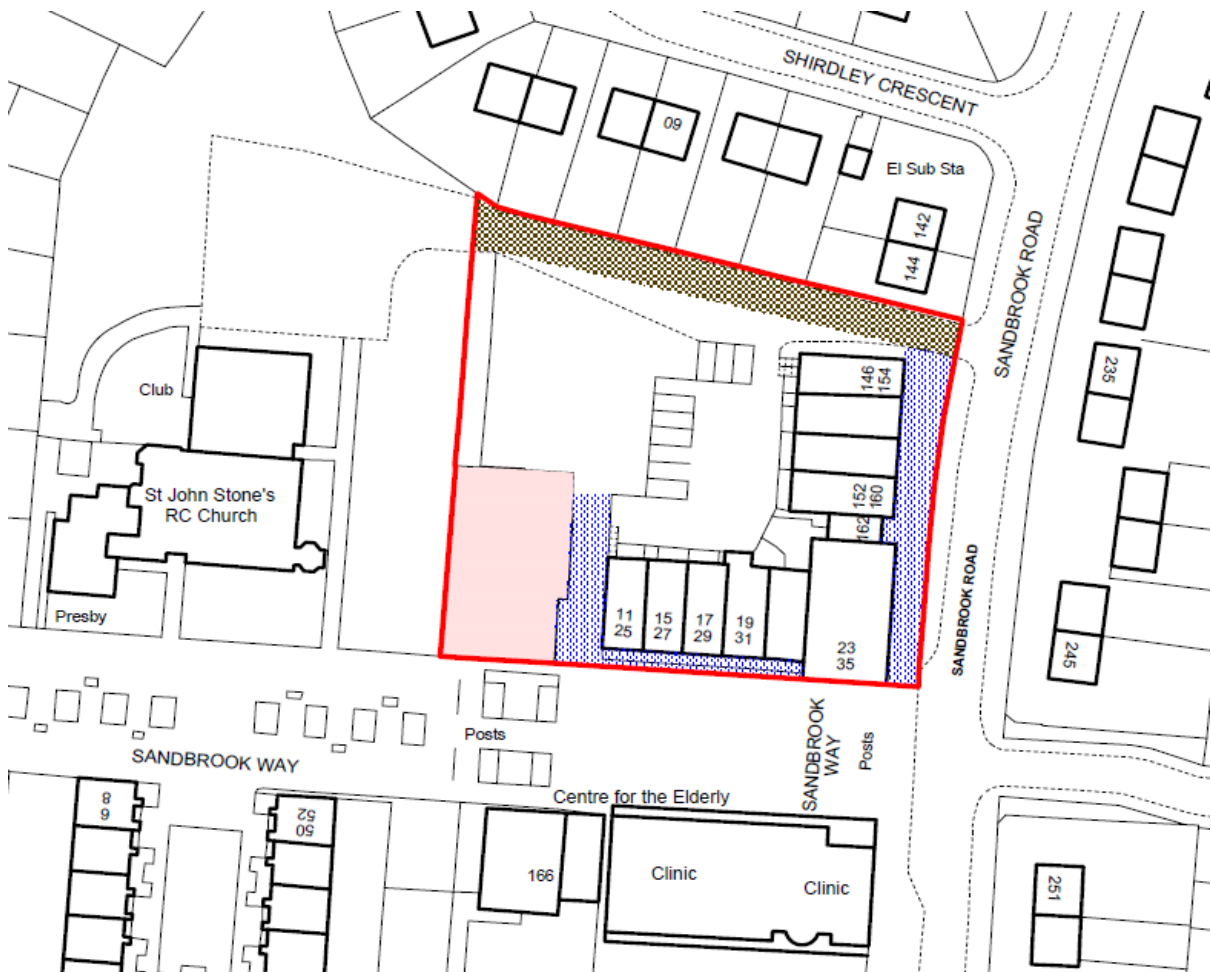
It is essential that in all cases formal pre-application advice is sought from the Council. This will allow a detailed consideration of any scheme, including the input of specialists in various fields. Details can be found at

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/apply-for-permission/pre-application-advice-on-development-proposals.aspx>

A fee is charged for this service. Developers will also be required to carry out appropriate community consultation.

2.0 Site Description

The Sandbrook Way Neighbourhood Centre is located at the junction of Sandbrook Way and Sandbrook Road in Ainsdale. Sandbrook Road is a local distributor route, whilst Sandbrook Way is a wide pedestrianised thoroughfare linking from Sandbrook Road through to Liverpool Road, the main A565 trunk road from Liverpool to Southport.



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With reference to the above plan the blue area delineates adopted highway, the black area is a right of way the Church have over the land to access the Church Hall. The pink area is the site of the former Sandpiper Pub, now demolished.

The buildings date from 1967 and were designed as a local centre providing retail and leisure uses together with residential accommodation. The main buildings were arranged in an “L” shape. To the ground floor there were a total of 9 “lock up” type retail units, 5 fronting Sandbrook Way and 4 fronting Sandbrook Road. At the corner of the “L” there was a larger food supermarket type building. To the first floor there were 10 self-contained flats, each accessed from the rear of the building

The Sandbrook Way Neighbourhood Centre was designed and developed in the late 1960s as a mixed-use retail and residential development to provide for local needs. The use and occupation of the Centre has declined significantly over the years, as has the physical condition of the buildings.

The surrounding area is characterised by established housing, although to the lower end of the market scale, and limited other commercial, retail or leisure provision. Immediately opposite is the Ainsdale Centre for Health and Wellbeing whilst next to the centre is St John Stone’s Centre and social club. Notably there is a large area of public realm at Sandbrook Way in the form of a pedestrian link between Sandbrook Road and Liverpool Road. This is a significant public resource but has suffered from under investment.



Presently the Centre is in poor condition, is underutilised and provides limited occupational utility. The extent of retail provision has significantly declined with many of the former retail units converted to residential use and larger users having vacated and not been replaced. The physical condition of the Centre has deteriorated and in many cases is now beyond economic repair.

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Overtime the buildings and uses have changed. The majority of the retail units have been converted to residential use and only 3 units remain in commercial use including a small convenience store, a fast-food outlet and a motor factors business. Some of the flats continue to be occupied whilst others are vacant and in disrepair. The former supermarket unit has had a number of different uses including a public house / nightclub but is currently vacant and derelict. The former Sandbrook publichouse has been demolished and the site cleared to ground level. The service yard is in a poor order and the garages are largely unused and derelict. The remainder of the site is unused.

In total the area of the site is approximately 2.04 acres which includes both the main site and Sandbrook Way. The main site is in the freehold ownership of the Council.



3.0 Current Ownership

Whilst the Council is the freeholder of the Centre, each of the current and former retail units and the individual flats are held on separate 99-year leases from 1967. As a result, no interest has effective control and there are currently no provisions for common maintenance, repair, or renewal.

The overall condition and appearance of the Centre is poor and has been subject to ongoing and increasing anti-social behaviour resulting in a considerable negative impact on the surrounding local community and area. The condition of the Centre continues to deteriorate and there is little apparent commitment to major repairs or renewal.

Given the fragmented multiple-ownership scenario, the Council Cabinet in February 2020 approved an approach to acquire all the existing leasehold interests in the Centre to bring it under one single ownership so that the Council will be in control of property interests to affect an appropriate

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development solution. Whilst those negotiations are continuing, the multiplicity of ownerships means that assembly of the necessary interests is needed to bring forward site development. The Council intends to continue with the land assembly to bring the whole of the Centre into a single ownership.

4.0 Policy Context

Sefton Council has an up-to-date development plan; the Sefton Local Plan (adopted April 2017). The Local Plan can be viewed at the following link,

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-including-local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/local-plan.aspx>

The site is located within the Primary Residential Area as most local shopping parades in Sefton are. Policy HC3 of the Sefton Local Plan sets out that

- New residential development will be permitted in Primarily Residential Areas shown on the Policies Map where consistent with other Local Plan policies.
- Non-residential development will be permitted in Primarily Residential Areas provided that it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- a. will not have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties, and
- b. will otherwise not harm the character of the residential area, and
- c. will not undermine objectives of the plan regarding housing delivery.

As the site was originally planned as a local shopping parade to serve local needs, it is considered to offer potential for replacement retail and service provision subject to any such proposals being consistent with retail and town centre policy as set out in the NPPF and adopted plan (Policy ED2). Policy ED2 sets out the Council's approach to retail, leisure and other main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF glossary). This seeks to direct retail, leisure and other town centre uses to Sefton's existing defined centres. Proposals for retail, leisure and other town centre uses are required to be subject to a Sequential Assessment and, depending on the size, an Impact Assessment. Ainsdale Local Centre is a particular consideration in respect of these assessments.

The Local Plan is supported by a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Information Notes. Due to the potential different uses that the site could accommodate, a number of the SPDs and information notes may be applicable. The SPDs and Information notes can be viewed as follows

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/SPD>.

There is also a highways developers pack which any developer should use to help guide their development.

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/parking,-roads-travel/highway-development-and-design.aspx>.

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The regeneration of the Neighbourhood Centre is part of the Council's Growth and Strategic Investment programme which comprises a portfolio of projects for the delivery of the Vision and Core Purpose of the Council. The programme supports the Core Purpose of the Council which states that, *"As place-leaders we will facilitate and enable happy, safe and resilient communities"*.

The Council developed Vision 2030, a corporate strategy for the future of the borough. Vision 2030 is to guide long term planning and seeks to stimulate growth, prosperity, set new expectation levels and focussing on what is important for Sefton. The Core Purpose provides an outline on how the Council will contribute to achieving those ambitions set out in the Vision 2030. The Council's major change programme the Framework for Change supports the Council Vision. Vision 2030 states that Sefton will become a confident and connected Borough through being:

- Together a stronger community
- A Borough for everyone
- A Clean green beautiful Borough
- Living working and having fun
- On the Move
- Visit explore and enjoy
- Ready for the Future
- Open for Business

To progress the most appropriate regeneration option for the site, the Council has undertaken an Options Appraisal, and the following objectives have been agreed to guide the Appraisal process:

Social:

- Meet the aspirations of the local community
- Address issues of antisocial behaviour and the negative impact on the surrounding area more generally

Environmental:

- Provide high quality and manageable public realm with a defined purpose
- Secure accessibility to and permeability through the Centre

Economic:

- Secure optimal investment for regeneration
- Optimise utilisation and provide long term viable

5.0 Potential Use

As stated above, the site is designated in the Local Plan as being in a primary Residential Area. The site lends itself to a mix of potential uses subject to addressing relevant planning policies and as such, an Options Appraisal has recently been undertaken to identify the most sustainable use for the site.

The Options Appraisal

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In order to identify the most effective and sustainable use for the site, the Council has undertaken a Site Options Appraisal for the site identifying potential options for development. An economic assessment of the options for the Centre, based on a review of the outputs arising from each option, sets out an assessment of benefits, in general compliance with the HM Treasury Green Book (2022), alongside appraisal guidance published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. In addition to this, it presents an assessment of economic impact at the local level, including assessments of Gross Value Added (GVA) and household expenditure

The options appraisal has assisted the Council in making an informed decision on how to deliver the best solution for the regeneration of the Centre. It considered the relative advantages and disadvantages of a number of different development options which will assist the Council in considering the relative desirability, viability and feasibility of the different options, and to examine:

- the best way to achieve the Council's project objectives
- the best way to use the resources available, and
- the best way to achieve the required outcomes

The options appraisal has been informed by engagement with key stakeholders and identifies a preferred model of delivery including the financial extent of both internal and external funding resources.

Whilst alternative options have been identified based on the overall assessment including the market testing, consultation, financial viability assessment and the economic benefit assessment, the preferred option is a comprehensive development solution for the site based on a standalone foodstore with appropriate public realm and infrastructure, together with other development as appropriate. However, this use is dependent on the provisions of Local Plan Policies HC3 and ED2 being met (see above). Key to the development will be the provision of a new vehicular link through to Liverpool Road along the existing Sandbrook Way. There would be no vehicular access to the site from Sandbrook Road.

6.0 Key Issues

Design

Local Plan policy *EQ2 Design* sets out a number of design considerations. These include responding to the character of the area and the importance of landmark (prominent) sites. The site is in a prominent location and is very visible from Sandbrook Road and is bounded by predominantly residential uses, with the NHS Wellbeing Centre to its southern boundary, and St John Stone RC Church at its western Boundary. Given its location, a high-quality building in terms of size, appearance and materials with very high design standards is essential. It is important that any proposal respects the immediate area and context.

The Council considers that a design solution that considers some appropriate development to parts of Sandbrook Way which are not required for the access road may assist with the animation of the space, security, natural surveillance.

Access and parking:

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Apart from the required vehicular access to the St John Stone site, there will be no vehicular access to the site from Sandbrook Road. All vehicular access will be via a new road access from Liverpool Road along the current Sandbrook Way pedestrianised area. There will be pedestrian access to the site both from Liverpool Road and Sandbrook Road.

All car parking associated with the site should be contained within the redline boundary of the site as identified above. Any planning application will need to provide full details of the proposed pedestrian/vehicular access arrangements. Car parking should be identified in accordance with Sefton's Supplementary Planning Document 'Sustainable Travel and Development'. The proposal should not result in additional car parking off site. Given the proximity of existing residential properties, any retail development will require details of any proposed servicing and delivery arrangements which will need to be discussed with the Council.

It is important to note that uses that generate a significant amount of traffic will need to be acceptable in this location. In this regard the Council will expect to see a transport assessment. The Council have standards for electric car charging points which are expected to be addressed. Any development will be expected to be fully accessible to a range of non-transport modes including walking and cycling. The site is in a very good location with access to public transport networks and other shops and services in Ainsdale town centre.

Environmental Health and Air Quality

The site is near to the A565 Liverpool Road. This is a section of road that is very close to the top of the current national air quality standards for Nitrogen Dioxide. Any use that would generate a significant number of additional car journeys has the potential to increase those levels to a dangerous level. Therefore, any future development must not result in increased nitrogen dioxide emissions and an air quality assessment must be carried out by any potential developer.

The site is adjacent to residential properties around the site, and these may be sensitive to some use, plant and equipment and vehicle movements. Any scheme will need to be supported by an appropriate noise assessment.

Likewise lighting, both as part of a proposed scheme and existing lighting, could have an impact upon amenity of future users of the site and on neighbours and must be considered fully.

Other issues

Any external works or alterations, such as provision of any additional parking, servicing or access areas or alterations to doors and windows may be subject to contamination, flood risk, ecology, invasive species, a Habitats Regulation Assessment and other relevant issues.

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Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 2 February 2023
Subject:	Financial Management 2022/23 to 2024/25 and Framework for Change 2020 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2022/23 – February Update and Three-Quarter Review		
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 December 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.
- 4) The latest performance management information for 2022/23.
- 5) The latest corporate risk management information for 2023/23.

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

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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

- 5) Note the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme (paragraph 8.1).
- 6) Note the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 December 2022 of £24.208m (paragraph 7.6); the latest full year forecast is £46.707m (paragraph 7.8).
- 7) Approve a supplementary capital estimate for £0.500m for the Crosby Lakeside Development project fully funded by grant from the Combined Authority (paragraph 7.5).
- 8) 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 7.14-7.16).

Performance

- 9) Note the latest position relating to key performance measures.

Risk Management

- 10) Note the latest position relating to key risk management areas.

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.

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

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

None

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The report indicates that for 2022/23 an overspend position of £3.467m is currently forecast and that further mitigating actions will be required to ensure the Council returns to a balanced forecast outturn position-if these actions are not available within the approved budget, existing reserves and balances may be used.

(B) Capital Costs

The Council's capital budget in 2022/23 is £47.378m. As at the end of December 2022 expenditure of £24.208m has been incurred and a full year outturn of £46.707m is currently forecast.

Implications of the Proposals:

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

Currently an overspend position of £3.467m 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 or financial contributions will need to be identified and approved by members.

Legal Implications:

None

Equality Implications:

There are no equality implications.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will

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

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.

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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.

<u>Protect the most vulnerable:</u>
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See comment above

<u>Facilitate confident and resilient communities:</u>

See comment above

<u>Commission, broker and provide core services:</u>

See comment above

<u>Place – leadership and influencer:</u>
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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 7104/23)

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer has been consulted and has no comments on the report (LD 5304/23).

(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.

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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 December and thereby updates the revenue forecast outturn position for all services, including the pressures previously identified in the previous reports. It is this position that also informs next year's budget setting process in terms of financial issues that will continue into the next year and need to be addressed.
- 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. Paragraphs 7.9 to 7.13 review progress of the capital programme. Finally, paragraphs 7.14 to 7.16 confirm that there are adequate levels of resources available to finance the capital programme.
- 1.7 The report to Cabinet in November outlined that as part of the outcome of the Local Government Association Peer Review Revisit that took place in April 2022, the peers had recommended "a combined three-pronged approach which routinely enables an understanding of risk, performance and finance is key." As a result, the report presented a Mid-Year Review of finance, performance and risk and it was proposed that this approach is followed at each quarter. Therefore, this report also includes key performance information and key risk management areas to develop a comprehensive three-quarter year position.

2. **Revenue Budget 2022/23 – Forecast Outturn Position as at the end of December 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.
- 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 and the cost of agency staffing 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 December 2022, the forecast outturn shows a net overspend of **£3.467m**. 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 £3.467m forecast overspend:

	Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance	Variance to November
	£m	£m	£m	
<u>Services</u>				
Strategic Management	4.024	4.029	0.005	-0.003
Adult Social Care	102.090	103.490	1.400	0.000
Children's Social Care	52.069	70.269	17.900	0.923
Communities	17.591	16.625	-0.966	0.000
Corporate Resources	5.559	4.932	-0.627	-0.033

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Economic Growth & Housing	6.583	6.423	-0.160	-0.122
Education Excellence	11.299	12.902	1.603	-0.019
Health & Wellbeing	19.349	18.626	-0.723	0.011
Highways & Public Protection	11.214	10.822	-0.392	0.007
Operational In-House Services	15.013	15.592	0.579	-0.089
Energy Costs	0.000	2.100	2.100	0.000
Additional Pay Award Provision	0.000	4.100	4.100	0.000
Total Service Net Expenditure	244.791	269.610	24.819	0.675
Council Wide Budgets	0.076	-1.076	-1.152	0.000
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	211.200		
<u>Forecast Year-End Deficit</u>			<u>3.467</u>	<u>0.675</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 December 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 for the service shows a potential overspend of £17.900m, an increase in the figure reported to Cabinet in December of £0.923m.

This increase since last month has been driven by the following:-

1. £0.573m increase in Family Support Packages – this is as a result of new placements; and,
2. £0.322m increase in the costs of managed teams and agency staff.

The service continues to see rising demand and further investigatory work is ongoing with partner agencies with the aim of addressing this. Overall, the overspend is made up of the following key areas:-

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- Due to a significant number of vacancies within the service, especially with regard to Social Workers, the expenditure on agency staff has been £6.5m over the staffing budget. Within this £3.5m relates to managed teams as well as the costs of employing additional social workers to manage the additional casework brought about by the rising demand for services.
- At the start of the financial year as inflation took hold in the UK, unbudgeted for inflation on accommodation costs has resulted in an overspend of £1.2m; and,
- Since the July report a number of additional complex and high-cost placements have had to be entered into which have led to an overspend on this budget of £7.5m. 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.

Members will be familiar from previous reports that the service are working through options to address each of these issues. The introduction of the social worker academy with an annual cohort of 30 staff and the proposal to bring to the Council 25 international social workers will reduce the reliance on expensive agency workers and proposals around supporting children and development of in-house accommodation will support future budget planning and control in respect of accommodation costs. In addition, a fundamental review of the service's budget is being undertaken and from this a remedial plan is anticipated to be completed next month.

- **Education Excellence** – The current forecast shows a potential net overspend of £1.603m, 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, 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 £0.579m. 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. As reported last month, 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 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

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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 £25.1m 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 than no additional funding will be made available, meaning the Council needs to make remedial plans to meet these pressures.

It can be seen from the Cabinet reports presented each month that the forecast overspend position on Children's Social Care has increased each month. The information provided in this report is based on the latest information provided by the service, however in light of the month on month increase this year there is a significant risk that this position will worsen further in the remaining three months of the year. Work has been done within the service to ensure that the decision-making controls are robust and effective to support financial control around agency expenditure and accommodation costs and it is essential that these are maintained and continually reviewed due to the unprecedented position that the service and the council is in. Work is being undertaken by the service to determine if further financial pressure is anticipated and this will be reflected in the next monitoring exercise that takes place.

Proposed Remedial Actions

- 2.7 As reported in the last three 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 **£3.467m** is currently forecast. The proposed actions in paragraphs 2.8 to 2.11 will continue to be fully evaluated and at this stage their financial impact is anticipated to meet a proportion of the current forecast overspend, with a balance estimated at up to £2.3m 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, particularly in respect of Children's Social Care, further remedial action or off-setting measures 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 general balances in year- as a result this and any further pressure, will

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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 earmarked reserves or 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 December 2022 is a surplus of -£2.480m. 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 (-£0.382m).
 - Exemptions and Discounts (including a forecasting adjustment) being lower than estimated (-£1.581m).
- 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 December 2022 is a surplus of -£4.898m 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 (-£0.563m).
 - 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 (-£5.141m).
 - Adjustments to the Appeals Provision relating to prior years (+£0.897m)
- 5.3 When taking into account the lower Section 31 grants due on the additional reliefs, a net surplus of £0.530m 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

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2022/23. Any additional surplus or deficit will be distributed in 2023/24 and future years.

6. High Needs Budget

- 6.1 Cabinet and Council have agreed to receive quarterly reports from the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education and the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) 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 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 continued increases in the number of children requesting Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's) and SEND placements in December 2022, the current forecast overspend will be at least £5.6m, despite the creation of additional in-house places at Sefton schools from September. Between April and December, there was an increase of 52 children placed at Sefton specialist schools / SEND resource units and 319 additional EHCPs (total now 2,584 with 325 in progress). The number of requests for EHCP assessments in 2022 was 726, compared to 602 in 2021 and 412 in 2020.
- 6.5 The approved pay awards for 2022/23 were also significantly higher than used for the new SEND Funding Model that the Council supported in 2022/23. Initial calculations show that the new 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 the 2022/23 funding formula to reflect this increase it is something that has been raised by schools as a significant costs pressure facing providers going forward. As part of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement announcement in November 2022 Sefton will receive an increase to its High Needs DSG for 2023/24 of £1.8m through a new Supplementary Grant allocation, this funding is to be used to support the higher cost prices and pay awards providers that have arisen during 2022/23 that were not anticipated in the Government's original DSG settlement.
- 6.6 The approved NJC pay award for 2022/23 has also increased cost pressures on non-specialist 1:1 provision in all primary and secondary schools in Sefton. Any additional pay uplift costs should be met from the increase to the High Needs

budget from the above Supplementary Grant funding in 2023/24 as schools are only required to make a fixed contribution per qualifying pupil.

- 6.7 The accumulative deficit position on the High Needs budget is estimated to be of £18.1m based on the current SEND numbers but these continue to increase.
- 6.8 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 March 2023.
- 6.9 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. The Government has now announced that the statutory override will continue for another three years to March 2026.
- 6.10 Due to the substantial increase in the High Needs deficit over the last two financial years, the level of the deficit is now a real risk to the financial sustainability of the Council. As stated, the government has announced that the statutory override will continue for a further three years and whilst the participation in the Deliver Better Value Programme will allow the Council to access additional expertise and source best practice in relation to High Needs budget management, similar increases in future years are not sustainable. As previously reported, central government has always stated that these deficits should not be met from a council's General Fund and the extension of the statutory override continues that principle however the risk remains, and indeed is increasing, in that a solution to meeting this deficit is required. There is no indication that central government will fund these deficits and the Council's general balances are not sufficient to meet this either. The Council has always supported the statutory override alongside the demand for sufficient government funding for the high needs block of the DSG that is based on data and demand. This continues to be the case, but in the event that central government decide in 2026 that this is wider than a DSG issue this would present a substantial risk to financial sustainability within the Council.
- 6.11 This issue will be detailed in the forthcoming budget report for 2023/24.

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	£47.378m
2023/24	£52.386m
2024/25	£45.190m

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

- **Corporate Resources** – £0.861m has been added to the budget for Sustainable Warmth Schemes following approval by Cabinet in January.
- **Education Excellence** – the following school schemes have been updated:
 - £0.069m for Linacre Primary outdoor play canopy and main hall improvements has been rephased to 2023/24 when the work is due go out to tender.
- **Communities:**
 - £0.209m has been rephased to 2023/24 for a replacement roof at Bootle Leisure Centre due to time required to secure a contractor to carry out the work.
 - £0.033m has been added for parks schemes funded by Section 106 contributions and approved under delegated authority.
- **Operational In-House Services:**
 - £0.120m has been rephased to 2023/24 for Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management schemes
 - £0.540m has been added to the budget for Ainsdale Coastal Gateway following approval by Council in January.

Crosby Lakeside Development Project

7.3 Council approved a supplementary capital estimate of £3.1m in January 2020 for the Crosby Lakeside Redevelopment Project which was fully funded by an external contribution from the Combined Authority.

7.4 As reported previously, completion of the project was subsequently delayed as a result of the failure of the main contractor to progress the works regularly and diligently. This, combined with other pressures around inflation, has meant that the budget for the project has increased beyond the initial £3.1 million. As a result, the Combined Authority have agreed to increase the funding by £0.5m to £3.6m.

7.5 Therefore, Cabinet is recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.5m for inclusion within the Capital Programme which will be fully funded by the additional grant from the Combined Authority.

Budget Monitoring Position to December 2022

7.6 The current position of expenditure against the budget profile to the end of December 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.

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Service Area	Budget to Dec-22	Actual Expenditure to Dec-22	Variance to Dec-22
	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	2.622	2.372	-0.250
Children's Social Care	0.179	0.181	0.002
Communities	0.588	0.668	0.080
Corporate Resources	4.237	4.264	0.027
Economic Growth & Housing	6.398	5.695	-0.703
Education Excellence	2.808	2.771	-0.037
Highways & Public Protection	7.252	7.380	0.128
Operational In-House Services	0.889	0.877	-0.012
Total Programme	24.972	24.208	-0.764

7.7 A significant variance has been experienced against the Economic Growth and Housing budget as a result of a shortfall in expenditure against the profiled spend for the Marine Lake Events Centre project. Works are continuing to programme however, and it is expected the full capital allocation will be met as per the programme. The reason for the discrepancy is due to timings of monthly invoices being submitted and the required detailed checks with the Council's appointed cost consultants.

Capital Programme Forecast Outturn 2022/23

7.8 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	4.898	4.770	-0.128	4.101	1.610
Children's Social Care	0.450	0.430	-0.020	0.100	-
Communities	1.239	1.246	0.007	0.468	-
Corporate Resources	7.440	6.924	-0.516	1.548	-
Economic Growth & Housing	10.431	10.575	0.144	22.284	38.585
Education Excellence	3.957	3.785	-0.172	12.109	0.007
Highways & Public Protection	16.989	17.004	0.015	6.241	3.663
Operational In-House Services	1.974	1.974	-	5.534	1.326
Total Programme	47.378	46.708	-0.671	52.386	45.190

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

7.9 A significant variance has been experienced against the Corporate Resources budget as a result of a shortfall in forecast expenditure against the profiled spend for Sustainable Warmth projects. The underspend is entirely related to Home Upgrade Grants (HUG) that can only be spent on properties that are without gas central heating, have low income and a low EPC rating.

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- 7.10 There is a £6.651m programme to deliver Sustainable Warmth Schemes over 2021/22 and 2022/23 and of this £5.651m relates to the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD). 100% of LAD funding will be spent by year end and will result in 332 properties being supported.
- 7.11 £1m relates to HUG and the target is to support 72 properties and to date 27 are complete. There are 45 homes to complete with a value of £0.5m and extensive targeting is still being undertaken to identify suitable homes as the eligibility means that expenditure can only be incurred on those with no central heating and low income and low EPC rating. The Combined Authority have requested a 3 or 6 month extension to the programme and it is hoped that The Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will respond by the end of January 2023. If the extension is granted the funding can roll forward into next financial year and enable more local properties to receive funding. However, if the request is denied and the funding is not fully allocated, any surplus funds will be returned to BEIS via the Combined Authority.
- 7.12 The current total programme budgeted spend for 2022/23 is £47.378m with a budgeted spend to December of £24.972m. The full year budget includes exceptional items such as £6.299m for Green Homes and Sustainable Warmth schemes, £9.472m for Growth and Strategic Investment projects, previously approved amounts for essential repairs and maintenance (£1.164m) and a significant scheme to upgrade to LED Street Lighting (£3.887m).
- 7.13 The current advice from project managers is that the above projects will 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.

Programme Funding

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

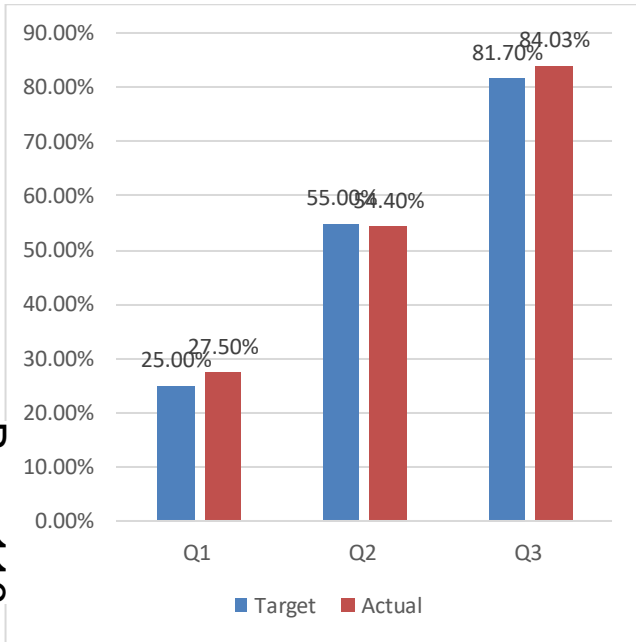
Source	£m
Grants	37.272
Prudential Borrowing	5.703
Capital Receipts	1.735
Contributions (incl. Section 106)	2.668
Total Programme Funding	47.378

- 7.15 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.
- 7.16 The Executive Director of 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.

8. **Performance**

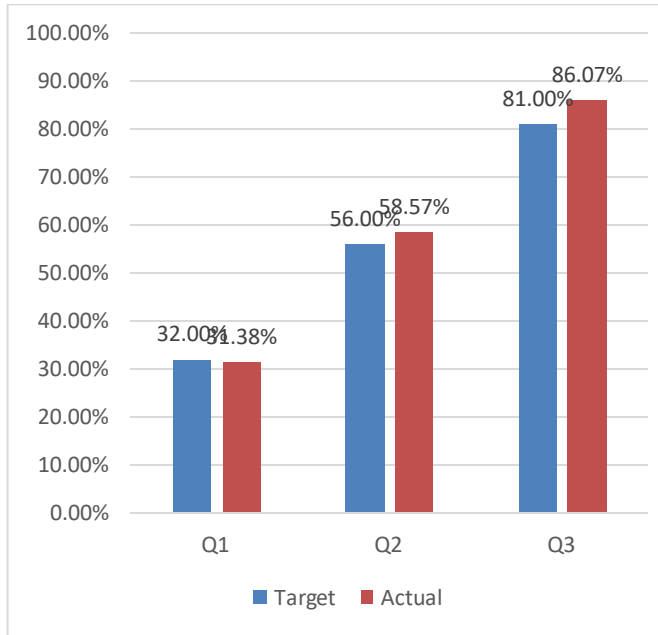
- 8.1 As stated earlier, the Council recognises the importance of performance management and service areas report regularly to Cabinet Members, Health & Wellbeing Board and Overview and Scrutiny on service-related performance and key corporate activity.
- 8.2 Members will also be aware that a detailed, comprehensive Corporate Performance is reported annually to Cabinet in July as part of the Financial Outturn report. Such an approach is the basis for reporting quarterly performance to Members as set out as follows:

Council Tax Collection Rates %



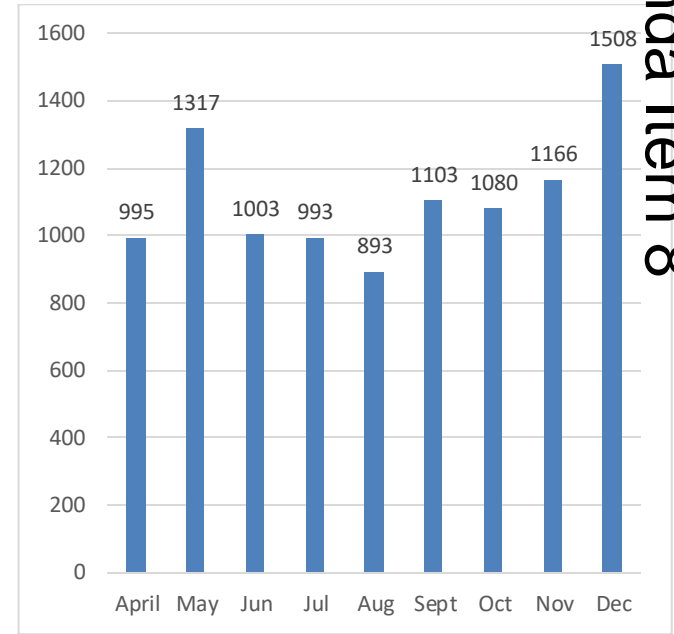
Council Tax collection is performing well when compared to same point last year despite current cost of living challenges faced by many households.

Business Rates Collection Rates %



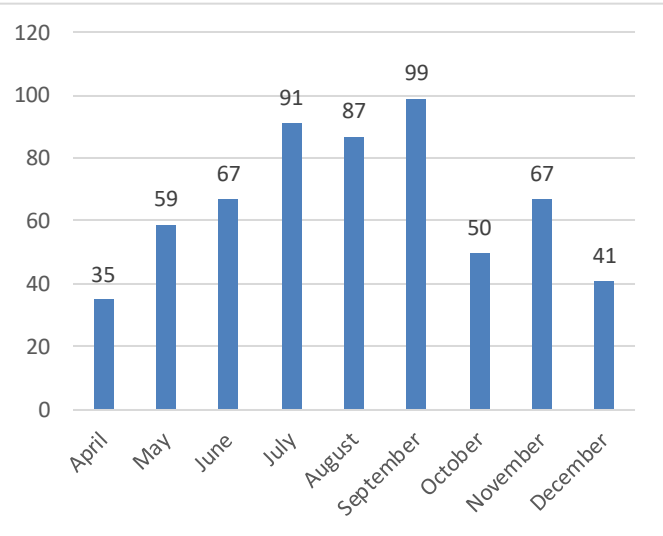
Business Rates collection is performing well when compared to same point last year despite inflationary and other challenges faced by many businesses.

Number of Emergency Limited Assistance Claims

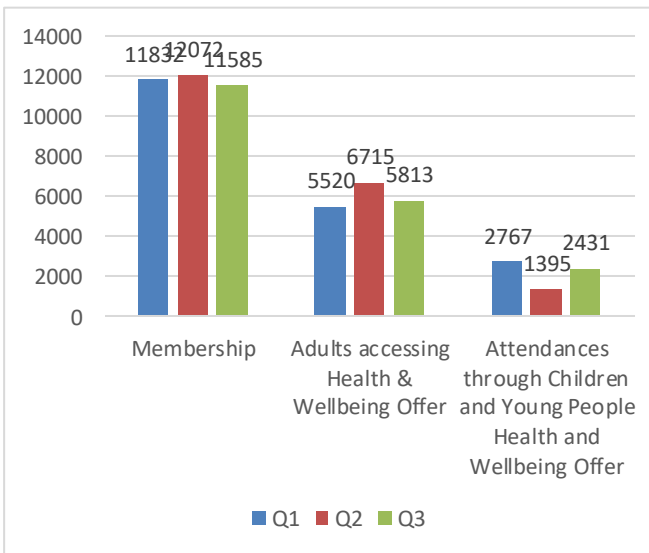


Sefton's Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme (ELAS) is available to support local people. This is for if those experiencing severe hardship, a disaster or emergency. As at 31st December 2022, the volume of ELAS applications received is 71% higher than at the same point in 2021/22.

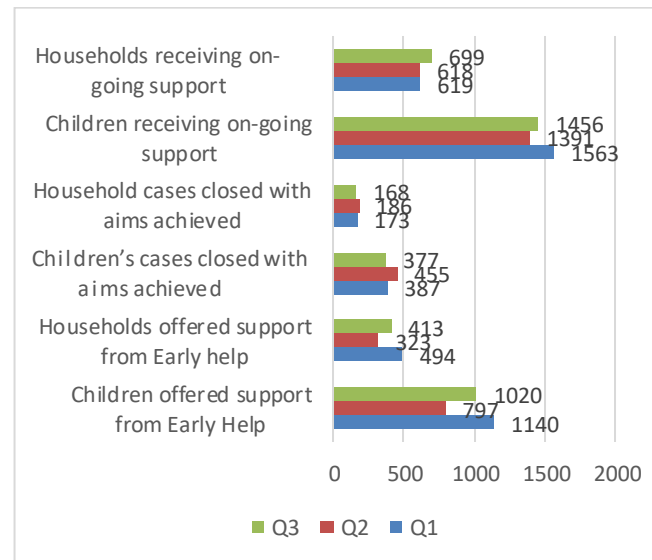
Welfare Rights Open Cases



Leisure Memberships/ Number of Adults accessing leisure’s health and wellbeing offer /Number of attendances across Children and Young People Programmes



Early Help (EH)cases held & EH case closed with positive outcomes achieved



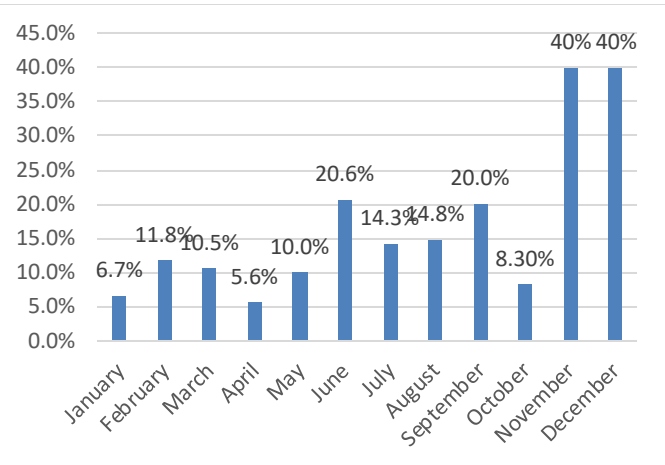
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The Welfare Rights Team provide advice and guidance for people who live or work in Sefton to access welfare benefits. Welfare Rights received 700 referrals in Q3 which is a 12% decrease from Q2, however Christmas will have impacted this and referral volumes into the service remain high.

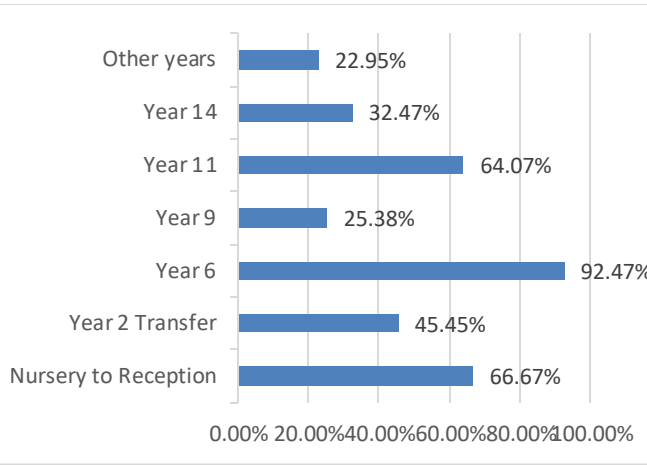
Active Sefton is the brand name used to describe Sefton’s Leisure Centres and health & wellbeing programmes. Membership rates and associated direct debit collection began to decrease at the end of Qu. 3, particularly December 2022, with the main cancellation reason cited being relating to the cost-of-living crisis.

Early Help is a partnership approach to supporting children and families as soon as the need for help is identified. Based upon information gained through an assessment process, the right professionals work with the children and families to improve outcomes. Plans are put in place and reviewed regularly to ensure progress is measured and improvements stay on track. Families also benefit from signposting, advice and guidance through various community and voluntary services that provide a comprehensive offer. The number of referrals and caseloads fluctuate, and new children and families are received daily. Support plans are kept open until the identified needs are met and such the service will always show as having open cases.

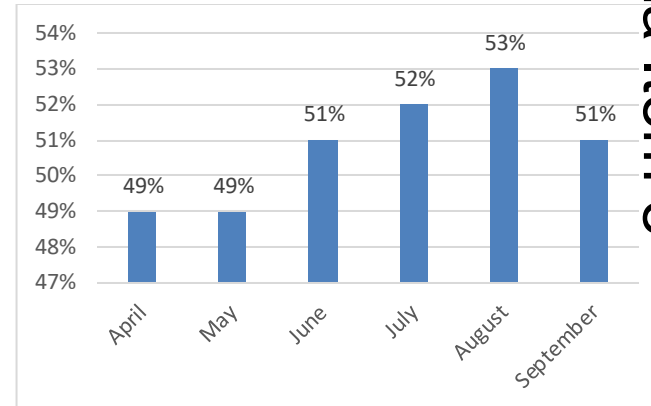
SEND Education Health & Care Plans % completed within 20 Weeks



SEND Education, Health & Care Plan Reviews



% of Care Experienced Young People In Education, Employment or Training

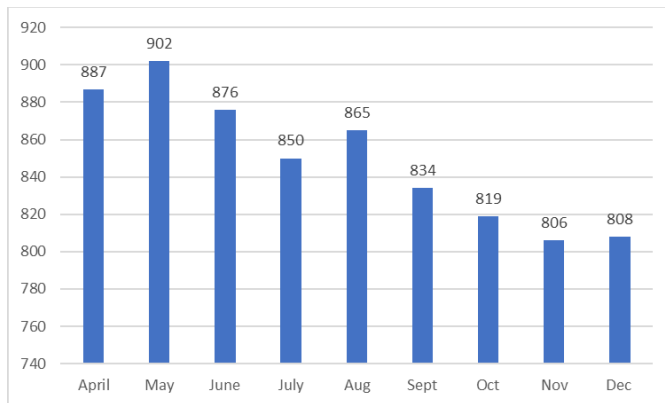


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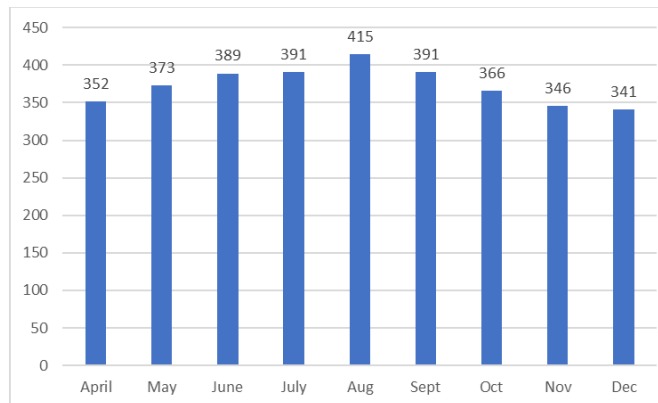
An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need additional support from education, health and/or social care. Over the last year there has been an exponential increase in the number of EHCP requests, coupled with staffing issues this has resulted in a decline in EHCPs being finalised within the 20-week time frame. A new interim Service Manager started in September and has reviewed and reorganised the team as well as driving recruitment. The numbers of completions within timescale have increased since then. Over the last year there has been a greater focus on completing reviews for children and young people especially in the transition years. As a result, the numbers of reviews being completed has risen and is now in line with national.

The percentage of care leavers (cared experienced) aged 19-21yrs who are in Education, Employment, or Training is 51%. Using the the most recent comparative data, this is an improvement on the percentage in 2021, which was 43%, below the statistical neighbour and nortwest performances of 50% and the national performance of 52%.

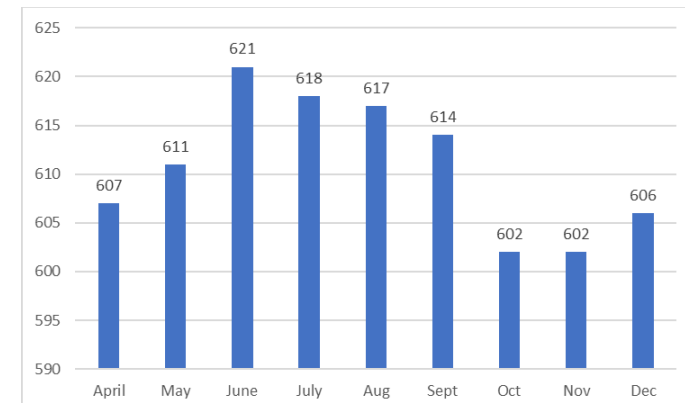
Number of Children on a Children In Need Plan



Number of Children on a Child Protection Plan



Open Episodes of Cared for Children

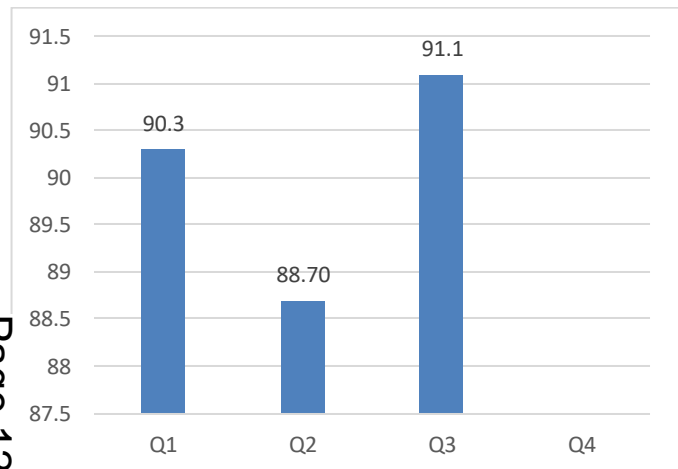


There are no direct performance comparators with other Local Authorities as the number of children in need with a plan is not published nationally or regionally. However, despite the trend showing a slight decline in the number of children in need (0-17yrs) with a child in need plan, the number is significant with consideration to caseloads and resources. A child in need is one who has been assessed by children's social care as being in need of services, including family support, leaving care support, adoption support or disabled children's services. Typically, we would compare the rate of children in need with other LAs at a national and regional level. The rate of children in need per 10,000 children aged 0-17yrs in Sefton is 433. Using the most recent comparative data, the rate in 2021 was 400/10,000, which was above the national rate of 321/10,000 and the statistical neighbour rate of 360/10,000. The rate of children in need aged 0-17 in Sefton has been above the national rate since 2016, but despite a peak of 920 in April 2022, the number continues to show a steady decline, falling to 808 by the end of December 2022.

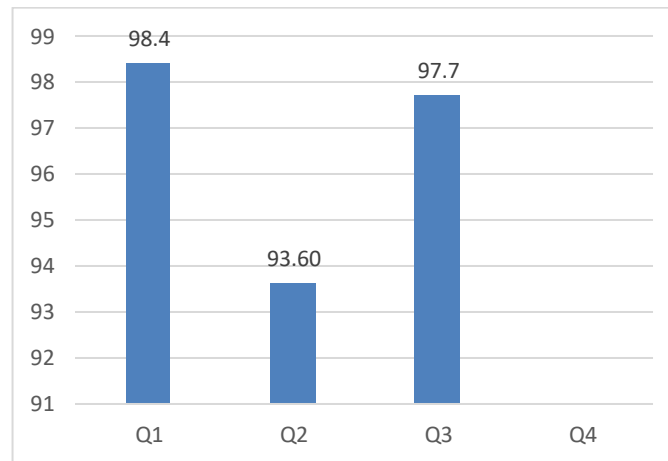
At the end of December 2022 there were 341 children who are the subject to a child protection plan, which represents a rate of 64/10,000 children aged 0-17yrs in Sefton. Using the most recent comparative RIG data, the rate of children aged 0-17 on a Child Protection Plan in Sefton at the end of Q1 (June 2022) was 66.4/10,000, compared with the Northwest rate of 48.2/10,000. Since 2013 the rate of children who are the subject of a child protection plan in Sefton has been marginally above the national comparable rate, but below the rates seen across statistical neighbours and LA's in the Northwest, and the numbers have shown a steady decline in the last three months.

There are currently 606 cared for children (CLA) with an open episode of care, which represents a rate of 114/10,000 children under 18yrs in Sefton. Using the most recent comparative RIG data, the rate of children looked after in Sefton at the end of Q1 (June 2022) was 116.1/10,000 aged under 18yrs, compared with the Northwest rate of 97.8/10,000. Between 2013 and 2019 the rate of children cared for in Sefton has been broadly consistent with the rates seen across the Northwest and statistical neighbours, but above the national rate. However, since 2020, the rate of children cared for in Sefton has been above the Northwest and statistical neighbours and significantly above the national rate. At the end of 2021 Sefton's rate of care for children was 113/10,000 children under 18yrs, compared with 97/10,000 in the Northwest, 88.7/10,000 across statistical neighbours and 67/10,000 across England. Whilst actual numbers have fluctuated slightly over recent months, the trend is still showing an increase, which represents a sustained demand on Council services and resources.

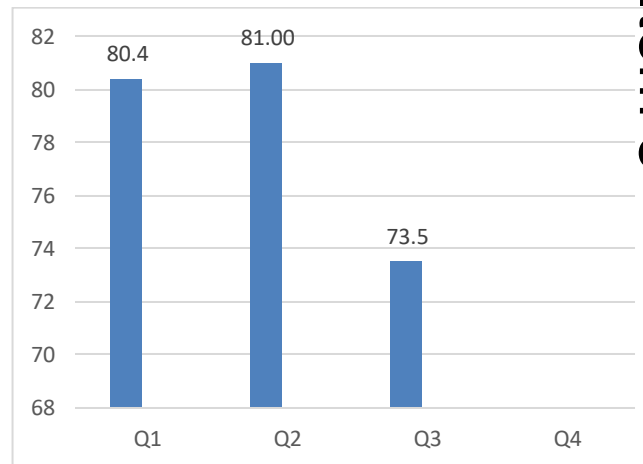
Proportion of older people 65 and over who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services effectiveness of the service (2B1) (%)



Proportion of Adult Social Care Safeguarding Enquiries concluded where people's preferred stated outcomes were fully or partially met (%)



Proportion of people whose initial service was short term who did not go on to long term services (%)



The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures nationally how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to most people. The three metrics included for Adult Social Care are part of the ASCOF. Supporting people to return home and regain their independence after a period in hospital is a key area of work for Adult Social Care. Upon leaving hospital individuals are supported at home receiving reablement and rehabilitation services who help people get back to their optimum so they can regain their confidence and independence. Sefton continues to perform well in in this area.

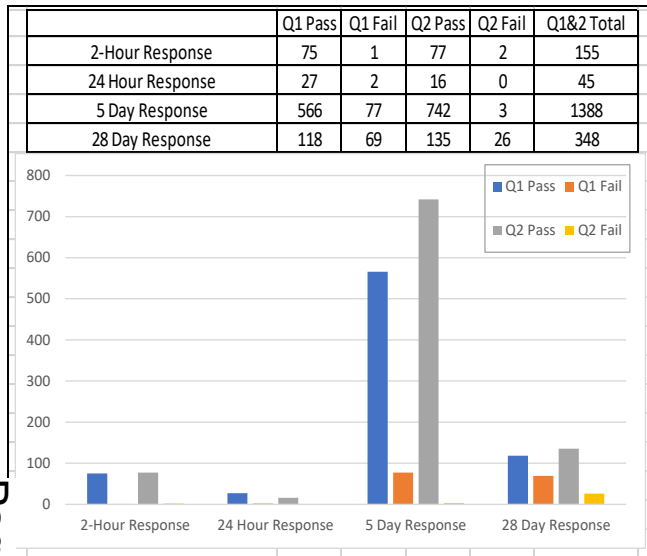
Adult Social Care has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable people who have care and support needs. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a national initiative' aiming to encourage an outcome focused and a person-centred approach in safeguarding work.

We ask those involved in a safeguarding episode what their preferred outcome would be, MSP indicates the percentage of people who had their preferred outcome fully or partially met. Whilst specific circumstances may mean that it is not always possible for an individuals desired outcomes to be achieved this is a key aspect of our safeguarding work.

Where ever possible Adult Social Care aim to support people to be as independent as possible, living at home and having strong links with their communities.

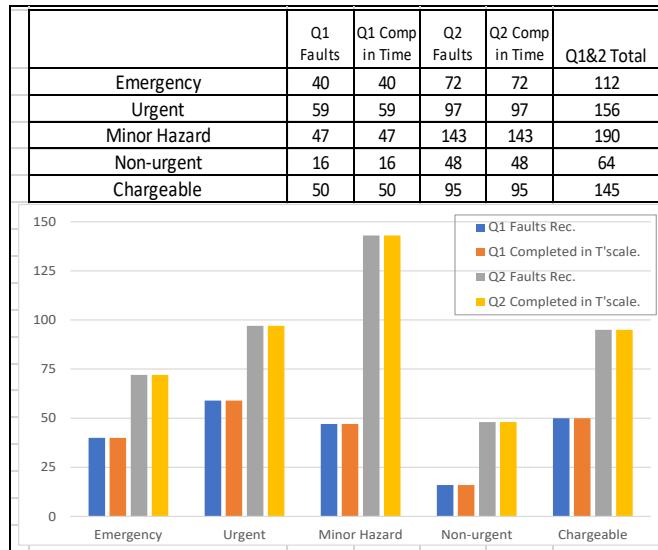
Whilst it is recognised that some people may well need long term services, this measure specifically shows the proportion of people whose short-term service resulted in a reduced, or no ongoing, need for support. A key responsibility of Adult Social care is to ensure early help and intervention helping people to delay the need for long term services.

Street Lighting – response to notified faults



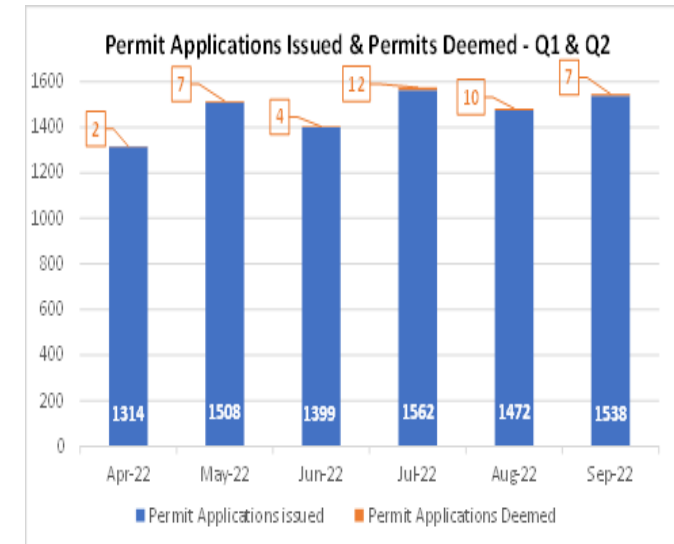
The Council has approximately 37,000 streetlights on its highways and recognises the importance of keeping them working well. When we are notified of faults, we assess the urgency of repair (e.g. 2-hours; 24 hours, 5 days etc.) allocate a target time for repair and pass it on to our appointed Contractor. We then monitor their performance against the targets. The contract includes financial penalties that can be applied if they fail to meet the required level of performance.

Urban Traffic Control – response to notified faults



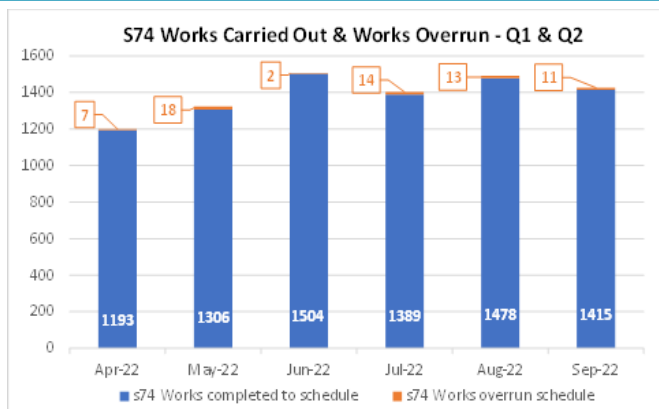
Urban Traffic Control (UTC) refers to our connected network of Traffic Lights and signal-controlled pedestrian crossings. Keeping these working well is essential for keeping people safe and the highway network flowing. When we are notified of faults, we assess the urgency of repair (e.g. emergency; urgent; minor hazard etc.) allocate a target time for repair and pass it on to our appointed Contractor. We then monitor their performance against the targets. The contract includes financial penalties that can be applied if they fail to meet the required level of performance.

Network Management Permit Approvals



Minimising disruption caused by works on the highway is important for managing the network and keeping traffic moving. For this reason, anyone wishing to excavate part of the highway requires permission and a permit for the work. We have a set time to deal with requests (the time period differs depending upon the length of time the works will take) and either accept, challenge or amend the permit requested. If we do not deal with these requests in time, the permission is automatically granted (a Deemed Permit). This data shows how effectively we manage this important function. The Deemed Permits will also include requests we receive for roads that are not our responsibility.

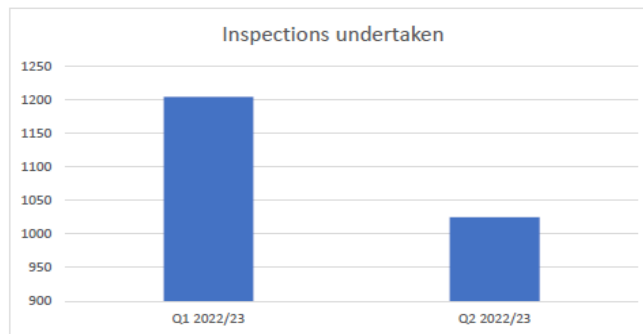
Network Management Permit Overruns



Anyone wishing to excavate part of the highway requires permission and a permit for the work. When we issue a permit, it allows a set time to complete the works and remove the obstruction. We monitor compliance with the permits and charge companies if they overrun the time allowed. This helps to minimise disruption and ensure that the works are dealt with efficiently.

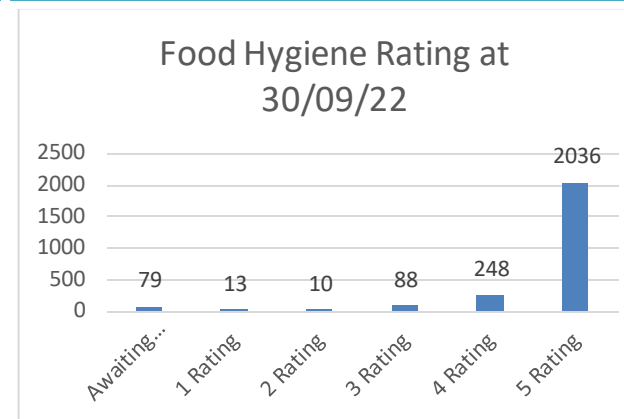
Public Protection Inspections Undertaken

	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Grand Total
Inspections undertaken	1204	1025	2229



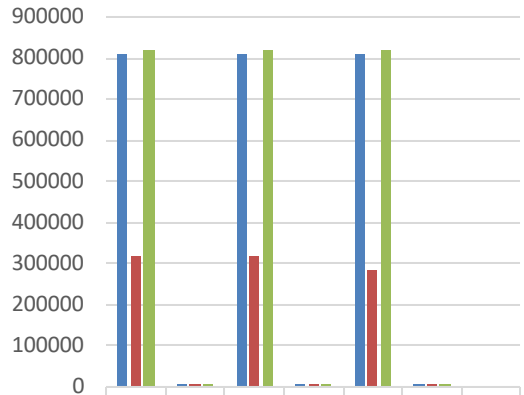
The Public Protection service undertakes a range of Food Safety, Health and Safety, Pollution Control, Trading Standards and Licensing inspections. These inspections enable us to monitor businesses, provide them with advice and guidance on legal requirements, and to take enforcement action when necessary. The Inspection programmes are an important activity for maintaining standards and ensuring that people are protected from harm and protect good businesses from unfair competition by those who try to cut corners with compliance.

Food Hygiene Rating Scores



After inspecting a business, our officers use the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme to award them a rating. The business must display this rating for customers to see and it is also published on the Food Standards Agency website. This provides potential customers with a simple way of understanding the businesses' hygiene standards. The ratings range from 0 (urgent improvement is required) to 5 (hygiene standards are very good), with 3 indicating that hygiene standards are generally satisfactory. Whilst the food business is ultimately responsible for the standards they maintain, the Council's monitoring, advice and enforcement activities play a crucial role, and enable customers to make informed choices about where to shop and eat.

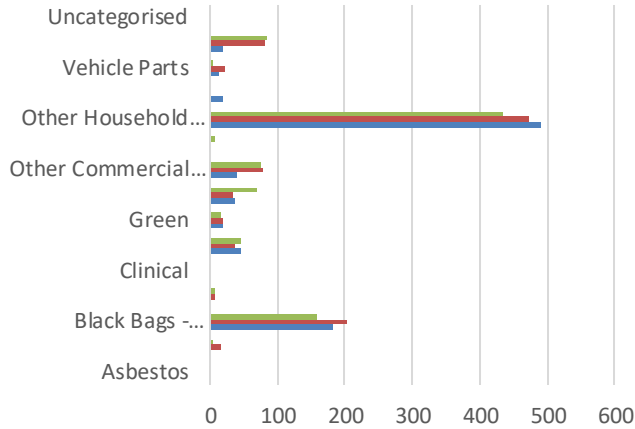
Bins Collected



	Q1 Collected	Q1 Missed	Q2 Collected	Q2 Missed	Q3 Collected	Q3 Missed	Q3 % Missed bins against collections due
Comingled collection	810563	33767	810563	820	810563	811	0.10%
Green waste collection	318438	61593	318438	987	283056	503	0.18%
Residual waste collection	821477	42608	821477	11498	821477	10611	0.13%

■ Comingled collection ■ Green waste collection
■ Residual waste collection

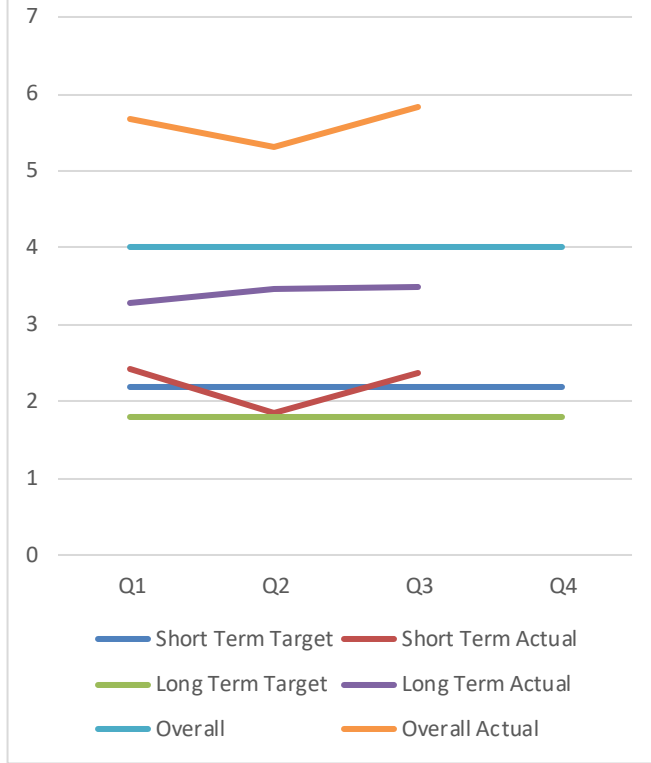
Fly Tipping Reports by Waste Type



	Asbestos	Black Bags - Commercial	Black Bags - Household	Chemical Drums, Oil or Fuel	Clinical	Construction/ Demolition/ Excavation	Green	Other (Unidentified)	Other Commercial Waste	Other Electrical Waste	Other Household Waste	Tyres	Vehicle Parts	Whiteline Goggles	Uncategorised
Q3	1	4	158	8	2	45	16	70	77	8	435	2	5	86	1
Q2 2022/23	1	18	202	8	1	39	21	36	78	3	472	1	22	83	0
Q1 2022/23	3	3	184	2	2	46	19	39	41	2	491	20	14	20	0

■ Q3 ■ Q2 2022/23 ■ Q1 2022/23

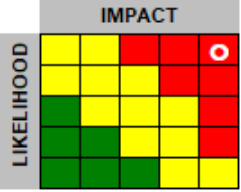
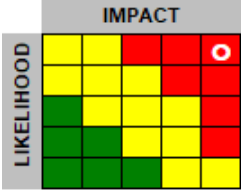
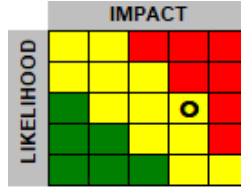
Sickness Absence Rates (%)


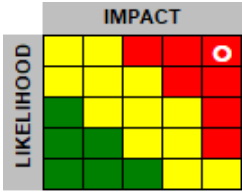
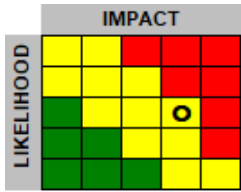


Agenda Item 8



9. **Corporate Risk Management**

- 9.1 The Council has an established approach to risk management. As part of that a Corporate Risk Register is maintained and is reported at each quarterly meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee. This Corporate Risk Register has been updated for this three-quarter review report and the top scoring risks are set out as follows. These risks should be considered and aligned to the key financial and performance issues within this report.

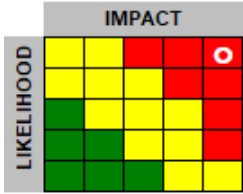

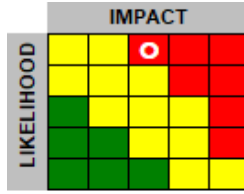
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Financial sustainability beyond 2022/23			
Causes	<p>The national economy, taking into account inflation and direct government funding which have been reflected in the financial settlements for 2023/24 and 2024/25 and the demand for services, especially Children’s Services will place substantial strain on the Council's overall medium-term budget.</p> <p>As a result, significant budget and cost reductions will be required. Due to the scale of budget reductions made since 2010, there is a risk that further suitable cost-saving / income generating measures will be difficult to identify. The impact on the financial sustainability of the Council is therefore a key risk.</p>		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council will need to identify substantial sustainable savings to meet the funding gap that arises from inflation, potential government grant reductions and increased demand for services • The budget reductions could have an adverse impact on residents and communities • The reputation of the Council may be compromised • Financial sustainability could be compromised • During 2022/23 with the impact of the pay award, inflation on energy and costs in Children's Services a remedial budget plan of over £20m has been implemented but there remains inherent risk in the ability to deliver a balanced budget in year without additional government support. 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The financial sustainability of the Council in the next two-year period after 2022/23 will be driven by the support offered by central government via the spending review and subsequent local government financial settlements. • The local government financial settlement was received in December 2022 with proposed sums detailed for 23/24 and sufficient information being available to inform planning for 24/25. As a result, the Council's financial assumptions have been revised and work continues to develop a robust and sustainable budget package for 23/24 • As part of the budget cycle , the MTFP for the next three-year period will be updated. This will need to be supplemented in the first 3-4 months of the next financial year by detailed planning for both Adults and Children’s Services that sets out the demand and resource requirements for the next 3-5 years, the sufficiency and workforce requirements and efficiency and transformation activity that will be undertaken. The work on Children’s Services will align with one of the recommendations made by the DfE commissioner. 		
Risk owner	Executive Director of Corporate Resources & Customer Services		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the Councils Budget Plan for 2022/23 that was approved on 3 March 2022 • Respond to all consultations in respect of the reform of local government finance and lobby for the best possible financial outcome for the Council - using the latest information from these consultations all three-year budget assumptions will be updated accordingly. • Ensure the rigorous approach to budget monitoring continues through 2022/23 • Work will continue within the budget cycle to identify proposals that will meet the budget gap- this work will focus on the next two financial years, i.e., the last two years of the Spending Review period. These will be presented to Budget Council in March 2023. 		


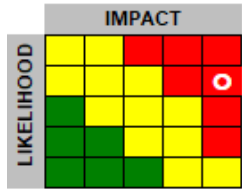
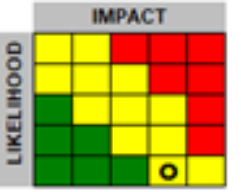
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Funding for Special Educational Needs is inadequate to meet requirements.</p>			
<p>Causes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Needs budgets are under considerable pressure from increasing numbers of children being diagnosed with complex and life-long SEND related issues. National funding allocations are not increasing annually at a rate to reflect increases in local population demand and so any additional commissioned places need to be financed from within existing budget envelope. The number and value of requests from mainstream schools for "top-up" funding (for children with SEND) continues to increase year on year as schools face financial pressures to meet the first £6k of any SEN Support. Maintained special school provision is full and more children are being placed in independent provision which is more expensive. Whilst this issue is being addressed through extra In-house provision, there remain risks that external placements may continue at high additional cost. Central Government have advocated parental preference for SEND provision - which has added to the number of children being placed in independent provision - with no additional funding. The current accounting override, has been extended for a further 3 years however with an existing £12.4m deficit that is due to increase by a further £5.6m at the end of 22/23 major intervention work is required to deliver financial sustainability. 		
<p>Result</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sefton's High Needs cumulative budget deficit is forecast to be £18m at the end of 2022/23. 		
<p>Current treatment and controls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Cabinet on work programme, timescales, and objectives Engagement with Sefton's Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education, Assistant Director of Education and the SEN Team Managers on how costs can be contained. Sufficiency statement produced that will drive future strategy and financial sustainability Lobbying and engagement of both DfE and MHCLG on financial impact and the need for increased support Engagement with special schools actively working with individual schools to review impact of any proposed changes to their funding, reviewing three-year financial plans, identifying any strategic savings to mitigate high calls on DSG High Needs funding. Review of place and top up levels of funding. In addition, further work is being undertaken on alleviating the barriers to inclusivity within mainstream settings and assessment of effectiveness of capital spend to maximise mainstream settings for children and young people. Council now part of DfE Delivering Better Value Programme 		

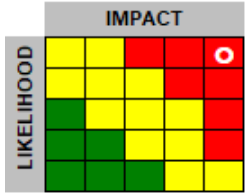
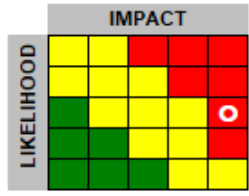
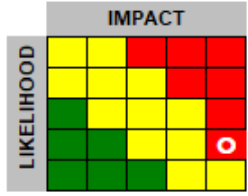
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive quarterly reports to be presented to Cabinet on sufficiency, in house provision, funding and deficit in order to provide rigour, transparency and inform decision making
Risk owner	Assistant Director Children's Services (Education)
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbying of Government has been successful, and Sefton will be working in partnership with the DfE in Dec 2022 to develop solutions to bring the High Needs Budget into a more financially secure position going forward and help to reduce the accumulated deficit over a set period. Through the High Needs Review the LA has been working on two specific workstreams with School representatives working on a number of key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a new funding model to support children with EHCPs. Clarifying high needs funding outside of the EHCP process. Reviewing provision and placement sufficiency. Considering new ways of working with SEN children in schools, making them more cost effective and with good outcomes. Review of the graduated response and supporting SEN leadership in schools.


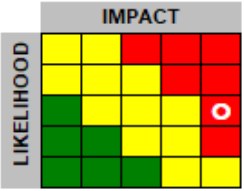
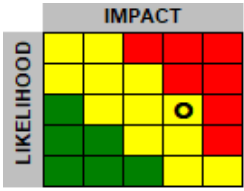
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
The Provision of Children's Social Care is not Financially Sustainable			TBC
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in government funding • Lack of national response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and report by the Competition and Markets Authority calling for action on the children's social care market • Unprecedented demand • Increased placement costs in Children's Social Care not included in Medium Term Financial Plan. • Numbers of children in care remain high • Insufficient local provision. • Inflation - Cost of placements continue to increase. • Commissioning capacity not sufficient to undertake effective market development. • Placements are not effectively reviewed 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on outcomes for children and young people • Lack of availability of suitable placements • Placements do not meet needs of children and young people. • Placements costs increase • Quality and sufficiency of placements decreases. • Children placed out of borough and unregulated placements. • Budget overspend 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Service MTFP agreed by DCS and s151 in line with DfE Advisor recommendations • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and supporting Children's Chapters • Increased Leadership capacity in Children's Services • Regular review of MTFP and Budget Monitoring • Joint Commissioning Strategy • Sufficiency Strategy • Market engagement and development including regional collaboration • LCR framework to coordinate the commissioning of independent residential and foster placements. • Marketing campaign to increase the number of in-house placements for children and young people. • Service Manager for Residential provision in post. • Fortnightly Placement Panel to monitor placement costs. 		

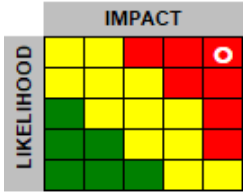
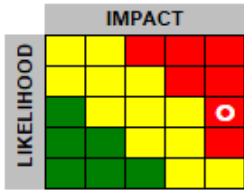
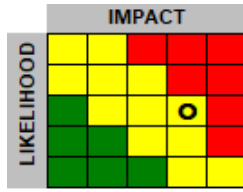
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly multi agency panels to review high-cost placements.
Risk owner	Executive Director Children's Services
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget to be rightsized for 2023 • Any additional expenditure required or requested will need the formal approval of Cabinet due to the wider Council budget pressures • Develop a Market Position Statement for approval at Executive Commissioning Group. • Reopen existing in-house provision • Develop a business case for inhouse provision. • Continue marketing activity to recruit inhouse foster carers • Continue to collaborate across LCR and develop market including Independent Fostering Agency Forum and Residential Care Forum (January 2023)

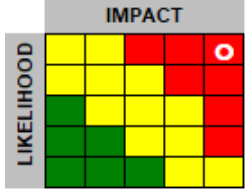
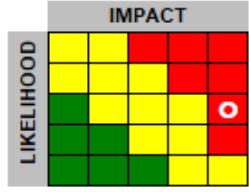
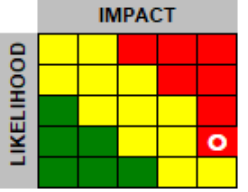
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Financial sustainability beyond 2022/23 – Housing Development Company			
Causes	The Council has a wholly owned Housing Development Company- due to the prevailing economic conditions at present, there is a risk that the value and timing of the dividend from phase 1 maybe the subject of change and the timing of the capital receipt is later than previously forecast.		
Result	Due to the national economic conditions at present, there is a risk that housing completions (driven by interest rates and potential inflation) will reduce from current levels. This could result in a delay to the completion of Phase 1 of company activity. This delay could reduce the dividend and it's timing together with the timing of the capital receipts and debt repayment due to the Council.		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council in October 2021, received a detailed update report on all aspects of the Company's activities including building programmes, grant funding and financial implications. The new financial implications received by members were subsequently approved at Cabinet in December 2021 following the receipt from the company of an updated exit strategy. The annual update of the business plan was reported to Cabinet in December 2022. • Within that report members were provided with a comprehensive update on the business plan and financial projections that reflect the latest estimates on the build completion and sales programme, and which will discuss the current risks driven by the national economic picture, especially interest rates and potential recession. • A focus on the report will be placed on the progress on the first 2 sites for which sales are progressing and the 3rd site for which construction has yet to commence. • The Company has utilised the Council's internal audit team to undertake a work programme during 2021/22 • An update on governance arrangements for the company was approved by Cabinet in July 2022. • An annual report was presented to Overview and Scrutiny management board in November 2022 and was then presented to the service O&S meeting in January 2023. • A self-assessment against the local partnerships' guidance re. management of wholly owned companies will be completed 		
Risk owner	Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director Corporate Resources & Customer Services		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to prevailing market conditions and the volatility that exists, the housing market is currently seeing substantial change within it- this includes the cost of construction, house prices and the cost of mortgages, all of which could impact sales, completions and the performance of the phase 1 business plan. These risks will need to be managed by the company but as a number of these are outside of its control, close working with the Council will be required to inform effective decision making that protects the Council's financial interests and supports the original objectives of the company • The governance arrangements and current controls will be continually updated - there is a lot of coverage nationally in respect of the management of wholly owned companies and as the guidance and best practice is updated on how these should be governed and managed is published, this will be taken into account by the council. 		

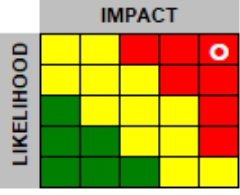
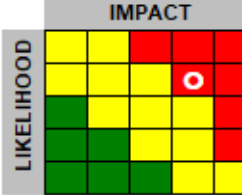
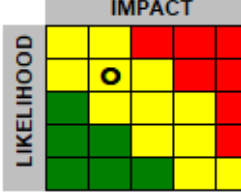
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Failure to adequately invest in the Highway network and associated assets.</p>			
Causes	<p>Inadequate funding to meet need; budget reductions; inflationary cost pressures; insufficient internal staffing resource; insufficient market capacity, contractor availability and contractor capacity; insufficient availability of materials and/or labour; delayed lead-in times for materials or services; rising prices for services, materials, and equipment.</p>		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deterioration of highway assets • Potential increase in claims • Financial and reputational risks • Potential increase in accidents resulting in injury and/or death • Reduction in amount of work able to be done within budget 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential work is prioritised within available budget. Regular inspections of most assets to monitor and guide prioritisation of works in order to mitigate risk. • Regular updates provided to Cabinet Member. • Preventive surface treatments used to prolong the life of the network and to treat more of it than if more long-term maintenance solutions were used (i.e., resurfacing) • Increased Capital funding received through City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for 2022-24. Will require additional staffing resource to deliver. 		
Risk owner	<p>Assistant Director Highways & Public Protection</p>		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively pursue opportunities for additional external funding via LCRCA and others to maintain and improve network. • Work with Contractors and suppliers to manage risk, mitigate for price rises, material, and labour shortages, and manage supply chain. • Undertake recruitment to vacant posts; create and recruit to additional posts and/or commissions where funding available to do so • Further refine and strengthen project planning, delivery, and governance measures 		

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
The Council is the victim of a cyber-attack.			
Causes	Malware, ransomware, or another virus infects the Council's systems.		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services will not have access to systems and data as standard and will have to fall back on non-ICT delivery methods, albeit without access to key data. • Data breach occurs. • Financial impact of ransom. • Reputational damage 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyberattack prevention measures are in place, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upgraded Council firewalls and active SIEM monitoring service. - Anti malware tools - New Acceptable use policy - LGA Stocktake completed - PSN Accreditation achieved and reviewed annually - New security standards for email encryption implemented - Further network security in place to reduce risk • Back-up disaster recovery facility is in place at a separate site, allowing Agilisys to restore the top 20 critical systems. • Agilisys has a Business Continuity-Disaster Recovery plan in place which covers an action plan for this priority restoration, and the subsequent restoration of all other systems • Ongoing monitoring in in place via ICT governance arrangements • Windows Defender anti-virus software is constantly updated alongside ESET also deployed • Communication to employees regarding the rise in malware attacks is in place, with plans to roll out better user education on this topic. • Review of Cyber Incident planning completed, and revised policy released • Removal of unsupported systems from the network 		
Risk owner	ED CR&CS		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ongoing ICT Transformation programme will see the majority of systems and data migrated to Microsoft Azure cloud hosting, which will reduce the overall risk; and improve Business continuity however further work is underway to improve the current security posture further. • Education programme for phishing to continue and this will be linked to the annual information security training. • Ongoing Cyber Security Improvement plan in place, including plans to bring all systems in the support of the existing ICT Contract. • External validation and assurance on-going, linked to improvement plan. 		


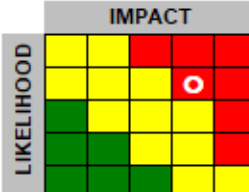
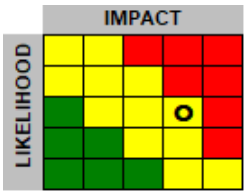
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Impact of Cost-of-Living Crisis on Residents and Demand for Council Services			
Causes	As residents become more vulnerable there is an increased demand for Council services - this increases pressure on teams and available resources.		
Result	<p>Increased demand will create:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased waiting time for some services • Issues around the capacity of the workforce to meet this demand • Budget pressure that cannot be contained • The requirement for the Council to administer central government support to residents in a tight timescale • Community cohesion will be compromised. 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual review of impact of cost-of-living crisis will be made based on demand for services, feedback from ward Councillors and performance information- this will lead to an agreed response with cabinet both in terms of direct support and impact on financial sustainability • In the event that the Council is asked to administer support to residents, the resource requirement will be evaluated and will be supported by new burdens funding and cabinet will be engaged on the most effective and efficient manner of providing that support 		
Risk owner	All Assistant Directors		
Proposed actions	<p>The Council will continue to lobby central government for support for residents impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and will continue to direct resources and support to those who need it most reflecting the core purpose objective of protecting the most vulnerable.</p> <p>A specific Child Poverty Strategy was approved by Cabinet in October 2022 and was launched in December 2022 with partners and stakeholders. The Cabinet has considered regular reports on Cost of Living and the Health and Well Being Board has requested the matter be a standing item on the Board agenda going forward.</p>		

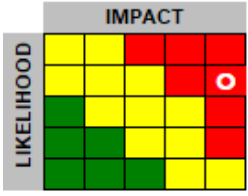
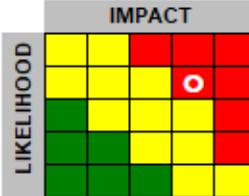
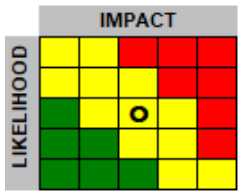
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Data breach resulting in the wrongful release of personal and/or sensitive information			
Causes	Policies and processes coordinated by Information Management and Governance Executive Group are not adhered to, resulting in a higher incidence of breaches caused by human error System error occurs		
Result	Failure to comply with legal requirements; loss of privacy, distress, or harm to the data subject; damage to Council's reputation; loss of public confidence; and significant financial penalties.		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information management and governance, including data breaches and actions to prevent data breaches, is overseen by the Information Management and Governance Executive Group (IMGEG), which consists of Heads of Service with lead responsibilities for key aspects of IMG (i.e., Data Protection Officer/IG Lead, Senior Information Risk Owner, and Lead officer for ICT infrastructure) supported by other officers with key roles relating to IMG. Each service has designated Information Asset Owners and Information Asset Administrators. Policies, procedures, process, and issues are communicated to these officers through the Information Management and Governance Tactical Group. Support, co-ordination, advice, and guidance is provided corporately, and appropriate training/refresher training is in place. The Council has implemented policies, procedures, and processes to prevent, manage and respond to potential and actual data breaches. 		
Risk owner	All Assistant Directors		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate resourcing, prioritisation and focus on information management and governance across the Council include the following: Regular monitoring and review by IMGEG of policies, procedures, and processes to prevent, manage and respond to potential and actual data breaches. Ongoing review of information systems to ensure no inappropriate or unforeseen data linkages exist within systems or reports. Review of systems ahead of updates to identify any unintended changes. Ongoing education of staff and monitoring of activity by IAOs and IAAs to identify and prevent areas of human error. Regular review of information contained to ensure information is accurate and any information that should be removed is removed. Regular reporting by IMGEG to SLB and Audit and Governance Committee, as necessary. Maximise the opportunities from the Council's ICT Transformation to increase and embed effective information management and governance. 		

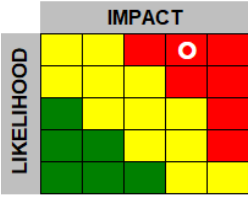
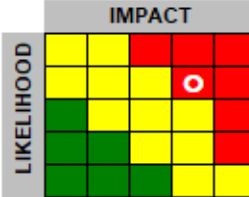
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Inadequate capability to prepare for and respond effectively to a major incident affecting the Council or occurring in Sefton as per the Council's responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.</p>			
Causes	A major incident occurs affecting the Council or the Borough		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of human life, illness, or serious injury • Major damage or destruction to infrastructure, property and/or the environment • Disruption or loss of critical services such as transport, communications, utility services • Reputational or financial harm to the authority 		
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 136</p> <p>Current treatment and controls</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Response Manual and Major Incident Guidance in place. • Revised Command and Control structure in place which defines Strategic and Tactical level officers. • Emergency Duty Co-ordinators (EDCs) are able to access Resilience Direct containing incident response plans. • Relevant training provided to Emergency Duty Co-ordinators and volunteers on an ongoing basis. • Five EDCs have now completed Multi Agency Gold Incident Commander (MAGIC) accredited training. • Attendance and participation in Merseyside Resilience Forum and joint planning across Merseyside. • Humanitarian volunteers in place and regular meetings and training now offered. • Continuous development and review of supporting plans. • Service Level Business Continuity plans now completed. Business Continuity eLearning package available to all staff • Business Continuity risk register completed and review on quarterly basis • Business Continuity Policy and strategy have been devised and approved. 		
Risk owner	All Assistant Directors		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Business Continuity Management System has been devised and is currently being implemented. This includes the following: • Six monthly review of BC plans and activation exercise undertaken to confirm accuracy of contact details included. • External provider hosted a BC exercise in January 2023 for all Executive and Assistant Directors, and this will be the start of an ongoing training and testing programme • Review and update of BC manual ongoing. 		

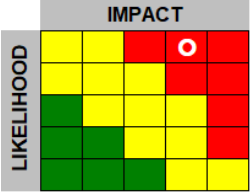
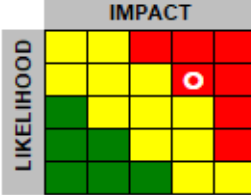
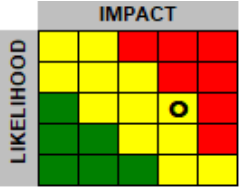
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Market failure of Social Care provision across Adult and Children's			
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability and capacity of the available workforce to provide domiciliary care • Lack of diversity of supply in the market to provide choice and control • Impact of Covid-19 and need for mandatory vaccination • Capability and capacity of the available workforce within the care home market 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to provide packages of care for service users and fulfil statutory duty of care • Lack of alternative providers able to support social care • Poor quality service provision and high costs • Significant increase in unmet needs of service users due to a fragile market that is not developing • Inability to meet sufficiency duty • Growing number of children placed out of borough with more LA's placing young people within Borough, placing additional pressure on ASC markets linked to transitions 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Position Statement and refresh of Children's Sufficiency strategy 22-25 • Strengthen governance - Executive Commissioning Group/Strategic Commissioning Group • Strategic Commissioning Team - increased interim capacity • Commissioning priorities reset and improvement plan in place • Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 • Winter Planning/checklist • Robust supply chain review undertaken • Demand Management Programme in adults and children's • Local Dynamic Purchasing system - approved by Cabinet • Cost of Care exercise now in process and on track to meet national reporting requirements • Re-procurement framework development has now commenced • Extension of arrangements for block purchasing of hours in place to support hospital discharge and other opportunities to adopt similar arrangement being explored in the South • Fees 22/23 report completed and implemented • Weekly escalation meetings with HOS and to DASS in place • Market position for ASC reporting now embedded into system calls • Links maintained across C&M DASS group with key areas of focus on Market Sustainability, Home First and Discharge • LGA Peer challenge completed in July 2022 that considered market oversight and sustainability 		

Risk owner	ED ASC&H, ED CSC&E
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened oversight of Quality Assurance with dedicated Senior Manager support will add the ability to refocus quality assurance resources on identified areas of risk in the market and gather intelligence to inform risks and ensure resilience and capacity. • Continue to focus on strategic plans to current contracts to ensure Value for Money and objectives are met. • Development of new opportunities through Sefton Place Based Partnership development • Children's High Risk/High-Cost Project, Commissioning priorities and full work plan in progress with extension • Recruitment for Senior Commissioning Leadership post in process • Recruitment campaign developed with Market with ongoing input from Sefton at Work • Development of contingency plans for provider failure - risk escalation process • Cost of care exercises for care homes (65+) and Domiciliary Care (18+) concluded in line with DHSC requirements and outcomes were submitted to DHSC on 14 Oct 2022. • links maintained with LCR on key market risks (capacity, workforce, cost of living, ceasing of covid funding, demand) • New Procurement for Domiciliary Care agreed at June 2022 Cabinet. To commence in Feb 2023 (with new framework in place from August 2023). • LGA Peer challenge completed in July 2022 which will consider market oversight and sustainability • Integrated commission arrangements will develop via new place arrangement. • Market Sustainability Plan and Fair Cost of Care Exercise to be sent to Central Government mid-October. • National Government Market Sustainability funding applied to Dom Care and care homes 65+ • Winter planning continues and work to mobilise a rapid and reablement expansion continues

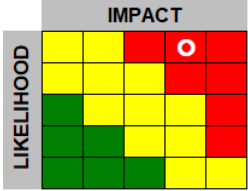
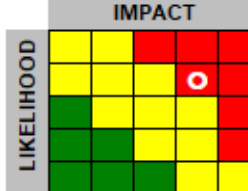
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Climate Emergency - Failure to meet the targets set out in the Council's declared climate emergency			
Causes	The Council has declared a climate emergency with a view to becoming a net zero contributor by 2030- the aim of this declaration is to improve the lives of residents, make the Borough a more attractive place to live and work, contribute to addressing the global impact of climate change contribute to stopping the deterioration of the Sefton environment.		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further deterioration in air quality • Extensive Coastal Erosion • Further deterioration in overall Sefton Environment • Sefton fails to support the drive to reduce carbon emissions that are having a significant impact on climate change • Reduced life expectancy • Reputational damage having declared an emergency and agreed a strategy and implementation plan 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has declared a climate emergency • Council has agreed the Strategy to meet this Declaration • Initial activities all completed • 3-year implementation place agreed by Council • Pathway to net zero articulated in latest annual report including residual amount that maybe left and financial support that will be required from central government for decarbonisation • Annual Reports track progress and are reported to Cabinet and Council • Initial projects in 3-year period include- move to agile working for staff, street lighting energy scheme, decarbonation work at Bootle and Southport Town Halls and procurement of 100% renewable electricity 		
Risk owner	ED CR&CS and ED People		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce 100% renewable electricity • Ensure completion of initial 3-year implementation place • Identify and bid for external funding to support change initiatives as without such financial support this will compromise the Council's ability to meet its target • Work with Combined Authority on communication strategy and leverage the CA to identify external funding and align with their programme of works • Work with the voluntary sector who have also declared a climate emergency - this will support delivery of schemes, external funding generation and community engagement for both organisations. Work on-going with Multi Agency Partnership to galvanise alignment with Partners activity in this area and influence delivery in line with Sefton's Strategy. 		

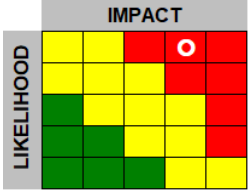
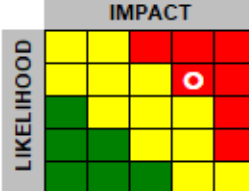
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Demand and Cost of Home to School Transport – Impact on the Financial Sustainability of the Council			
Causes	<p>Increasing expenditure is being driven by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rising number of children and young people with an Education Health and care plan. • The rising number of children and young people whose needs are not met in local mainstream provision and placed in educational provision outside the local area • The rising cost of fuel and living • Driver and escort shortages, competing for scarce resources 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply unable to match demand • Increased waiting time for users, impact on school attendance • Financial and reputational risks, financial sustainability of council could be compromised, budget pressure cannot be contained • Capacity of the workforce to meet this demand • Potential for poor service delivery • Negative socio-economic impact • High level of media and public interest in the council's actions • Loss of reputation 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to Leadership Team and Cabinet • Engagement with SEND on how demand can be contained • Review of In-House Fleet and post 16 charging policy • Monthly finance reports • On-going review of all provision • Personal travel budgets 		
Risk owner	Assistant Director of Education Excellence		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand personal travel budget programme • Explore expansion of in-house fleet • Engagement with SEND on how demand can be contained • Review of travel solutions, focus on Post 16, out of borough, single occupancy and personal assistants 		

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Market Failure of Social Care Provision across Adults and Children's			TBC
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of national response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and report by the Competition and Markets Authority calling for action on the children's social care market • National and regional pressures in Social Work recruitment and available workforce • Sufficiency in children's residential provision 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of alternative providers able to support social care • Poor quality service provision and high costs • Increase in unmet needs of children and young people due to a fragile market that is not developing. • Inability to meet sufficiency duty • Growing number of children placed out of borough with more LA's placing young people within Borough, placing additional pressure on ASC markets linked to transitions • Reliance on high cost out of borough residential provision for children and young people 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and supporting Children's Chapters • Market Position Statement and refresh of Children's Sufficiency strategy 22-25 • Strengthened governance - Executive Commissioning Group/Strategic Commissioning Group • Strategic Commissioning Team - increased interim capacity • Commissioning priorities reset and improvement plan in place • Local Dynamic Purchasing system - approved by Cabinet • Re-procurement framework development has now commenced, and update scheduled for Cabinet. • Strengthened oversight of Quality Assurance with dedicated Senior Manager support will add the ability to refocus quality assurance resources on identified areas of risk in the market and gather intelligence to inform risks and ensure resilience and capacity 		
Risk owner	ED ASC&H, ED CSC&E		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of new opportunities through Sefton Place Based Partnership development • Children's High Risk/High-Cost Project, Commissioning priorities and full work plan in progress • Recruitment for Senior Commissioning Leadership post in process • Development of contingency plans for provider failure - risk escalation process • Links maintained with LCR on key market risks (capacity, workforce, cost of living, ceasing of covid funding, demand) • Develop business case for inhouse provision of Children's residential care 		

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Inflation and cost of care impact on budget availability			
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Care Crisis reflected at regional and local level Increasing provider costs – CPI etc / Impact of national decisions such as increase to National Living Wage Increased pressure to implement Real Living Wage – including to mirror approach adopted by other regional Local Authorities Workforce issues – recruitment, retention, pay and conditions/ Affordability 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgetary impact / Council overspend Failure to meet statutory obligations Provider failure Needs of the population being unmet Contracts being handed back – leading to potential increased use of non-contracted Providers Reputational damage 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of Care exercise commissioned externally, and completed in line with DHSC requirements Market management by strategic commissioning re increased efficiencies Establishment of Local Framework Agreements to manage costs in process Establishment of Strategic Partnerships with providers Utilisation of workforce grants to support the market Involvement with regional forums e.g., NW ADASS Operational Commissioners Group to ensure collaborative approach, updates on key developments Collaborative fee setting exercise complete- paper to cabinet June 2022 LGA Peer Review completed July 2022 Strategic review of budget in process as part of Sector Led Improvement offer 		
Risk owner	ED ASC&H		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of Care Exercise completed in line with DHSC requirements Use of bespoke cost of care tools to calculate costs Implementation of Local Frameworks to control costs and commissioning activity (in process) Benchmarking with regional authorities Enhance pooled budget arrangements with Health in development in line with Place arrangements Integrated approach to commissioning further enhanced (Intermediate care, market sustainability) Transformation programme – realignment / redistribution of expenditure across service sectors to reflect actual/desired changes in demand 		

- Care Cap reform work commenced – paper submitted to ELT – However, implementation now postponed by Government to October 2025

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Failure to Manage Increasing Demand for Services			TBC
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of national response to the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care and report by the Competition and Markets Authority calling for action on the children’s social care market • Increase in the number of children needing a Social Care intervention across the spectrum of need. • Lack of common understanding of spectrum of need. • Budget pressures 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased safeguarding risks • Poor outcomes for children in Sefton • Inability to cope with demand • Reputational damage 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and supporting Children's Chapters • People Strategy and Action Plan • Sefton Stronger Together Partnership • Level of Need document shared across partnership • Recruitment campaign for in house foster carers • Quality Assurance Framework • Practice Standards • Monthly Senior Management Performance Management meetings • Regular audit of cases, scrutiny of data and understanding of cohort to predict future demand (needs analysis). • Greater emphasis on the right response at the right time to enable intervention more swiftly and avoid drift and delay. • Budget monitoring • Increased scrutiny on the decision to bring a child and the exploration of safe alternatives. 		
Risk owner	Executive Director and Assistant Director of Children’s Services		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of Early Help into Children's Services • Embed performance culture • Review of Safeguarding Partnership • Review of existing kinship care placements with a view to making these into SGO arrangements. • Develop channels to gain family feedback and incorporate into service delivery. 		

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Impact of Regulatory Framework Outcomes			TBC
Causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted Monitoring Visits • Further inspection of services under the ILAC framework 		
Result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are found to not adequately safeguard children • Reputational damage to the Council and Statutory partners • Loss of confidence in partnership arrangements 		
Current treatment and controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement board established under DfE improvement notice • DfE Advisor supporting Improvement Programme • Phase 1 Improvement Plan progressing • Regular reports to Overview & Scrutiny • Self-evaluation has been refreshed and updated • Performance dashboard • Quality Assurance Framework. 		
Risk owner	Executive Director and Assistant Director of Children's Services		
Proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Improvement Board oversight • Scrutineer to join Improvement Board • Progress recommendations made by Children's Commissioner • Report progress and risk to Overview & Scrutiny • Develop Phase 2 of Improvement Plan • Review Quality Assurance Framework • Continue with Audit regime. 		

Agenda Item 8

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	535,705	392,851	-
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
New Directions Programme	10,962	379,038	-
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	546,226	43,781	-
Dunes Splashworld – Health and Safety Works	270,000	-	-
Bootle Leisure Centre – Lift Replacement	38,000	-	-
Bootle Leisure Centre – Roof Replacement	-	209,000	-
Netherton Activity Centre – New Fencing	103,000	-	-
Libraries - Centres of Excellence	90,000	188,019	-
Section 106 Funded Projects	191,957	26,861	-
Corporate Resources			
Council Wide Essential Maintenance	485,838	1,547,897	-
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	6,299,479	-	-
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		

Agenda Item 8

	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
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
Enterprise Arcade	187,500	1,245,000	61,500
Transformations De Southport	153,000	1,847,000	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	1,032,281	-
Social Housing Allocations Scheme	65,000	-	-
Southport Pier	321,822	3,000,000	-
Education Excellence			
Schools Programme	3,115,581	9,371,282	7,055
Planned Maintenance	429,902	50,000	-
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	411,607	2,688,090	-
Highways and Public Protection			
Accessibility	989,402	-	-
Healthy Lifestyles	790,000	-	-
Road Safety	120,000	-	-
A565 Route Management Strategy	1,571,027	778,014	-
A59 Route Management Strategy	250,000	589,000	-
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	-	-
Operational In-House Services			
Burials & Cremation Service – Vehicles & Equipment	47,713	-	-
Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management	788,473	2,372,701	1,306,000
Parks Schemes	223,149	110,919	-
Tree Planting Programme	134,505	19,769	19,769
Golf Driving Range Developments	9,988	280,280	-
Ainsdale Coastal Gateway	27,712	840,000	-
Crosby Marine Lake Improvements – Phase 1	30,339	-	-
Green Sefton – Plant & Machinery	-	131,152	-
Vehicle Replacement Programme	366,835	1,779,494	-
Wheeled Bins	345,000	-	-
TOTAL PROGRAMME	47,377,998	52,385,575	45,190,153