

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION AND SKILLS)

**MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE
ON 25 NOVEMBER 2024**

PRESENT: Councillor Hart (in the Chair)
Councillor Corcoran (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Cavanagh, Hinde, McKee, Webster and Lloyd-Johnson

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Doyle, Dowd and Lappin

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Killen, Morris, Sammon, Councillor Harvey, Cabinet Member – Cleansing and Street Scene and Councillor Veidman, Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Paragraph 9 of the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declaration of personal interest was made and the Member concerned remained in the room during the consideration of the item:

| Member | Minute No. | Nature of Interest |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Councillor Corcoran | Minute No. 27 – Cabinet Member Communities and Partnership | Member of the advisory board of the organisation "At the Libraries" |

18. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

19. SELECTIVE AND ADDITIONAL LICENSING SCHEMES - ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIONS OF LITTERING AND DUMPING RUBBISH IN REAR ENTRIES

Further to Minute No. 49 (1) of 5 March 2024 the Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director – Economic Growth and Housing advising that the council currently operated a Selective Landlord Licencing scheme in Bootle and Additional (HMO) licencing schemes in Seaforth, Waterloo and Southport; that these schemes placed obligations on the landlords to ensure that their tenants were aware of how to properly dispose of refuse from the property; and the exploration of whether additional licencing conditions could be placed on the landlord to prevent fly-tipping in rear entries by their tenants.

The report advised that as part of HMO licencing schemes, requirements were already in place relating to the external areas and refuse; but that the Committee wished to explore whether the licencing schemes could be used to compel landlords to have additional control over their tenants.

The report identified that robust proof was required to successfully prosecute tenants who breached the rules; that the Council was currently 20 months into a 5-year Licencing scheme and therefore was unable to add additional licencing requirements to the current scheme; and that additional requirements could be added to specific properties of concern, however, blanket changes to licencing conditions could not be introduced until 2028 when the current scheme ended.

The report concluded by detailing that the Council was currently working with several registered social housing providers who owned properties in the 'Poet Streets' area of Linacre Ward to look at issues relating to fly-tipping in rear entries; that regular joint inspections of the area had recently re-started to identify fly-tipping issues and ensure that this was cleared up as soon as possible, and that where evidence existed that was sufficient to take action against perpetrators that this happened; and that it was hoped that this approach could be rolled out in other fly-tipping 'hotspot' areas.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- concern was expressed at the limited resources currently available to deal with irresponsible landlords
- context was sought on why people fly-tip
- information was sought on the enforcement rates of people fly-tipping
- praise was given for work done around Poet Street and Officers were encouraged to roll the scheme out borough-wide
- lessons learned from good landlords and training offered

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Housing Standards Manager be requested to provide members of the Committee with additional information on enforcement rates of fly-tipping; and
- (2) the report on whether additional licencing conditions could be placed on landlords to prevent fly-tipping in rear entries by their tenants be noted.

20. RECYCLING & WASTE CONTAINMENT

Further to Minute No. 49 (3) of 5 March 2024 the Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director – Operational In-House Services that updated on the current Waste and Recycling Collection Service and waste containment and which included project work underway; and that outlined impending national changes within the waste industry and the subsequent impact those changes would have upon the service within Sefton.

The report indicated that Sefton Council collected approximately 118,602 tonnes of household waste from approximately 120,000 properties across the borough on an annual basis; that this was a combined total from all waste streams; that approximately 98,000 properties participated in the garden waste collection service delivered on a 3-weekly basis; that Sefton's 2021/22 recycling rate was 33.2% and each household in Sefton generated on average 614.9 kgs of waste that year; and that in comparison to the rest of the Liverpool City Region (LCR), Sefton ranked around mid-table but was significantly below the national average for recycling performance which was about 45%.

The report also detailed the environmental, financial and local drivers for change relating to the way waste was collected both in Sefton and as part of a wider LCR approach to improve performance and environmental impacts as well as driving down costs; legislative changes introduced by DEFRA which made it mandatory for councils, from April 2026, to provide a kerbside food waste collection on a weekly basis and additional requirements to collect a wider range of recycle; and the LCR Strategic Waste and Resources Partnership, which aimed to harness the benefits of working collectively and that Sefton was one of 7 partners in the Partnership, comprising the 6 LCR Local Authorities and MRWA.

The report provided information on the Sefton specific Corporate Transformation Project within the Waste Management Service, the purpose of which was to review current resource utilisation such as vehicles and staff to ensure well balanced and efficient schedule creation and that rounds would also be developed with sufficient capacity for any pre-approved housebuilding sites within the Borough that were due to commence over the next 3 year period; indicated that wherever possible, standardised collection arrangements would be implemented boroughwide but that in the future, any location that required a bespoke collection

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arrangement / presentation point would be assessed on a case-by-case basis; that Sefton had recently appointed a Waste Minimisation Officer and detailed the main duties of the post; and the corporate risks associated with the procurement of products (food caddies and vehicles) in a saturated market as all local authorities that didn't currently offer a food waste collection service would be undertaking the same steps.

The report concluded that there was considerable change on the horizon for residents across the Borough; that significant engagement and communications would be delivered timely and through a variety of forums to ensure a wide reach; and that all partners and stakeholders would have a role to play in disseminating information and promoting consistent messaging as Sefton prepared for change.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- communication to residents concerning what currently can and cannot be recycled in Merseyside
- the introduction of food waste collections for properties requiring bespoke collections
- collection crews access to bespoke collection data
- reduced collection service over the Christmas period
- the introduction of a waste minimisation officer
- Members opportunity to update residents while litter picking and operating community skip schemes

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the content of the report be noted;
- (2) the national changes within the waste industry be noted; and
- (3) the impact of national changes within Sefton be noted

21. LOCAL PLAN POLICY – PROVISION OF COMMUNITY RECYCLING FACILITIES IN DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Further to Minute No. 49 (2) of 5 March 2024 the Committee considered the report of the Chief Planning Officer on the potential inclusion, within the Local Plan, of the need to provide recycling/community recycling facilities in development proposals.

The report indicated that National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPF) did not provide guidance on the need for community recycling facilities, but did allow Local Authorities to address non-strategic issues that arose in their area through the Development Plan process; that the Development Plan for Sefton included the Sefton Local Plan (2017) and the Merseyside and Halton joint Waste Local Plan (2013); that the Local Plan did not include

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any requirement for community recycling facilities in new development, but policy WM9 “Sustainable Waste Management Design and Layout for New development” included in the Local Plan did set out that the design and layout of new development must, provide for the “facilitation of collection and storage of waste, including separated recyclable materials”.

The report also detailed the potential for a new Local Plan policy and how this could be achieved, but that in the best-case scenario, a new Local Plan would be unlikely to be adopted for at least three to four years.

The report also detailed issues to be consider for including separate recycling schemes with development; and referred to previous recycling facilities that had been secured on commercial development sites, for example, on car parks of large supermarkets and retail parks; and consideration given to communal recycling facilities within both existing and new residential developments. Problems associated with this were that doorstep collections were already provided by Sefton, which each household could use; and the challenging issue of where the recycling facilities would be sited as the facility both needed to be readily accessible for anyone to use but not situated immediately next to someone’s home. When Operational In-House Services trialed communal bins in 2021 there was significant objection to them being cited near to peoples’ homes.

The report concluded that notwithstanding the issues referred to, the Council would continue to apply existing policies that required that space was included within new premises and homes for the safe and easy storage of recycling material ready for collection, and layouts of new development to allow for the collection of waste and recycling; and that it was not considered justifiable to have a Local Plan policy requiring communal recycling facilities to be provided within new developments. However, it was something that could be reviewed when the next Local Plan /Waste Local Plan was commenced.

Members of the Committee commented on the following issue:

- supporting evidence in the form of quantitative data

RESOLVED:

That it is not currently considered appropriate for the inclusion of a new policy for communal recycling facilities within major new commercial and housing developments in the next Local Plan and/or Waste Local Plan.

22. 2023/2024 FLOODING AND COASTAL EROSION ANNUAL REPORT

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The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director – Operational In-House Services that presented the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Annual Report 2023/24.

The report indicated that the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 previously required that arrangements be made to review and scrutinise the exercise by the Council as a Lead Local Flood Risk Authority of its flood risk management functions and coastal erosion risk management functions; and that following the cessation of this requirement, the Committee had requested that the annual FCERM review be submitted to it instead to ensure that delivery of flood and coastal erosion risk management was undertaken appropriately and that the Committee's views were considered in the future delivery of the Council's FCERM function.

The Annual FCERM review, attached as an appendix to the report, covered the 12-month period September 2023-2024 and detailed the following key areas:

- Information on flooding & erosion incidents experienced over the last year.
- Work progress relative to our legislative responsibilities as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Riparian Owner & Coastal Authority.
- Work progress relative to our own actions set out in our Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) 2022-2030.
- Overview of annual finances

The report concluded by seeking any comments on the FCERM review to the Cabinet Member - Health and Wellbeing.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- concern was expressed at the challenges associated with removing sand from sand dunes along the Blundellsands – Waterloo promenade
- the different bodies/groups set up to deal with flood risk
- flood risk mitigation in Maghull
- making space for water
- thanks was given to the relevant teams following the Bowles Street, Bootle flooding on 30 September
- concern was expressed at possible under-reporting of flooding events
- public consultation with young people and schools

RESOLVED:

That the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Annual Report 2023/24 be noted.

23. SOUTHPORT MARKET UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director – Economic Growth and Housing advising that Southport Market (the Market) was repurposed into a Food and Drink Market and opened in July 2021; and outlining its year 3 performance, particularly in the context of economic conditions affecting the sector and venues including, but not limited to, Southport Market.

The report referred to the importance of the offer at the Market continuing to evolve; that in the third year of trading no changes had occurred in the business mix with all traders still trading, with many of the original traders still operating in the market despite the continuing pressure in the hospitality sector; that two units had changed their trading name to reflect menu changes; and that the Market also had a large events space called The Extravaganza Room that could accommodate 200 people.

The report advised that food traders and the bar paid a turnover rent rather than a set rent measured on square footage; that this arrangement was now common practice in many food markets and allowed the landlord to be rewarded the more successful the operation became; that it also importantly allowed new start-up businesses breathing space to become established and to build up a robust cash flow; and provided information on the financial performance of the Market in respect of:

- Year 2 v Year 3 Food and Drink Sales
- Year 3 Rental Performance v Business Plan Targets
- Year 3 Expenditure v Business Plan Targets
- Year 3 Actual v Business Plan
- Revised Year 3 v Business Plan
- Year 2 Actuals V Year 3 Actuals

The report also referred to the sector pressures in respect of the trading environment for the hospitality sector which continued to see significant changes and challenges due to cost-of-living crisis, inflation and other factors impacting on Southport; and detailed that the events space to the rear of the Market continued to be a success, with multiple sell out events throughout year 3 with thousands of tickets sold for Easter events, themed nights and Christmas extravaganza events and that income from events was up 128%.

The report concluded that as part of the new business plan an extensive review by an independent hospitality expert was taking place, and that the review would look at the full operation including trader menus and sales, market operation including staff training and welcome, capital investments, events and marketing.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

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- future works planned
- future events planned i.e. extravaganza
- the demographic of the clientele
- how traders were being supported during recent economic challenges

RESOLVED:

That the report on the year 3 performance at Southport Market be noted.

24. SOCIAL VALUE OUTCOMES FROM THE GROWTH AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets which advised that the objectives of the Growth and Strategic Investment programme (GSIP), and the projects therein, were consistently intended to balance economic, financial, social and environmental outcomes; that each project was developed with wider aims to support with delivery against strategies and policies in other areas of the Council beyond regeneration; and that the aim of the report was to provide Members with visibility of the work that had been undertaken, was being undertaken, and was planned, on projects across the Council's GSIP that demonstrated "social value", which for the purposes of this report, was defined as the wider value created by capital projects beyond the economic and financial.

The report indicated that the Council's GSIP comprised a range of projects across all parts of Sefton, of a wide range of types, sizes, funding sources and delivery models; and provided an overview of activity and outcomes relating to social value from a number of example projects as detailed below, alongside an overview of the wider approach to incorporation of social value into all projects:

- Marine Lake Events Centre (MLEC)
- Southport Pier
- Bootle Strand
- Sound City Course
- Teenage Market Event

A copy of the Bootle Strand Demolition Social Value August 2024 and MLEC Social Value Report August 2024 reports were attached as appendices to the agenda.

The report also provided information on Employment and Learning with particular reference to care experience young people support; that the Invest Sefton and Property teams had been supporting affected local businesses following the unspeakable events in Southport in July 2024 which included support with the relocation of the Hart Space to The White House, Southport, to enable continuity of their good work; and action areas for 2025 and beyond to ensure continued incorporation of social

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value into the GSIP and beyond, that would include particular emphasis on children and young people, ensuring they were at the heart of everything the Council did.

The report concluded by seeking feedback on key issues and opportunities arising from GSIP, and on areas of potential interest for further review and focus in future years.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- praise was given for the Sound City Programme
- the possibility of linking up aspiring young musicians with the Royal British Legion for relevant events
- possible expansion of the Teenage Market Event across the borough

RESOLVED:

That the report on the Growth and Strategic Investment programme be noted.

25. SEFTON ECONOMIC STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 47 of the meeting held on 5 March 2024 the Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director – Economic Growth and Housing that updated on progress with the Sefton Economic Strategy (the Strategy) Action Plan for the period April - September 2024.

The report indicated that the Strategy set out the Council's framework and delivery for services providing support to the local economy and was aligned with Sefton 2030 Vision; that it was also being aligned with the emerging Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's emerging Growth plan; and that Cabinet approved the framework strategy on 3rd November 2022 and gave authority to the Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Housing, in conjunction with Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills, to approve the subsequent Action Plans that were reported to this Committee.

In respect of the Strategy the report provided information on:

- Governance and reporting
- Economy
- Business Growth and Employment
- Business Growth and Investment
- Partnership working
- Cross Council activities
- Inward Investment
- Southport Business Recovery Fund

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- Employment and Opportunities for work
- Regenerated Places – Growth and Strategic Investment Programme
- Regenerated Places -Tourism
- Summaries of other Strategy objectives and subsets

The report concluded that the work identified in the Strategy provided a basis for the continuance of the Council's commitment to sustainable and inclusive economic growth for Sefton; and sought feedback on the Strategy.

The Sefton Inward Investment Prospectus summary and the Sefton Economic Strategy performance dashboard July-September 2024 were attached as appendices to the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issues:

- thanks were given for the thorough report
- economic growth across the borough

RESOLVED:

That the update on progress with the Sefton Economic Strategy (the Strategy) Action Plan for the period April - September 2024 be noted.

26. WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25, SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPICS AND KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that sought views on the Work Programme for 2024/25; the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by informal meetings of the Committee; the identification of any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan; that updated on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and that advised of a change to responsibility for consideration of matters associated with asset management.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be considered, along with any additional items be noted;
- (2) the reports about Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited (SHOL) - 2023/24 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies; Sandway Homes Limited - 2023/24 Outturn Review of Council Wholly Owned Companies; and Domestic Abuse be deferred to the meeting of the Committee to be held on 21 January 2025;

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- (3) it be noted that responsibility for asset management issues now rests with this Committee rather than the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) and therefore, future reports/presentations on issues associated with disposal of surplus council owned land/asset management strategy will be submitted to this Committee;
- (4) the items contained in the Forward Plan which fall within the remit of this Committee be noted; and
- (5) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

27. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS - SEPTEMBER 2024 TO NOVEMBER 2024

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer that included the most recent reports from the Cabinet Members for Cleansing and Street Scene; Communities and Partnership Engagement; Housing and Highways; Public Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton element); and Regeneration, Economy and Skills.

Councillor Harvey, Cabinet Member – Cleansing and Street Scene had submitted his apologies for absence and had indicated that he was keen to give Members the opportunity to query his report. Therefore, if Members wished to raise any questions on his report he requested that Members emailed their questions to him.

Councillor Dowd, Cabinet Member - Communities and Partnership Engagement presented her report and highlighted the following issues:

- Events taking place across Merseyside commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls
- Work done by Sefton's library service

Members of the Committee commented on the following issue:

- Operation Banger

Councillor Lappin, Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Economy and Skills presented her report and highlighted the following issues:

- Sefton@Work's engagement with the wider city region
- Department for Work and Pensions schemes
- Property Services
- Marine Lake Event Centre

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Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member - Public Health and Wellbeing presented her report and highlighted the following issues:

- the variety of work being undertaken across Sefton's coastline including but not limited to; invasive species, Southport Beach, sand dunes, tree clearance, sheep / cow led schemes

Members of the Committee asked questions/commented on the following issue:

- the use of livestock in the management of the sand dunes.

Councillor Harvey, Cabinet Member – Cleansing and Street Scene had submitted his apologies for absence. However, Members of the Committee directed questions/comments on the following issue towards the Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services:

- weed control in residents' rear entries

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet Member - Cleansing and Street Scene; Communities and Partnership Engagement; Housing and Highways; Public Health and Wellbeing (Green Sefton element); and Regeneration, Economy and Skills reports relating to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and
- (2) Councillors Dowd, Doyle and Lappin be thanked for their attendance at the Committee.