

# Public Document Pack

# Sefton Council

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: Thursday 25th July, 2024

TIME: 10.00 a.m.

VENUE: Committee Room, Town Hall, Bootle

DECISION MAKER: **CABINET**

Councillor Atkinson (Chair)  
Councillor Dowd  
Councillor Doyle  
Councillor Harvey  
Councillor Howard  
Councillor Lappin  
Councillor Moncur  
Councillor Roscoe  
Councillor Veidman

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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

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# 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	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>		
2	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  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	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>  Minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2024		(Pages 5 - 10)
4	<b>High Needs Monitoring</b>  Report of the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education	All Wards	(To Follow)
* 5	<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report</b>  Report of the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets	All Wards	(Pages 11 - 18)

6	<b>Appointment of Representative on Outside Body</b> Report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer	All Wards	(Pages 19 - 22)
* 7	<b>Financial and Corporate Performance 2023/2024</b> Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(Pages 23 - 96)
* 8	<b>Treasury Management Outturn 2023/24</b> Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(Pages 97 - 114)
9	<b>Corporate Plan</b> Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(To Follow)
* 10	<b>Financial Management 2024/25 to 2027/28 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2024/25 – July Update</b> Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(To Follow)
11	<b>Exclusion of Press and Public</b> To comply with Regulation 5(2) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, notice has been published regarding the intention to consider the following matter(s) in private for the reasons set out below.  The Cabinet is recommended to pass the following resolution:  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 item 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.		
* 12	<b>Asset Disposal - Pendle Drive, Netherton -</b>	Blundellsands;	(Pages 115 -

**Exempt Appendices**

Church; Manor;  
Victoria

122)

Exempt appendices of the Executive Director –  
Corporate Services and Commercial

13 **Re-admittance of the Public**

The Cabinet meeting will now move back into  
open session to consider the following agenda  
item

\* 14 **Asset Disposal - Pendle Drive, Netherton**

St. Oswald

(Pages 123 -  
128)

Report of the Executive Director – Corporate  
Services and Commercial

**THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY 3 JULY 2024. MINUTES NOD. 15, 16 AND 17 (6) – (12) ARE NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL-IN".**

## **CABINET**

**MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL,  
SOUTHPORT  
ON THURSDAY 20 JUNE 2024**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Atkinson (in the Chair)  
  
Councillors Dowd, Doyle, Harvey, Howard, Lappin,  
Roscoe and Veidman

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Sir Ron Watson CBE

### **12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Moncur.

### **13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **14. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

#### **Decision Made:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **15. BOOTLE AREA ACTION PLAN - PUBLICATION**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director (Place) seeking approval for publication of the Bootle Area Action Plan (Local Plan Document) for public comment and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State for Examination in Public. A link to the Publication Draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan and Policy Map was provided within the report.

Reference was made to a survey undertaken with children and young people and how the Bootle Area Action Plan (AAP) contributed towards a positive impact on that cohort, together with consultation and engagement with that cohort.

#### **Decisions Made:**

**That the Council be recommended to:**

# Agenda Item 3

CABINET - THURSDAY 20TH JUNE, 2024

- (1) approve the Publication Draft of the Bootle AAP and supporting assessments, for publication for public comment and submission to the Secretary of State for examination;
- 2) delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways and the Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Economy and Skills, to make non-strategic changes to the Publication Draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan or supporting assessments prior to publication and/or submission; and
- (3) delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways and the Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Economy and Skills, to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the Publication Draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan or supporting assessments prior to publication and/or submission.

## **Reasons for the Decisions:**

To allow the draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan and supporting assessments to be published for public comment and subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

## **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not to produce an Area Action Plan for Bootle. This is not appropriate as it is considered necessary to clearly set out a vision for the town and to provide the planning policy framework to allow the various planned and future regeneration projects and investment opportunities to secure planning approval.

## **16. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services indicating that Sefton Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019. Following the declaration, work had progressed within the Council and a climate emergency strategy and associated action plan was created. Annual reporting on progress made was required as part of the governance approach to the programme. Members were asked to note the progress made on achieving net zero carbon by 2030 and the programme of works supporting the Council's transition to low carbon working. The Climate Emergency Annual Report 2023/24 was attached to the report.

Reference was made to financial pressures and positive work with partners within the Liverpool City Region and Cabinet Members thanked staff for their commitment to work on the climate emergency.

## **Decision Made:**

CABINET - THURSDAY 20TH JUNE, 2024

That the Council be recommended to note the progress made on the targets in the Sefton climate emergency strategy and action plan.

**Reasons for the Decision:**

To support the delivery of the Council motion that declared a climate emergency and ensure the Council was aligning with future regional and national net zero targets.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not acting would increase the risks to Sefton in future years, on the themes of energy cost and security, and climate change resilience (increased incidence of extreme weather events, sea level rise etc.). Sefton would also be subject to regional (2040) and national targets (2050) around achieving net zero, beyond the current scope of work, which would require additional action. Therefore, ensuring net zero emissions for Sefton Council operations was the first stage of this wider body of work.

**17. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2024/25 TO 2027/28 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2024/25 - ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that set out supplementary capital and revenue estimates for approval in the Council's Capital Programme and Revenue Budget and an update on revised allocations of grant from central government and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

**Decisions Made:**

That

- (1) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.859m for the Better Care Fund – Disabled Facilities Grant additional allocation funded by DLUHC be approved;
- (2) supplementary capital estimates of £0.003m for Devolved Formula Capital and £0.034m Schools Condition Allocation funded by grant from the Department for Education be approved;
- (3) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.500m for the Green Light Fund funded by grant from the Department for Transport, be approved;
- (4) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.449m for the Network North Roads Resurfacing Fund funded by grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be approved;

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- (5) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.065m for the Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant funded by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be approved;

**the Council be recommended to:**

- (6) approve a supplementary capital estimate of £3.500m for the Disabled Facilities Grants core programme in 2024/25, funded by the Better Care Fund;
- (7) approve a supplementary capital estimate of £4.040m for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities funded by the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation from the Department for Education;
- (8) approve a supplementary capital estimate of £0.450m for the ICT Equipment Refresh project funded by prudential borrowing;
- (9) approve a supplementary revenue estimate of £1.237m for the UKSPF Ways to Work grant funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority;
- (10) approve a supplementary capital estimate of £5.273m for the Southport Public Realm project funded by external grants and contributions and Council resources;
- (11) approve a supplementary capital estimate of £5.799m for the A59 Northway Pedestrian/ Cycle Improvements project funded by external grants and contributions and Council resources;
- (12) approve a supplementary capital estimate of £3.300m for the Carriageway Resurfacing Programme funded by grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority; and

**Rule 27**

- (13) 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 (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) had been consulted under Rule 27 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution, to the decision being made by the Cabinet and the Council 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 of the requirement to set supplementary budget estimates as part of the ongoing delivery of Council's financial strategy for 2024/25.

**Reasons for the Decisions:**

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To approve updates to the capital programme and revenue budget so that they could be applied to schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall financial strategy.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Not Applicable.

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**Report Title: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report**

Date of meeting:	Thursday 25 July 2024
Report to:	Cabinet
Report of:	Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Communities and Partnership Engagement
Wards affected:	(All Wards)
Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Is this a key decision:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No

**Summary:**

Sefton Council published its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy for 2023-2027 for approval at the Cabinet meeting of April 2023. That meeting requested an annual report on progress against the strategy and action plan therein.

This report provides a summary of progress over the first 12 months since approval of the strategy against its objectives and action areas. The report outlines the breadth of activity and level of progress being made across the Council in all areas, recognising the strategy’s focus on the Council’s role as an employer as a priority in the short term. However, it also recognises that there remains much to do in this important area of work as we continue (and will always continue) to aim to improve all aspects of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as an employer, a provider of services, a commissioner and as a place leader.

**Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) note the content of this report and its appendices;
- (2) provide feedback on key issues and opportunities arising, and advise on areas of potential interest for further review and focus in future years; and
- (3) receive the next annual report on performance against the strategy and action plan

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in 12 months' time.

## 1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Sefton Council has an exciting and ambitious Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy launched in April 2023.
- 1.2 The Council's aim has been to focus on borough-wide challenges and opportunities, for the whole of Sefton and all the communities within it. Equally, an important commitment to ensuring that Sefton meets its own high standards and expectations as an inclusive employer with a diverse workforce, that is supportive to all employees and ensures the attraction, development and retention of a diverse workforce.
- 1.3 Sefton Council's workforce and community is becoming even more diverse. The Council has recently been delighted to welcome the much-needed international workers. The Council recognises its crucial role in ensuring all employees feel valued, supported and understood but also, in promoting the positive appreciation for these newly recruited cohorts within Sefton's community.
- 1.4 The aim of this report is to provide the Cabinet with visibility of the EDI strategy evaluation a year on, the actions that have been prioritised and the expected outcomes in relation to the wider objectives. Also, to enable feedback and discussion on these areas of priority for the EDI Strategy and the projects embedding it.
- 1.5 This strategy focuses on each of the Council's roles:
  - As an employer
  - As a provider of services
  - As a commissioner of goods and services
  - As a place leader

There are seven key objective areas:

- Objective 1: Increased awareness and engagement across the whole organisation
- Objective 2: Increased engagement with our partners and communities
- Objective 3: Consistent and targeted training and development
- Objective 4: Strengthened support for staff
- Objective 5: Maximise effectiveness and inclusivity in HR processes and procedures
- Objective 6: Improved monitoring and measurement of progress
- Objective 7: Establish and strengthen monitoring and governance structures

## 2. Areas of progress and impact

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- 2.1 There have been key areas of progress since the launch of the Strategy in 2023 which are summarised below. The appointment of a new Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer provides direct focus on the aims of the strategy, ensuring that agreed actions are completed and vision on future development is maintained.
- 2.2 The awareness of issues surrounding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has increased. This can be seen through engagement with opportunities within Sefton such as the some of the Network Groups, calendared events and policy change. The recent staff survey was also evidence of this where most staff felt EDI principles were valued within Sefton Council.
- 2.3 The Caring Business Charter and Workplace Adjustment Passports have been launched which both provide key aspects of support and inclusion for staff and young people who are Cared for or Care Experienced. Community groups have led change in the delivery of accessible information on the Council website and wider forms of communication.
- 2.4 Phase 1 Race Equality training has been delivered to staff and managers across a range of Council sectors and overall feedback has been positive. It has provided a platform for further areas of development, due to the wider understanding and awareness of issues that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff and community members can face in their lives.
- 2.5 Staff Network groups have been used to gather feedback and viewpoints from diverse perspectives and implement change in policy and practice. This has also provided a forum for staff to share their experiences and have creative ownership of chosen events.
- 2.6 Key HR processes have been adapted to provide more inclusive opportunities for diverse applicants through the short-listing processes and the make-up of interview panels.
- 2.7 Recent developments around how the Corporate Equalities Group monitors the success of the EDI Strategy have been established to provide regular updates, evaluation opportunities and accountability.

## **3 Summary of Key Priority Actions in 2024**

- 3.1 The Strategy's initial list of 33 key performance indicators have been condensed and prioritised so that the actions that are near completion or will have wider immediate impact are being focussed on.
- 3.2 Feedback from staff network groups available for consultation provided a common theme around acknowledgement of positive steps of progress but a need for the wider understanding to be embedded within the working culture of Sefton. It was often commented that whilst many staff and managers appreciated the importance of EDI principles and key policies, it could be subjective to the sector or dependent on the training that had been completed or personal interests of certain staff or managers.
- 3.3 Increased awareness through training and events, with promotion of the Zero Tolerance Policy and its Additional Guidance for protected characteristics will be key in embedding understanding and awareness within Sefton Council.
- 3.4 Communication both internally and externally will require updating so that the website and microsite provide updated and clear information that promotes the positive EDI principles Sefton values.

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## 4. **Objective 1: Increased awareness and engagement across the whole organisation**

- 4.1 The current Equality & Diversity Awareness training is mandatory and provides a broad understanding of EDI issues, the law and how that works as an employer / employee. However, due to the delivery being online, independently using an interactive powerpoint, the engagement and impact is limited. It does not allow for more nuanced discussions around some complex issues.
- 4.2 The Phase 1 Race Equality Training (also mandatory) is delivered face to face by an external company procured by LCR. This is a half-day session where attendees can both listen, discuss and feedback on information around race equality. Overall feedback is very positive in terms of how informative the session was and inspirational in wanting to bring about change within the Council. 63% of places on the training sessions have been used. Potential barriers have been analysed through feedback from staff (those who have & have not attended). It is clear that busy work schedules is a key issue, but also lack of awareness around how the training could be of use to individuals or teams, beyond the information acquired in the online Equality & Diversity Awareness training.
- 4.3 Phase 2 Race Equality Training will be planned with Sefton's Combined Authority partners and the LCR Race Equality Hub. The planning will respond to feedback and lessons learnt from Phase 1 training.
- 4.4 The new Zero Tolerance Policy also presents an opportunity to address multiple objectives within the EDI Strategy, but specifically Ob.1 Increased awareness and engagement across the whole organisation & Ob. 3 Consistent and targeted training and development when it is launched.
- 4.5 The Zero Tolerance Policy's additional guidance will be created through input and ideas from the Staff Network Groups. This will provide stakeholders with lived experience the opportunity to raise awareness around key issues and provide guidance that improves the culture with Sefton both day to day and more broadly. Managers will be empowered to support their staff more effectively if they face disadvantages or discrimination due to their protected characteristics.
- 4.6 The additional guidance documents and the issues they raise could also be introduced through 'bite-size' training sessions completed within monthly team meetings. This would then provide an opportunity for staff to engage more meaningfully with the material and discuss its implications within the context of that service area.
- 4.7 The structure of 'Team Training' sessions could then provide future opportunities to embed further elements of the EDI strategy actions such as the development of psychological safety in the workplace and restorative supervision opportunities.
- 4.8 Staff Network groups will support further development of the calendared events so that each group has the minimum of a main annual event, with further dates acknowledged through communications both internally and externally. This should provide increased capacity to support the events and deepen engagement within the Council.

## 5. **Objective 2: Increased engagement with our partners and communities**

- 5.1 The Caring Business Charter is already engaging partners in both business and education settings. There is an opportunity to review what this support and opportunity feels like to the young people accessing it. Also, any lessons learnt by the businesses who have signed up for the charter can be captured. This will guide further planning and support through this important initiative.

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- 5.2 The Sefton Race Equality Monitoring Group could form part of the increase in engagement amongst partners and communities. Its role and aims will need reviewing to maintain a sense of purpose and awareness of impact for the members.
- 5.3 Re-creating information shared on the microsite provides an opportunity to gain input from staff network groups but also community groups, who can share their views and suggestions for improvement and see the impact of their engagement.
- 5.4 Collaboration with key stakeholder community groups will be developed further. This will include discussions around improving accessibility, identifying wider areas for training to improve services and opportunities to create calendared events.
- 5.5 Further promotion of the Small Grants Fund to support community groups is required to increase engagement. The development of the communications externally will support this.

## **6. Objective 3: Consistent and targeted training and development**

- 6.1 The plans described in 4.5 and 4.6 explain how training can be developed and embedded across the Council, creating the potential for wider areas of training within Teams.
- 6.2 The Sefton Active Workforce has begun collaboration with the EDI Officer in using the forum to celebrate diversity and raise awareness through literature and staff discussion groups.
- 6.3 Recent collaborations with Inclusive Companies can provide further opportunities to provide specific areas of training (such as support employees identifying as trans or neurodivergent) and to plan bespoke packages relevant to the Sefton context.
- 6.4 The Council will continue to roll-out “real-lived experience training”, including (but not limited to) immersive visually-impaired walking tours of town centres, known as SimSpec Walks, in partnership with Merseyside Sight Loss Council, and also including a “real-lived experience of the care system” training session delivered in person to staff from across the Council by a care experienced young person in Sefton.

## **7. Objective 4: Strengthened support for staff**

- 7.1 As described earlier in the report, the Zero Tolerance Policy and its subsequent training opportunities will help to embed a supportive culture for staff members with a protected characteristic. Sensitive and empathic learning provides the forum to reflect on the implications of certain behaviours or attitudes that could be unintentionally harmful.
- 7.2 The inclusion of HR and OH input in the creation of the Zero Tolerance policy and its link policies, will ensure that where intervention is required, staff can feel reassured that the principles and guidance are being followed consistently and reliably.
- 7.3 The role of ‘Freedom To Speak Up Guardians’ has been seen as a positive form of peer support by Staff Network Groups. It is felt that this will provide a valuable alternative to formal complaints routes, where staff might feel less confident to disclose negative experiences. The role’s expectations will be finalised in conjunction with the Zero Tolerance Policy launch. This roles will provide confidential, emotional support and practical guidance

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or signposting where needed. It will not replace the formal procedures that address discrimination or abuse.

- 7.4 Staff Network Group engagement requires further review. Whilst some network groups are well-attended, others have struggled to gain interest. Any barriers or issues can be further understood and addressed, but equally views of staff who might not feel the groups are beneficial to them. There are also opportunities that could be further explored around support for neurodivergence and care experienced.
- 7.5 The promotion of wider use of pronouns on emails requires further staff consultation to gather views and current levels of understanding around the benefits.
- 7.6 The current awareness, use and impact of the Reasonable Adjustment Passport needs to be reviewed. This will improve consistency of use, embedded understanding of the principles around this (e.g. visible & non-visible disabilities being planned and catered for, employees avoiding repeated conversations around agreed needs) and the benefits felt by staff availing themselves of this support. (The lessons learnt from this process can be used to review a potential carer's passport).

## **8. Objective 5: Maximise effectiveness and inclusivity in HR processes and procedures**

- 8.1 The recruitment and subsequent HR processes will be reviewed in order to understand the journey for a potential candidate from the initial vacancy search to the potential first month of employment. This will be vital in identifying how inclusivity and diversity can be improved through areas such as the adverts, website information, application format, shortlisting process, interview panels/formats and the induction process.

## **9. Objective 6: Improved monitoring and measurement of progress**

- 9.1 The Corporate Equalities Group will continue to review the impact and success of the EDI Strategy through the bi-monthly meetings. The Objectives and key actions form the agenda. This provides regular evaluation, feedback and collaborative planning. Equally, the ELT and Cabinet reviews of progress ensure robust reviews of the EDI strategy and its effectiveness.
- 9.2 Sefton Council continues to use the Navajo Assessment to monitor progress against the agreed targets. The next review is due in 2024.

## **10. Objective 7: Establish and strengthen monitoring and governance structures**

- 10.1 The consistency of approach to EIAs requires further work. Templates have been shared with the CEG but need to be agreed upon once wider feedback has been captured. Care experience and (potentially) socioeconomic duty need incorporating.
- 10.2 The Race Equality Monitoring Group requires its role and purpose reviewing to develop the engagement and effectiveness in feeding back on the Strategy's relevant actions.

## Financial Implications

There are no revenue implications of this report. The activity and associated resources discussed herein are funded from within core budgets. There are no capital implications associated with this report.

## Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising

## Corporate Risk Implications

Any corporate risk implications arising are included in the body of the report.

## Staffing HR Implications

Any Staffing HR implications arising are included in the body of the report.

## Conclusion

The recommendations will support the effective and transparent governance of the Council's approach to inequality, diversity and inclusion, and its performance to date against the approved strategy and action plan.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The alternative option of not producing an annual report was not considered.

<b>Equality Implications:</b>	
Given the subject matter of the report, equality implications are considered throughout.	
<b>Impact on Children and Young People: Yes</b>	
The Council has recognised care experience as a protected characteristic, and as such focus on support and opportunity for care experienced young people should permeate through every part of the strategy and action plan. Some specific action areas are referenced within the report.	
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
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	No

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There are no environmental implications.

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD7697/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5797/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Internal consultation also includes with key stakeholders from the Council's Corporate Equalities Group (comprising representation from all service areas of the Council), along with Staff Network groups (DEBs, Disability, LGBTQ+, Women's) and feedback from relevant Cabinet Members.

### (B) External Consultations

Ongoing dialogue with partners including, but not limited to the LCR Race Equality Hub Board, Sefton CVS, Southport African Caribbean Heritage, Liverpool Advocates for Windrush, Merseyside Police Race Action Plan, Liverpool Commonwealth Symposium, Cared for Children, Navajo, Inclusive Companies, SAFE, People First, Ability Plus.

## Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting.

Contact Officer:	Emma Stewart, Equality Diversity & Inclusion Officer
Telephone Number:	07890892455
Email Address:	Emma.stewart@sefton.gov.uk

## Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

## Background Papers:

Link below to the strategy approved in April 2023.

[EDI Strategy 2023-2027 \(sefton.gov.uk\)](https://sefton.gov.uk/EDI-Strategy-2023-2027)

**Report Title** **Appointment of Representative on Outside Body**

Date of meeting:	25 July 2024
Report to:	Cabinet
Report of:	Chief Legal and Democratic Officer
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member – Corporate Services
Wards affected:	All
Included in Forward Plan:	No
Is this a key decision:	No
Exempt/confidential report:	No

**Summary:**

To consider the appointment of the Council’s representative to serve on the Outside Body named within this report for the remainder of 2024/25.

**Recommendation(s):**

- (1) That the proposed appointment to the Outside Body indicated below, for the remainder of 2024/25, be approved:

**Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Joint Health Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Conalty to replace Councillor Hart

**1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations**

**1. Introduction**

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

# Agenda Item 6

- 1.2 Representations have been received from the Council’s Labour Group to replace an appointment to an Outside Body for the remainder of 2024/25.
- 1.3 The proposed appointment to the Outside Body indicated, for the remainder of 2024/25, is set out below:

**Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Joint Health Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Conalty to replace Councillor Hart

## Financial Implications

None arising directly from this report. The appointment to the Outside Body concerned does not attract any special responsibility allowance. Travel expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, where they are held outside Sefton, may be reimbursed.

## Legal Implications

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

## Corporate Risk Implications

None directly. Not approving the recommendation could result in the Council not being represented on the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

## Staffing HR Implications

None

## Conclusion

In order for the Council to have on-going representation on the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, the proposal is commended.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

<b>Equality Implications:</b>
There are no equality implications.
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b>
The Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Joint Health Scrutiny Committee could consider matters that affect the health of children and young people.

<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>
The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral impact.

## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial (FD.7718/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5818/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

The Council's Labour Group has been consulted as to which elected Member it wishes to appoint as a replacement representative on the Outside Body referred to within this report.

### (B) External Consultations

Not applicable

### Implementation Date for the Decision :

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Cabinet decision.

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### Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

### Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

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## Financial and Corporate Performance 2023/2024

Date of meeting:	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
Report to:	Cabinet
Report of:	Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial
Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Wards affected:	All
Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Is this a key decision:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No

### Summary:

To inform Cabinet of the revenue and capital outturn position in relation to the 2023/24 financial year. In doing so the report will outline any key variations and where appropriate any impact on future years' financial performance. In addition, it provides details of the Council Corporate Performance for 2023/24 and current corporate risks.

### Recommendation(s):

**Cabinet** is recommended to: -

#### Revenue Outturn

- 1) Note the General Fund net surplus of £4.309m for 2023/24 that will increase the Council's General Balances by £0.114m less than was budgeted for.
- 2) Note the increase in Schools' balances of £2.381m for 2023/24 and the net reduction of non-schools centrally retained DSG balances of £19.489m.
- 3) Note the overall deficit on the High Needs Budget of £37.996m.
- 4) Note the changes to Earmarked Reserves in 2023/24.

#### Capital Programme

- 5) Note the total capital outturn of £40.937m for the financial year 2023/24.

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- 6) Note the successful delivery of a number of schemes as set out in section 10 that have supported the delivery of the Council's core purpose.

## **Corporate Performance**

- 7) Consider the Council's Corporate Performance Report for 2023/24 and the latest Corporate Risk Register alongside the financial outturn for the year.

### **1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations**

The production of a revenue and capital outturn report is a key feature of effective financial management and will allow Members to make informed decisions that will support service delivery and medium-term financial sustainability.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Treasury Management Outturn report for 2023/24 also on this agenda.

## **Main Body of the Report**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The report details the revenue outturn position for the financial year 2023/24 and provides details of the major variations within that position for the General Fund and Schools' Delegated Budgets including the High Needs Budget. The report also provides details of the Capital Outturn position for 2023/24.
- 1.2 In addition, the report includes the Council's Corporate Performance Report for 2023/24 (Appendix A) together with the latest Corporate Risk Register (Appendix B).

## **General Fund Revenue Outturn 2023/24**

### **2 Overall Position 2023/24**

- 2.1 The outturn figures for 2023/24 are explained in more detail in section 3 but can be summarised as follows:

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b><u>Services</u></b>			
Strategic Management	3.939	4.080	0.141
Adult Social Care	111.316	114.221	2.905

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Children's Social Care	81.581	89.558	7.977
Communities	12.008	11.142	-0.866
Corporate Resources	7.623	7.116	-0.507
Economic Growth & Housing	6.647	6.394	-0.253
Education Excellence	15.765	17.477	1.712
Health & Wellbeing	19.645	18.520	-1.125
Highways & Public Protection	10.973	10.811	-0.162
Operational In-House Services	17.470	17.512	0.042
Energy Costs	4.200	3.357	-0.843
Additional Pay Award Cost	0.000	1.394	1.394
<b>Total Service Net Expenditure</b>	<b>291.167</b>	<b>301.582</b>	<b>10.415</b>
Mitigating Actions approved in November 2023	0.000	-4.795	-4.795
Mitigating Actions approved in February 2024	0.000	-3.561	-3.561
Council Wide Budgets	11.843	9.966	-1.877
Levies	36.193	36.193	0.000
General Government Grants	-84.086	-84.154	-0.068
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>255.117</b>	<b>255.231</b>	
<b><u>Forecast Year-End Deficit</u></b>			<b><u>0.114</u></b>

## **General Fund Revenue Outturn 2023/24 – Variation Analysis**

- 2.2 From the above table it can be seen that the Council in 2023/24 was overspent on net service expenditure by £10.4m. It is important to note that this was due to the issues that were reported through the year in respect of Children's Social Care, who were £8.0m overspent, Adult Social Care, who were £2.9m overspent, and Education Excellence, who were £1.7m overspent, mainly due to the Home to School Transport function. Most other services were underspent or reporting close to balanced positions. In addition, Remedial Actions Plans approved by Cabinet in November 2023 (£4.795m) and February 2024 (£3.561m), plus savings across Corporate budgets meant the overall overspend was reduced to only £0.114m. As a result, as shown in section 4, the outturn for 2023/24 shows that there was a transfer to General Balances of £4.309m which was £0.114m less when compared to the increase in General Balances of £4.423m that was budgeted for.
- 2.3 As would be expected, during the financial year, there has been a number of significant variations in individual services. The major variances are highlighted in the following paragraphs: -
- 2.3.1 **Adult Social Care** - Children's Social Care overspent in 2023/24 by £2.905m, a position that was reported to Cabinet during the second half of the year.

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Initial forecasts assumed that the Adult Social Care budget will break-even during 2023/24. However, it was reported that there are a number of significant assumptions and uncertainties that could impact on that position before the year-end. The service was also committed to a number of efficiencies and savings that amounted to £5.7m, in order to meet the savings approved as part of the 2023/24 budget plus additional savings that were required to meet the additional budgetary pressures arising from the increases in provider fees approved at Cabinet meetings in June 2023. The achievement of these savings was carefully monitored throughout the year and the full level of savings were ultimately delivered.

Like all councils, the Service experienced growth pressure with demand for services and sought to meet the cost of this within the resources available, including taking account of the additional funding from Central Government that was made available to councils to meet increases in demand and financial pressure including those that maybe experienced during winter and in respect of discharges. Although all options to ensure that any potential overspend was reduced were explored and implemented, given the pressures faced an residual overspend of £2.905m occurred.

## 2.3.2 **Children's Social Care** - Children's Social Care overspent in 2023/24 by £7.977m, a position that was reported to Cabinet throughout the year.

Members will be aware that the 2023/24 approved budget included an additional £21m of investment in the service based on the requirement for additional staffing (including temporary funding for additional agency costs whilst more permanent staff are recruited to, including International Social Workers and from staff coming through the social work academy) as well as additional resources to reflect the number of packages at the time, some potential growth as well as resource for inflationary pressures.

The final position on staffing was an overspend of £2.2m. There was a clear set of assumptions originally driving forecasts in terms of when expensive project / court teams would leave the Council as new staff are onboarded from the International Social Worker cohort and the academy. As these assumptions changed the forecasts were revised during the year with additional pressure being experienced. This is also a key aspect of budget setting and medium-term financial planning.

Certain areas of accommodation and support packages overspent by £5.2m, partly due to additional packages in the late part of 2022/23 and early part of 2023/24. As mentioned in reports last year, packages initially have been at a higher cost than previously seen. However, recently improvements in practice have resulted in more children being placed in more appropriate settings at a lower cost. This continued throughout the year. However, numbers and costs of Children with Disabilities has increased, although specialist work was undertaken to ensure health were making the appropriate contributions to the cost of care.

## 2.3.3 **Communities** – The surplus of £0.866m primarily relates to reduced net expenditure on sports facilities, partly due to the reopening of Splashworld (including a refund of Business Rates for when the facility was closed) and increased surpluses at Crosby Baths and on the Aquatics service.

- 2.3.4 **Corporate Resources** – The net surplus of £0.507m for Corporate Resources primarily relates to savings made against staffing budgets which is due to posts being held vacant, and other mitigating savings being found, in order to contribute to the overall budget pressures faced by the Council.

There was a significant pressure during the year within the ICT budget from inflation on contracts that is in excess of the provision made and a loss of income from School SLAs as a result of a change in the contractual arrangement enforced by the provider for which the Council has no control. These two pressures amounted to £0.624m, which was offset by the underspends across the Service. Without this pressure, the Service would have underspent by £1.131m due to significant cost control that continued across all service areas during the year.

- 2.3.5 **Education Excellence** – The net overspend of £1.712m was mainly due to a significant increase in the costs of Home to School Transport. Members will recall that in the budget substantial funding was added to the Home to School Transport budget. However, there was a continuing significant increase in the number of children being transported, especially relating to out of borough placements, due to the increase in the number of EHCPs being completed. In addition, there was additional provision of SEND staff due to the increase in EHCP assessments.

- 2.3.6 **Health & Wellbeing** – A net surplus of £1.125m arose primarily due to savings on contracts procured during the year, including on substance misuse and health prevention services. In addition, there were also vacancy savings in the service, as well as additional grant funding made available to offset existing costs in the year.

- 2.3.7 **Energy Costs** - As previously reported, the global increase in energy prices had a significant impact on the Council's energy and fuel costs, increasing costs by £3.357m above the core budget. However, the Council had set aside one-off resources of £4.200m to fund these costs so there was an underspend of £0.843m in the year.

- 2.3.8 **Additional Pay Award Cost** - The approved Base Budget included a provision for the 2023/24 pay award of around 4.5%. This was line with most other local authorities who had budgeted for similar amounts. The final award from the National Employers for local government services body was for a fixed increase of £1,925, with a minimum of 3.5% (similar to the increase in 2022/23). For Sefton, this equated to an increase in the pay bill of about 6.0% or an additional £1.394m above the amount included in the 2023/24 budget.

- 2.3.9 **Remedial Action Plans** – Due to the overall pressures faced during the year, particularly from the increased costs the pay award, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, and Education Excellence, Cabinet approved Remedial Action Plans to partially fund these pressures. In November 2023 they approved one-off savings of £4.795m and in February 2024 approved further one-off savings of £3.561m.

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- 2.3.10 **Corporate Items:** There are various corporate items that have had an impact on the Council's outturn position, with a net impact an underspend of £1.877m. This is mainly due to the increase in interest rates across the year, which meant the Council was able to achieve increased returns on its cash investments. This resulted in a net underspend of £1.476m in the Council's Treasury Management budget.
- 2.4 As a result of the variations detailed within this report an overall a Council-wide small overspend outturn position has been recorded for the year which represents the outcome of stringent financial management through the year as the Council continues to meet the unprecedented financial pressure from demand led services, energy costs, pay and price inflation and the extreme challenges of national government policy.
- 2.5 As was detailed within the Budget report presented to Council in February 2024, the Council continues to face unprecedented financial pressure particularly within Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and Education Excellence (Home to School Transport). This position is not unique to Sefton; however, the challenge is significant and will require very careful financial management throughout 2024/25 and beyond. The Council acknowledged these risks in its budget report and significant additional resources were built into 2024/25 budget in recognition of these additional demands.

## **3 Schools' Delegated Budgets Outturn 2023/24**

- 3.1 The level of schools' balances as at the end of 2023/24 stand at a cumulative surplus of £20.375m (£17.994m 2022/23). This overall sum consists of direct school balances of £20.130m (£17.732m 2022/23); Schools Supply Funding Pool surplus of £0.091m (£0.051m surplus in 2022/23) and the Schools Rates Pooled Account surplus of £0.154m (£0.210m 2022/23). These total balances represent 12.2% of schools' 2023/24 delegated budgets.
- 3.2 High Needs budgets were overspent by £19.330m in 2023/24 (£6.172m in 2022/23). This has resulted in the overall High Needs accumulated deficit now standing at £37.996m. Cost pressures have continued across High Needs provision with increasing demand for Special School places driven by growing numbers of children being assessed for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). During 2023/24 an extra 600 children have been assessed as requiring an EHCP across the Borough (a 21% increase). In addition, numbers of places commissioned out of Borough, have also continued to increase, due, in part, to a shortage of in-house places. Initial spending forecasts were well exceeded in terms of overspending in the year. In addition, there has been a significant take-up of dedicated 'Group' funding over the year by many of the mainstream schools, to gradually start to replace the need for many individual 1:1 s in the classroom, and to focus on specialised group classroom teaching methods and support for SEN children. This is considered considerably cheaper to fund and is seen to be quite beneficial by the schools.

3.3 During the year, the Council continued to engage in the Government's Delivering Better Value (DBV) Programme for those local authorities with significant High Needs deficits. Along with 55 other local authorities, Sefton were selected to be part of Tier 2 of the DBV programme. This programme set about obtaining and analysing Sefton's High Needs spending to help their statistical experts to forecast trends and to hopefully identify some potential areas of spending mitigation over the next 5 to 8 years. Their own initial forecasting suggests, that, without any mitigations over the next 5 to 8 years, the Council would have a significantly increased accumulative net deficit on its High Needs spending. This is clearly unsustainable but is something also being forecast in many other local authorities under the DBV Programme. Of great concern is the fact that from the end of 2025/26, the Government's statutory override mechanism for DSG deficits to be ringfenced comes to an end, and should it not be extended, local authorities may be required to fund any deficit from its General Fund. Sefton is actively seeking clarity from the Government on how deficits are to be funded once the statutory override finishes as it will be one of a number of local authorities for whom it would impact on financial sustainability. This issue has been covered in great detail in both the Budget Report for 2024/25 and the Robustness Report of the S151 Officer on the same agenda. The significance of this issue cannot and is not being underestimated and as stated engagement with staff in Treasury, MHCLG and DfE is to take place. As a result, the regular reports will be produced for Cabinet and Council by the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education) are critical to inform members of developments, demand, mitigating work that will reduce or contain cost, the Delivering Better Value Programme and national and sector discussions. Due to the significance this issue is also included on the Council's Corporate Risk Register.

A separate report on the High Needs funding position of the Council is included on this agenda.

3.4 The Council holds Centrally Retained DSG reserves, separate to its Maintained Schools' balances. These are shown below:

<b><u>Centrally Retained DSG Balances</u></b>	<b><u>1 April 2023</u></b>	<b><u>Movement 2023/2024</u></b>	<b><u>31 March 2024</u></b>
	<b><u>£m</u></b>	<b><u>£m</u></b>	<b><u>£m</u></b>
Schools Block	-0.963	0.024	-0.938
Early Years Block	-0.644	-0.292	-0.937
High Needs Block	18.666	19.330	37.996
	<b>17.059</b>	<b>19.062</b>	<b>36.121</b>

3.5 The DfE permit Local Authorities to carry forward a deficit on their DSG Centrally Retained balances, without any obligations on behalf of Local Authorities to support a deficit position out of non-school Council balances. As a result of the statutory requirements introduced for 2020/21, this balance is now held on the Balance Sheet as an Unusable Reserve, the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account.

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## 4 Council Balances

4.1 The change in the level of Council and School Balances as at 31 March 2024 are set out in the tables below:

<b><u>Non-School General Fund Balances</u></b>		<b><u>£m</u></b>
Actual Non-School General Fund Balances at 31 March 2023		-11.991
Plus Budgeted Contribution to Balances	-4.423	
Less overspend in comparison to the 2023/2024 Base Estimate:	0.114	
Actual increase in General Balances		-4.309
Actual Non-School General Fund Balances at 31 March 2024		<b>-16.300</b>

<b><u>Schools' Balances</u></b>		<b><u>£m</u></b>
Schools' balances as at 1 April 2023		-17.994
Underspend on Schools' Delegated Budgets		-2.381
Schools' balances at 31 March 2024		<b>-20.375</b>

## 5 Earmarked Reserves

5.1 Unlike General Fund balances, Earmarked Reserves are held for a specific purpose. These purposes may be determined by the Council to coincide with its policy objectives, dictated by statute (e.g., Schools Earmarked Reserves) or relate to revenue grants and contributions that haven't been fully applied by the end of the financial year.

5.2 Once approved, expenditure incurred in accordance with the reserve's purpose is funded by applying the reserve, without any need for further approval. If the reserve is no longer required for the originally intended purpose it is released back into the General Fund.

5.3 An analysis of the Council's Earmarked Reserves, and the movement during 2023/24 is shown in the table below:

<b>Movements in 2023/2024</b>	<b><u>1 April</u> <u>2023</u> £000s</b>	<b><u>Transfers</u> <u>in</u> £000s</b>	<b><u>Transfers</u> <u>Out</u> £000s</b>	<b><u>31 March</u> <u>2024</u> £000s</b>
Environmental Warranty	-9,000	0	1,952	-7,048
Insurance Fund	-1,633	0	1,633	0
Transforming Sefton	-1,861	0	1,830	-31
Redundancy Reserve	-946	0	946	0
Community Transition Fund	-327	0	131	-196
Contamination Clearance	-1,379	0	0	-1,379
Secondary School Deficit Reserve	-1,513	0	636	-877

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Council Tax - spreading of 2020/2021 Deficit Reserve	-499	0	499	0
Regeneration Scheme Reserve	-2,500	0	378	-2,122
Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied	-22,476	-3,144	10,030	-15,590
Other Earmarked Reserves	-9,656	-1,068	5,288	-5,436
<b>Total</b>	<b>-51,790</b>	<b>-4,212</b>	<b>23,322</b>	<b>-32,680</b>

5.4 The main changes in Earmarked Reserves are as follows:

- a) **Environmental Warranty Reserve** – In 2023/24 the level of Business Rates reliefs granted was less than estimated. This meant that the level of S31 Grants received in the year to compensate for the cost of providing these reliefs was also less than estimated. However, an equivalent surplus was therefore generated due to more Business Rates being due in the year. Due to Collection Fund regulations, this surplus can only be credited to the General Fund in the following year. Therefore, the shortfall in S31 Grants in 2023/24 has temporarily been funded from the Environmental Warranty Reserve, with the budget approved by Council for 2024/25 including an amount to replenish the Reserve, funded by the Business Rates surplus generated in 2023/24.
- b) **Insurance Fund Reserve** – The Council maintains an Insurance Fund, which is split between a Provision (to meet known liabilities) and an Earmarked Reserve (to meet future claims) based on an assessment by insurance brokers each year. As known liabilities have increased, the balance previously included as an Earmarked Reserve has been transferred to the Provision.
- c) **Transforming Sefton Reserve** – In November 2023, Cabinet approved the utilisation of £1.000m of the Reserve as part of a number of mitigating actions to meet budget pressures in the year. In addition, the Reserve was utilised to fund expenditure in line with previous Cabinet / Council decisions, including initial funding for International Social Workers (£0.500m) and Cost of Change schemes.
- d) **Revenue Grants and Contributions Unapplied** – A number of specific grants and contributions were utilised during 2023/24 to fund relevant expenditure, including for the Home for Ukraine and Syrian Refugee schemes (£2.854m), Adult Social Care grants, including residual COVID19 funding (£2.758m), Other Residual Covid19 Funding (£1.043m) and the Energy Bill Support Scheme (£0.890m).
- e) **Other Earmarked Reserves** – In addition to funding expenditure in line with previous Cabinet and Council decisions, a number of other Earmarked Reserves were utilised as part of the remedial action plans agreed during the year to support the budget (£1.083m).

## **6 Council Wholly Owned Companies**

- 6.1 The Council has three wholly owned companies, namely, Sefton New Directions, Sandway Homes Limited and Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited. During the year Cabinet have received comprehensive Business Plan updates on each of these companies. Outturn reports for each of the three companies, detailing progress against business plan both in terms of service delivery / meeting of objectives and financial performance, will be presented to overview and scrutiny committee in early autumn.

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## **7 Revenue Outturn 2023/24 - Conclusion**

- 7.1 On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023, the Council set a one-year budget for 2023/24. Through the application of stringent financial management throughout the year, the Council continued to meet the financial pressures from demand led services, especially Children's Social Care, as well as the increased costs of energy and pay and price inflation.
- 7.2 Whilst the position reported is largely favourable, the Council is still facing significant financial pressure from some of its main demand led budgets, in particular Children's Social Care. The experience in Sefton is currently similar to many local authorities across the country and as a result will require careful financial management in the forthcoming year in order that these pressures are aligned with the delivery of the overall savings target that the Council has to meet. This approach and pressure were identified within the Budget report of March 2023 and significant additional resources were included in the budget for 2024/25.
- 7.3 The Council's draft accounts were published at the end of May 2024. They are currently being reviewed by the Council's external auditor, Grant Thornton, and following final completion of the audit, the Accounts will be presented to the Audit & Governance Committee for consideration in late September 2024, together with the ISA 260 report that will reflect their findings and conclusions.

## **Capital Outturn 2023/24**

### **8 Overall Position for 2023/24**

- 8.1 The approved capital budget for 2023/24 was £47.171m against which capital expenditure of £38.355m has been incurred at the year end. This has resulted in a year end variance of £8.816m. A service-by-service breakdown is shown in the following table:

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Budget 2023/24</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure 2023/24</b>	<b>Variance to Budget</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Adult Social Care</b>	7.320	6.086	-1.234
<b>Children's Social Care</b>	0.548	0.420	-0.128
<b>Communities</b>	2.054	0.593	-1.461
<b>Corporate Resources</b>	2.226	1.979	-0.247
<b>Economic Growth &amp; Housing</b>	9.922	7.244	-2.678
<b>Education Excellence</b>	6.122	5.037	-1.085
<b>Highways &amp; Public Protection</b>	16.408	14.996	-1.412
<b>Operational In-House Services</b>	2.572	2.001	-0.571
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>47.171</b>	<b>38.355</b>	<b>-8.816</b>

- 8.2 In addition to the core programme, capital expenditure totalling £2.582m was incurred by the Council. This included Schools Devolved Formula Capital which is

provided directly to and managed by schools and capitalisation of Highways expenditure. Total capital expenditure in 2023/24, including this was £40.937m.

## 9 Programme Funding

9.1 The table below shows how the capital programme has been funded in 2023/24:

<b>Source</b>	<b>£m</b>
Grants and Other Contributions	<b>30.660</b>
Prudential Borrowing	<b>6.005</b>
Contributions	<b>2.426</b>
Revenue Contribution	<b>1.847</b>
<b>Total Programme Funding</b>	<b>40.937</b>

## 10 Programme Delivery 2023/24

10.1 As would be expected with a capital programme of this size, the investment that has been incurred during the year has led to both the development and improvement of the Council's infrastructure and supported the delivery of key outcomes as set out in the Framework for Change programme. The key areas of delivery are as follows:

### 10.2 **Adult Social Care**

#### 10.2.1 Disabled Facilities Grants Core Programme (£2.996m)

For 2023/2024, there were 358 Disabled facilities grant adaptations certified as complete. These adaptations include works such as stairlifts, bathroom adaptations, vertical lifts, ceiling track hoists, property extensions and others. The number has increased when compared to last year due the continued increase in referrals for adaptation received from the Occupational Therapist Team as a result of their increased staff resource and the Home Improvements team now being fully staffed.

#### 10.2.2 Integrated Community Equipment (£0.864m including Children's spend)

Loan equipment has been purchased to issue to Sefton residents with medical needs or a disability to enable them to remain safe and independent in their own homes. The equipment provided includes walking aids, bathing aids, toileting aids and patient handling equipment to enable carers to assist and care for residents in a safe manner. All equipment is issued on a loan basis and ownership is retained by the Council. When no longer needed by service users it is collected, decontaminated in accordance with strict infection control procedures and recycled for future issue to others.

#### 10.2.3 Single to Double Handed Care Equipment (£0.119m)

The equipment purchased, predominantly for patient handling, is specifically designed to enable a reduction in the number of carers required to care for an

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individual. The service provides gantry hoists, specialist slings and a variety of patient handling pieces taking advantage of new product development and techniques, with the ultimate aim of reducing a care package for the individual whether that care be provided by family or formal carers. The benefits of the equipment provide a more dignified care process for the recipient. All equipment is issued on a loan basis and when no longer needed by the service user, collected and recycled for further use.

## 10.2.4 ICT Development and Transformation (£0.451m including Children's spend)

The Council's Liquidlogic and ContrOCC systems were migrated to cloud hosting and upgraded to the latest version; Controcc Insights Reporting tool has been installed, with staff awaiting training.

## 10.2.5 Care Home Improvement Grants (£0.413m)

Positive outcomes have been achieved over the three rounds of the Grants Programme and a further 28 care home providers have been successful in being awarded grants in round four of the Programme. This means that a total of 98 care providers have received Capital Care Home Improvement Grants to date. Following round four of this Grants Programme, it has been proposed that a new Capital Grants Programme is implemented focussing on Remote monitoring and falls prevention/reductions in Shared Care Settings to include Supported Living providers as well as Care Homes.

## **10.3 Communities**

### 10.3.1 Bootle Leisure Centre Roof (£0.211m)

The project to replace the sports hall roof and reinstall the photovoltaic panels has now been completed.

### 10.3.2 Libraries (£0.215m)

The capital programme for Sefton's libraries in 2023/24 has delivered the following improvements:

- New shelving and carpeting at Crosby Library
- Promotional equipment and digital media for the long-term promotion of the Libraries Service
- Four soundproof meeting pods and virtual meeting equipment at Southport and Crosby Libraries
- A soundproof pod and new ICT equipment for Netherton Library.

## **10.4 Corporate Resources**

### 10.4.1 Corporate Maintenance (£1.254m)

The following projects were delivered during the year:

- Southport Town Hall / Cambridge Arcade Roof / Canopy – Phase one of a two phase programme including part renewal of the side roof to the Town Hall and renewal of the canopy above Cambridge Arcade.
- Toad Hall – Storm damage repairs were made to the roof and associated structure.
- Health and Safety works were completed to Bootle Leisure centre, Springbrook Home, and Bootle Town Hall canopy roof.

## 10.4.2 Sustainable Warmth Scheme (£0.687m)

85 properties received funded works that were eligible due to having a poor energy efficiency rating and a low household income. The funded works included external wall insulation, cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, under floor insulation, photovoltaic panels, double glazing, and upgrades to heating controls. The aim of the scheme was to improve the energy efficiency rating from a D, E, F or G to a C or above. The works will help reduce household utility bills and also lower carbon emissions.

## **10.5 Economic Growth and Housing**

### 10.5.1 Crosby Lakeside Redevelopment (£0.798m)

The Bunkbarn at Crosby Lakeside was completed in October 2023 and handed over to the Council's operational team. Snagging works were also completed and the retention payment made to the contractor for the Lake House works.

### 10.5.2 Salt & Tar (£0.837m)

Works to Salt and Tar were completed and the music and events venue is fully operational with toilets, containers for food and beverage stands, a VIP platform and decking, planters, bike racks, lighting, and towpath works all complete.

### 10.5.3 Marine Lake Events Centre (£2.994m)

Work continued on the Marine Lake Events Centre project with the conclusion of RIBA Stage 4 design work, Operator Gateway approvals, PCSA contract works, significant utility and drainage diversions undertaken and completed, and the installation of a Bird Raft during 2023/24.

### 10.5.4 Enterprise Arcade (£0.360m)

The project works undertaken during 2023/24 included completion of RIBA Stage 3 Design work, ICT relocation and commencement of the envelope and main refurbishment works contract.

### 10.5.5 The Strand Repurposing Programme (£1.250m)

The signing of the Levelling Up Fund Memorandum of Understanding was completed as well as the RIBA stage 2 report and business plan. RIBA stage 3 work also commenced during the year. A professional team has been appointed, a development manager, bird contractor, and negotiations on PCSA for a demolition

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contractor have begun, as well as further design work to inform main contract work and tender, and vacant possessions have been completed.

## 10.5.6 Strategic Acquisitions – Ainsdale (£0.252m)

Acquisitions of two further properties took place during the year and market testing of the site was also undertaken.

## 10.5.7 Southport Pier (£0.355m)

Extensive investigative and exploratory works were undertaken and completed that required 4 large areas of the Pier to be inspected, the results from these works will inform the final project. Design and structural design works continued to ensure completion for the main contractor.

## **10.6 Education Excellence**

### 10.6.1 Schools Programme (£2.511m)

Completions on schemes funded by the Schools Condition Allocation can be summarised as follows: upgrading / repairs and renewal of flooring, windows / doors and roofs, along with remodelling classrooms and toilet facilities, and improving accessibility to sites, playground / car park and drainage improvements covering 18 projects at schools, replacing outdated electrical systems, fire alarms and boiler replacements covering 9 projects at schools. The full list of schemes is provided below.

- Birkdale Primary – Replace fire alarm.
- Christchurch Primary – Infants roof.
- Christchurch Primary – Playgrounds.
- Freshfield Primary – Rewiring.
- Grange – Boiler replacement.
- Grange – Rewiring.
- Hudson Primary – Replacement windows.
- Hudson Primary – Heating ducts provision.
- Hudson Primary – Reroofing.
- Kings Meadow – Rewiring.
- Larkfield Primary – Refurbishment of toilets.
- Linaker Primary – Replace boilers.
- Lydiate Primary – Rewiring.
- Marshside Primary – Playground and car park surfaces.
- Marshside Primary – Rewire.
- Melling Primary – New Pupil Places.
- Melling Primary – Refurbish toilets.
- Meols Cop – Car park surfaces.
- Merefield – Playground resurfacing.
- Netherton Moss – Roof refurbishment.
- Netherton Moss – Toilet refurbishment.
- Northway Primary – Entrance lobby.
- St. Philip's Primary – Reroofing.

- Valewood Primary – Rewire.
- Valewood Primary – Playground resurfacing.
- Waterloo Primary – Wet pour surfacing and equipment.
- Waterloo Primary – Upgrade nursery areas.

## 10.6.2 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) (£2.526m)

Completions on schemes funded by High Needs funding can be summarised as follows: upgrading and remodelling classrooms, toilet and changing facilities, accessibility works to entrances and footpaths over 13 projects at Schools (listed below).

- Crosby High – New footpath.
- Holy Family High School – Internal Alterations
- Lydiate Primary – Re-commission first floor classrooms.
- Marshside Primary – Convert IT classroom to ASD.
- Norwood Primary – Hygiene room and specialist equipment.
- Rowan High 6<sup>th</sup> Form – 3 classrooms.
- Rowan Park School – Expansion.
- St Nicholas Primary – SEND room.
- Thomas Gray Primary – Create new nurture base.
- Thomas Gray Primary – Internal alterations.
- Waterloo Primary – Alterations to upstairs toilets.
- Waterloo Primary – Basic skills classroom KS2.
- Waterloo Primary – Reception room redesign.

## **10.7 Highways and Public Protection**

10.7.1 The Highways projects delivered within 2023/24 from the £14.996m spend included:

- Development of two major scheme business cases (Southport Eastern access and Maritime corridor).
- Development of Southport Public Realm works in support of the Town Deal & Southport investment Strategy.
- Completion of Formby bypass active travel improvements
- Completion of Phase 1 of Crosby Town Centre Access Improvements
- Replacement of 3 Variable Message signs.
- 278 Lighting Columns replaced (through CRSTS)
- Carriageway Patching (6,000m<sup>2</sup>)
- Footway Reconstruction (1,850m<sup>2</sup>)
- Carriageway Resurfacing (120,600m<sup>2</sup>)

## 10.7.2 LED Street Lighting Upgrade

The LED unit and column supply has been maintained. Over 8,500 LED units have been installed between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024, with over 1,300 new columns installed over the same period. Presently the contractors focus is on

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replacement of illuminated traffic bollards, illuminated traffic signs and the and decommissioning of traffic signage that no longer require illumination.

Energy savings for 2023-24 were 5,494,486.2Kwh with a saving of £1.004m with Carbon savings of 1,223.6. Total Project savings to 31st March 2024 are 9,198.163.87Kwh with a Carbon savings of 2,014.42.

## 10.8 Operational In-House Services

### 10.8.1 Coastal Monitoring Programme (£0.889m)

The Northwest Coastal Monitoring Programme has continued with its standard beach monitoring programme but has collected new vertical aerial photography for the northern half of the coast (the southern part has been delayed until Summer 2024 due to weather conditions in 2023), undertaken ground truth habitat surveys to support future analysis of the aerial photography and produced new coastal process analysis reports for all coastal authorities. The project has also created a new coastal scientist post to improve the interpretation and dissemination of coastal knowledge.

### 10.8.2 Parks and Recreational Facility Improvements (£0.216m)

23 play areas were improved over 2023/24. Improvements include landscaping and ground works; purchase and installation of park equipment such as multi-play units; fencing; and painting.

### 10.8.3 Urban Tree Challenge Fund (£0.130m)

The Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCF) is part of the Government's £6 million Nature for Climate Fund. The UTCF is a competitive fund; applications are subject to scoring. 253 trees were planted using this fund during 2023/24.

### 10.8.4 Vehicle Replacement Programme (£0.120m)

The Council's Vehicle Replacement Programme continued in 2023/24 including the purchase of 9 new vehicles with further expenditure planned for 2024/25.

## 11 Explanations of Full Year Outturn Key Variances 2023/24

### 11.1 Adult Social Care

#### 11.1.1. Short Term Assessment Unit (-£0.448m)

There were delays to the construction phase start date due to matters beyond the Council's control, including issues with the contractor discharging some planning conditions and the adoption of a highway. Construction is now underway, and the contractor has provided a new programme for delivery.

## 11.1.2. ICT Development and Transformation (-£0.331m)

Controcc Brokerage development has been delayed due to prioritisation of other modules being developed. It is planned that this will be progressed in 2024/25.

The development of Liquid Logic and OCC Systems relates to regular upgrades of the software. The work was delayed due to the fact that other system development work was prioritised. Upgrade work has now commenced, with User Acceptance Testing complete, and the upgrade to the Live system scheduled in July 2024.

## **11.2 Communities**

### 11.2.1 Local Authority Housing Fund (-£1.297m)

The Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUCH) confirmed in February 2024 that Sefton's allocation of £1.3m from the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) was secured and were aware that delivery of the programme would run into 2024/25. The main purpose of the programme is to acquire 12 homes as additional housing stock to provide accommodation to refugees. The Council established a Partnership Agreement with two Registered Housing Providers to complete these acquisitions. Finding available suitable homes, within the budget envelope, in the current housing market has proven challenging. However, three properties have now completed with a further three close to exchanging contracts. The Council and partners remain committed to delivering the final six homes under the scheme, plus the temporary accommodation element, thus fully utilising the grant.

## **11.3 Corporate Resources**

### 11.3.1 Corporate Essential Maintenance (-£0.130m)

Cost increases in a range of projects resulted in limited funds being available for major repairs to Bootle Town Hall roof. The funding will be carried forward and added to new resources made available for this project in the 2024/25 financial year.

## **11.4 Economic Growth & Housing**

### 11.4.1 Crosby Lakeside (£0.124m)

An overspend against the overall project budget has been experienced due to previously reported issues with a former contractor earlier in the project.

### 11.4.2 The Strand Repurposing Programme (£0.570m)

The budget profile is being redefined to reflect the new programme more accurately for delivery and to accommodate early enabling works and vacant possessions payments. The project is still on target to stay with the agreed budget envelope.

### 11.4.3 Marine Lake Events Centre (-£1.869m)

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The Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) works concluded in December 2023. Demolition and main works packages were procured separately, resulting in re-profiled expenditure into 2024/25.

## 11.4.4 Enterprise Arcade (-£0.161m)

Protracted contract negotiations resulted in later than anticipated start on site date. The refurbishment contract has now commenced in January 2024.

## 11.4.5 Les Transformations de Southport (-£0.304m)

The underspend was the result of late contractor appointment in 2023 which impacted on programme delivery. Work is now underway on design and cost confirmation with commencement planned after summer season 2024.

## 11.4.6 The Strand Maintenance and Improvement (-£0.120m)

Works to install new car park fencing have now been rephased to 2024/25.

## 11.4.7 Southport Pier (-£0.645m)

The project has not spent as originally anticipated due to the original Pier project scope changing from the replacement of decking boards to a more comprehensive refurbish/rebuild meaning the main works have yet to commence until the further funding is secured.

## **11.5 Education Excellence**

11.5.1 The existing school's capital programme is made up of over 133 individual schemes at various stages of the delivery programme. Delays in delivering key schemes results from contractors' availability, staff resource limitations and site restrictions all of which will have a direct impact on the delivery timescales. Schemes may also have been impacted by delays resulting from material availability and final accounts settlement. It is also important to note that some of the identified resources (underspend) has been set aside for future years schemes, along with savings made due to academisation. Only one capital scheme experienced a major variation from planned budget in 2023/24:

### 11.5.2 Newfield (St. Theresa's) Conversion to Special School (-£0.338m)

The project was delayed due to conditions with the structure and ventilation of the building that were previously unforeseen. This required design changes and the appointment of a specialist subcontractor which caused postponements with the works.

## **11.6 Highways and Public Protection**

11.6.1 Delays to the progress of schemes are encountered as detailed design and consultation is undertaken, and approvals sought and land acquisition undertaken. Consequently, some schemes are not able to be progressed within the timescales

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originally proposed. Constraints due to sourcing materials and contractors have also contributed to an underspend on the 2023/24 Highways Capital Programme.

11.6.2 Priority was given to projects where spend was required to be completed/ committed in 2023/24, particularly Local Growth Fund projects and those funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme. Due to delays and programming constraints a number of schemes have been unable to be completed within 2023/24 and this has resulted in a re-phasing of committed projects, some of which has already been reported throughout the year to Cabinet as part of regular budget updates. A summary of the key allocations carried forward is provided below.

<b>Transport Block</b>	
<b>Local Transport Block/ CRSTS</b> Carried forward due to delays to projects, owing to changes required following consultation, conflicting roadworks and to complete ongoing construction projects including land payments.	<b>£703,441</b>
<b>Crosby Town Centre</b> Carried forward to complete Phase 2 of the Crosby Town Centre accessibility/ Public Realm improvements	<b>£707,481</b>
<b>Birkdale Village Accessibility Improvements</b> Carried Forward to undertake improvements to Birkdale, delayed, to allow Statutory undertakers improvements to be undertaken.	<b>£399,627</b>
<b>A59 Corridor Improvements</b> Carried forward with approval of the Combined Authority and DfT to complete Active Travel Improvements on the Formby Bypass. Project originally scheduled to commence in late 2023, will now be constructed in 2024/25	<b>£2,090,875</b>

<b>Maintenance Block</b>	
<b>Carriageway Maintenance Block</b> Carried forward to complete 2023/24 Carriageway resurfacing programme	<b>£530,533</b>
<b>KRN Resurfacing –</b> Carried forward to complete 2023/24 Carriageway resurfacing programme	<b>£26,201</b>
<b>Drainage</b> Carried forward to complete 2023/24 Drainage Improvement programme owing to difficulties procuring contractor.	<b>£28,672</b>
<b>Highway Structures –</b> Carried forward owing to schemes being completed under budget	<b>£60,143</b>

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<b>Highway Structures – Millars Bridge</b> Additional Funding Carried received directly from DfT. Carried forward whilst investigatory works are undertaken by Network Rail.	<b>£2,000,000</b>
<b>UTC LED Signal Head replacement –</b> Project delayed following consultation with Combined Authority, owing to difficulties procuring contractor, works commenced in 2023/24 and will be completed in 2024/25	<b>£673,968</b>

## 11.7 Operational In-House Services

### 11.7.1 Vehicle Replacement Programme (-£0.352m)

Following the previous 5-year capital renewal programme, departmental leads re-evaluated fleet requirements within their services. It was agreed that a number of renewals could be deferred given such factors as mileage, condition of vehicle and usage. There was also an industry delay on delivery and manufacturing which in turn added to the lack of vehicle available on the market to purchase. This led to a small number of services choosing to lease short term and defer purchase to be included as part of the next 5-year programme when the market had stabilised.

## 12 Capital Outturn 2023/24 - Conclusion

12.1 The capital programme continues to be a key element of the councils' approach to meeting its core purpose. During the year expenditure has directly contributed to the delivery of key service priorities and services to residents and communities. The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial will continue to manage the financing of the capital programme to ensure that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council in future years.

## 13 Corporate Performance 2023/24

14.1 The Council has recognised that in considering its financial performance it should also provide details at year end of performance across a range of its services in order that it can demonstrate how outcomes that will drive the delivery of the core purpose relate to the budget.

14.3 As a result, the Council's Corporate Performance Report for 2023/24 is attached as Appendix A (together with the latest Corporate Risk Register - Appendix B) and provides: -

- A detailed narrative on how the delivery of each element of the Council's core purpose has progressed during the year; and,
- A comprehensive suite of performance measures for key Council activities for 2023/24.

- 14.4 It is acknowledged that when reporting various Council activities on a year-on-year basis that there will be a degree of subjectivity within some areas, that a lot of Council activity is driven via demand from residents and businesses for which it has no direct control, and the external economic environment also impacts upon core activity. Those areas that are reported provide a clear view of the range of Council activity that is undertaken in supporting residents, communities and business across the Borough and how they support the core purpose.
- 14.5 Over this year the Council has strengthened performance reporting with regular quarterly reporting to Cabinet. Officers will continue to build upon this, and it is to be noted that this year considerable progress has been made to strengthen performance reporting with the development of the Data Warehouse and implementation of Power BI (Business Intelligence).

## 2. Financial Implications

All financial implications are reflected within the report.

## 3. Legal Implications

None

## 4. Corporate Risk Implications

This report highlights the financial performance of the Council in 2023/24, which supports its Financial Sustainability in 2024/25 and future years.

## 5 Staffing HR Implications

None

## 6 Conclusion

As reported to Cabinet throughout the year, the Council has again faced a challenging financial environment during 2023/24. Yet despite this, the Council's revenue outturn position was only slightly worse than originally budgeted for.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

<b>Equality Implications:</b>
There are no equality implications.
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b>
None

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## **Climate Emergency Implications:**

The recommendations within this report will have a **Neutral** impact.

The allocations of capital funding outlined in sections 8 to 12 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.

## **What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

### **(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial is the author of this report (FD.7720/24).

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5820/24) has been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### **(B) External Consultations**

None

## **Implementation Date for the Decision:**

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

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## **Appendices:**

The following appendices are attached to this report:

APPENDIX A – Corporate Performance Report 2023/24

APPENDIX B – Corporate Risk Register – June 2024

## **Background Papers:**

None

## Appendix A

**Sefton MBC**

# **Corporate Performance**

## **Summary Performance Report 2023-24 Quarter 4**

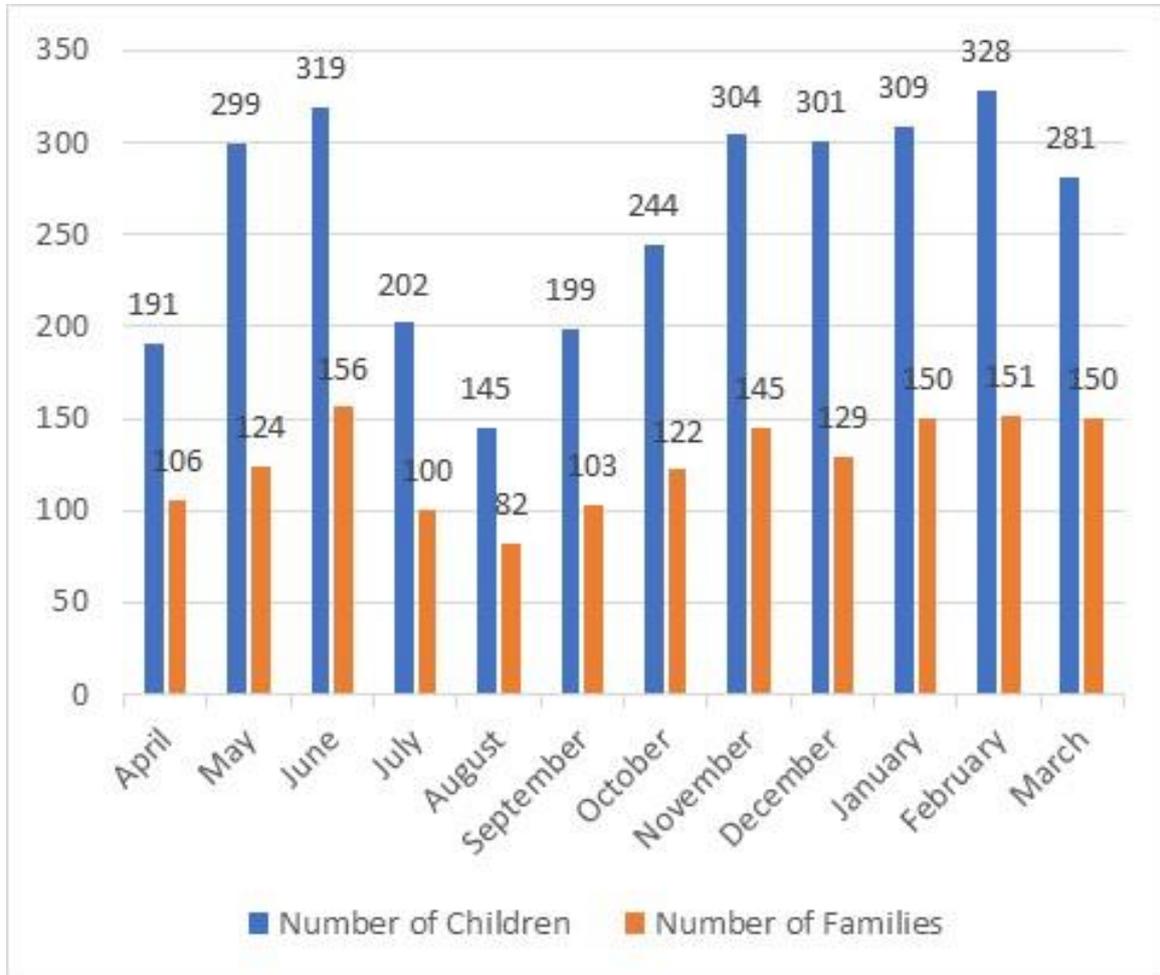
Strategic Support  
Policy, Performance & Business Intelligence.

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Children & Young People – “Improving outcomes for children and their families.”

Early Help (EH) cases open

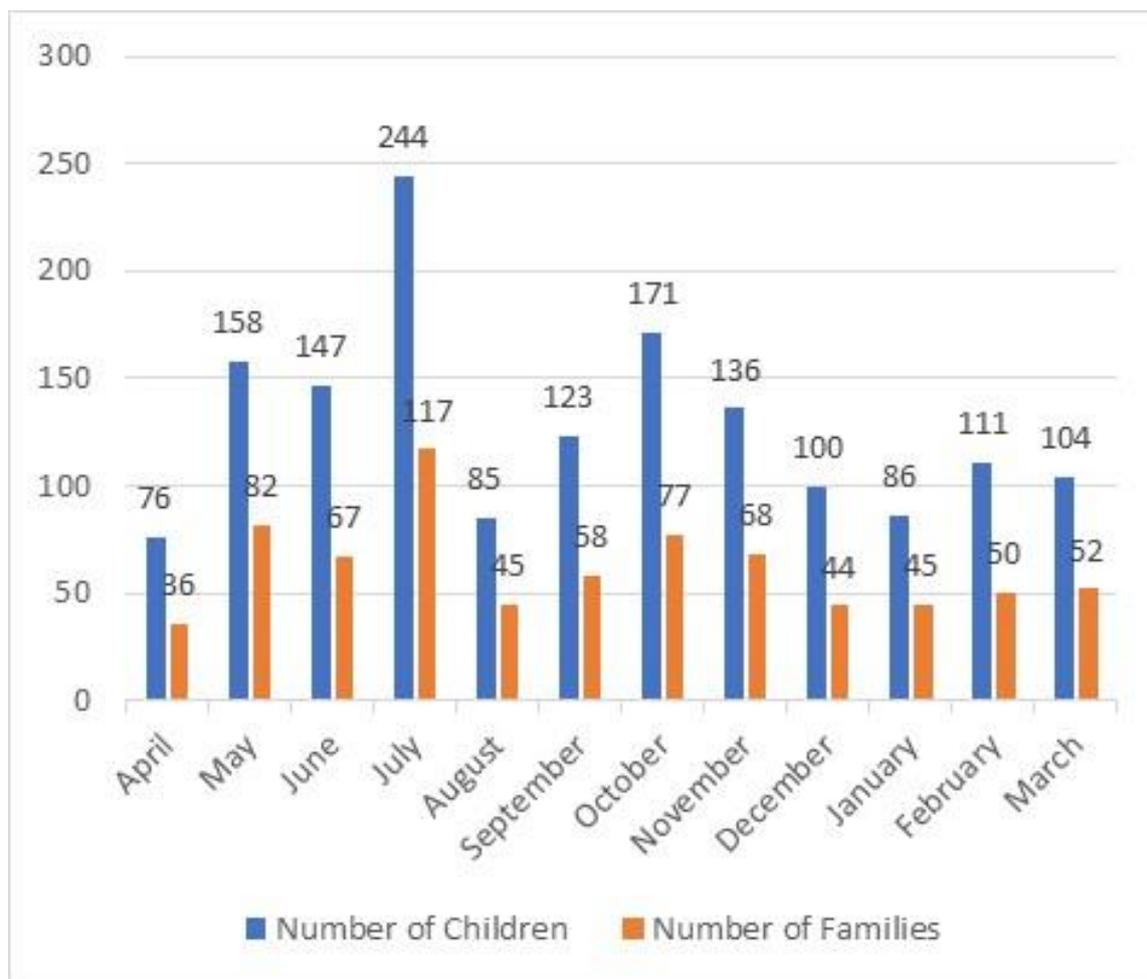


Between January and the end of March 2024 (Q4), our Early Help Service opened the cases for 918 children (448 families). 70% of cases were held at the Family Wellbeing Centres, 10% in Team Around School, 13% MASH & TFS and the remaining 7% were commissioned or held in schools.

Top 3 reasons for opening cases were: Parenting Support (43%), Social & Emotional Difficulties (29%) and Behaviour Difficulties (16%).

Between January and the end of March 2023 (Q4), there were 4940 contacts received through the Integrated Front Door, which represents on average 1647 contacts per month.

## Early Help (EH) cases closed with positive outcome(s) achieved

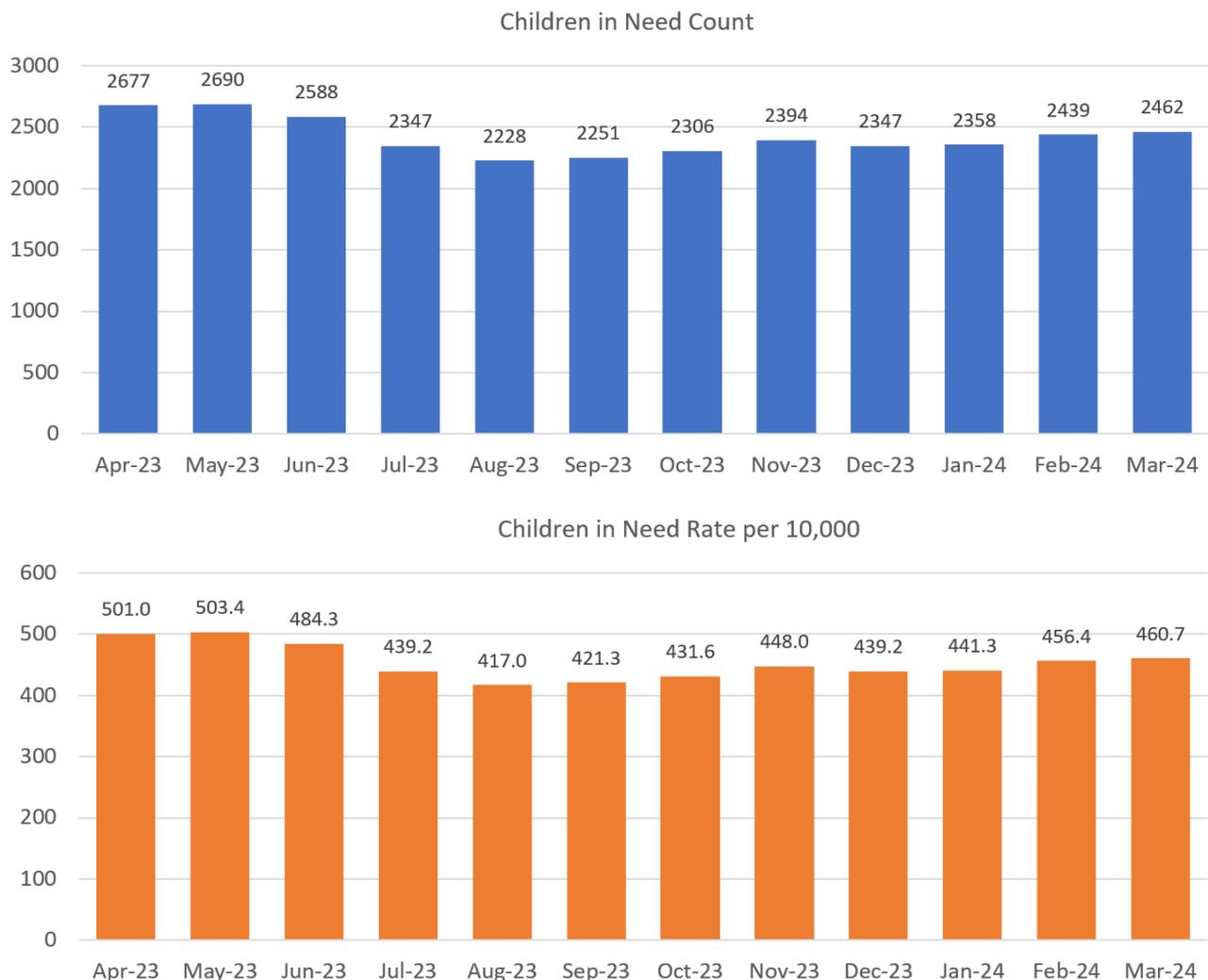


Between January and the end of March 2023 (Q4), our Early Help Service closed cases for 819 children (381 families), which resulted in a positive outcome. 38.6% of families reported that they achieved all the outcomes set by the family to address all their identified needs/difficulties/challenges. The remaining 61.4% of our families reported that early help, support and interventions had significantly helped to address most of their needs.

The service continues to promote the Council’s Early Help Strategy and the whole family approach, which encompasses all stakeholders working with children and families. This includes Health, Police, Education, Children’s Social Care, Local Authority Early Help, Voluntary Community and Faith organisations and the wider public. The new Team around the school (TAS) initiative is now being piloted across 5 clusters of schools, with multiple agencies working together to support families at the earliest opportunity in a way that empowers families, builds on their strengths and develops their resilience, supporting families with parenting, child development, attendance, sleep, health concerns, speech and language, money worries, emotional health and wellbeing, managing behaviour and drug or alcohol misuse. It is not anticipated that the TAS initiative will reduce the demand for Early Help; it may increase demand and recorded involvement with families. However, it should contribute positively to improving the reported satisfaction of outcomes.

The reconfiguration of Early into our multi-agency based and virtual hubs is online to launch in July of 2024. The Family Hubs will be an accessible and community based and virtual provision for those families who require support outside of statutory services. The aim of these hubs is to bring multi-agency services to families as and when they need them and reduce the need for acute services.

## Children in Need



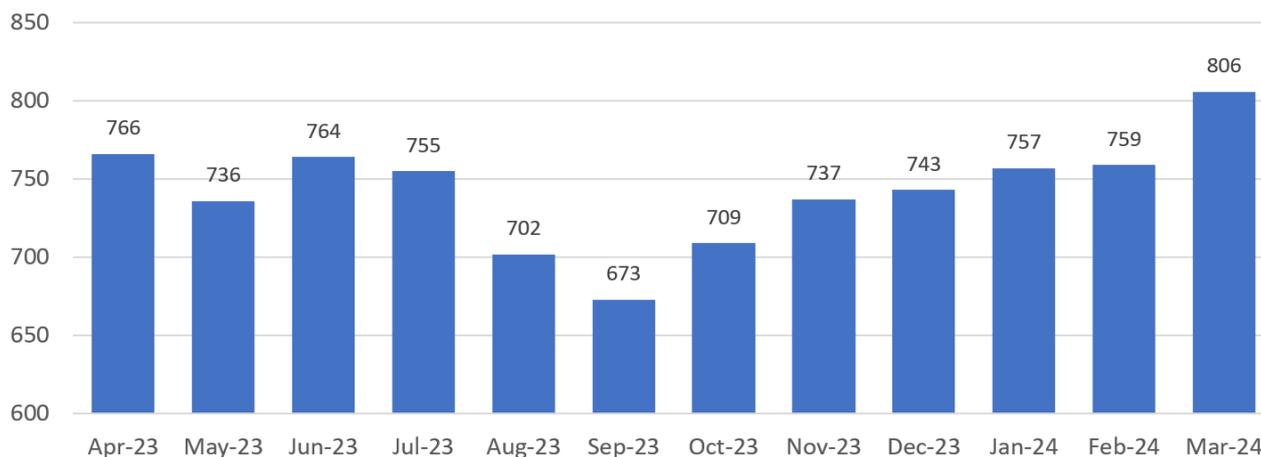
A child in need is one assessed by Children’s Services as needing services, including family support and Early Help Services as set out in Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. The latest government national annual data published in October 2023 identifies that in 2023, over 403,000 children were classed as in need, a rate of 342.7 Children in need per 10,000 children. Rates per 10,000 children are calculated based on ONS (Office for National Statistics) mid-year population estimates for children aged 0 to 17 years. As of March 2023, the comparable Northwest rate was 386.8 Children in need per 10,000 children and the statistical Neighbour comparable rate was 390.15 Children in need per 10,000 children, whilst Sefton’s rate was 516.8 Children in need per 10,000 children, higher than national, regional, and statistical Neighbours.

The Children in need rate for Sefton (460.7/10,000) at the end of March 2024 has decreased by 10% compared to 516.8/10,000 in March 2023. Sefton’s latest rate remains

25% higher than Northwest (369/10,000 from the RIG Q3 23/24) and 34% higher than the national rate (343/10,000).

The launch of Family Hubs in Sefton is expected to support families outside statutory services and will bring our numbers of Child in Need cases in line with regional and national figures.

## Number of Children on a Child in Need Plan



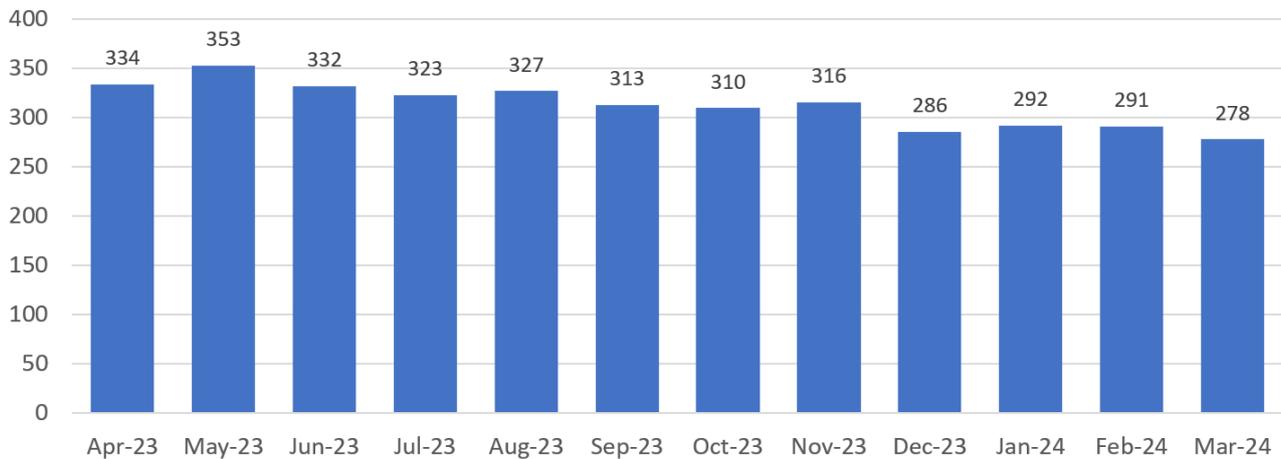
At the end of March 2024, there were 806 children in Sefton open to Child in Need (CiN) services, support, and interventions, with a plan, which represents a rate of 151/10,000 children (0-17). This is higher than the comparators for England, a rate of 90/10,000 children, Northwest, a rate of 95/10,000 and statistical Neighbours, a rate of 95/10,000 (Data-to-Insights/RIG).

There has been an increase from September to March 2024 in the number of children in need (0-17yrs) with a child in need plan. The current rate of children subject to CiN planning is 5% higher compared to last year. The reductions have been caused by an increasing number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan or with an episode of Care ending and being subject to Child in Need plan instead.

The conversion rate of contacts to referrals remains at 20% from the last quarter, which is in line with the regional figure. With the number of front door contacts static at approximately 1250 per month, the lower conversion rate means approximately 100 fewer young people access social care and instead they are accessing Early Help Services from the partnership or signposting to relevant resources to support families.

Children in Need also includes those children who receive services due to their complex needs. The introduction of our care package review hub aims to offer services for those families who do not wish to be under statutory procedures such as having an allocated Social Worker or regular visits and reviews. As we continue to develop this offer, we expect more of our children with complex needs to receive services in the care package review hub and therefore we will see a further reduction in our CIN numbers.

## Number of Children on a Child Protection Plan

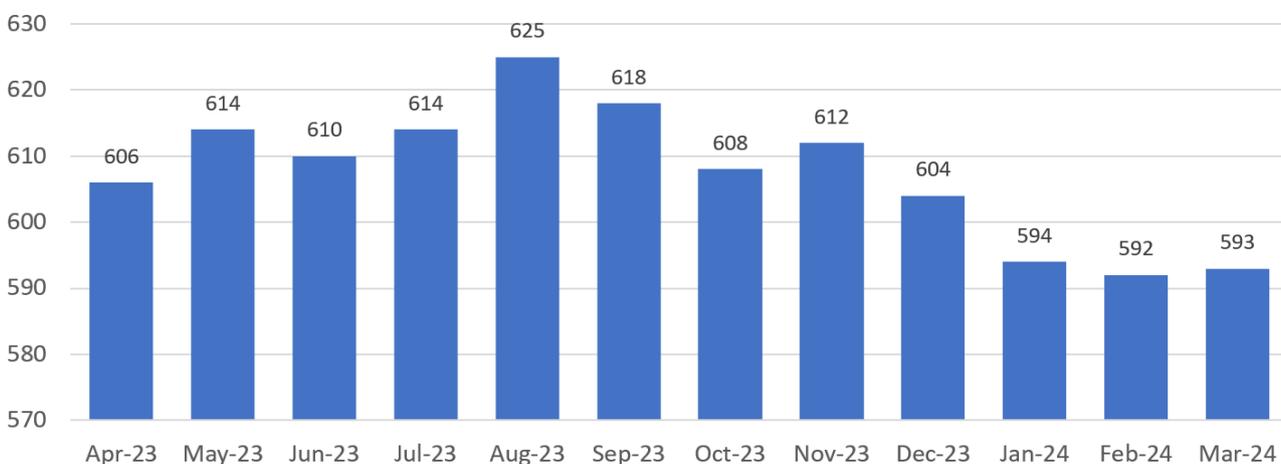


At the end of March 2024, 278 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan, a rate of 52/10,000 children aged 0-17yrs in Sefton.

The number of children subject to child protection planning continues to fall to a rate approaching the national figure. In comparison to the latest RIG Q3 (23/24) data, Sefton is currently 2% above the Northwest (51/10,000 children), and 21% above the England (43/10,000 children) figures. Additional scrutiny for the children who have been subject to CP Plans for more than 15 months supported to ensure the plans are purposeful and reduced drift and delays.

Increased management oversight of CP plans, supported by improved performance management scrutiny has gone some way to improve the quality of our practice for the children subject to CP Plans. There is also increased oversight of those plans where a decision to end at an early (3 month) stage is taken. This oversight is a direct response to the findings of earlier Ofsted monitoring visits. Improved quality of practice and a range of new services means that the needs of families and children can now be met through voluntary support rather than state intervention.

## Open Episodes of Cared for Children



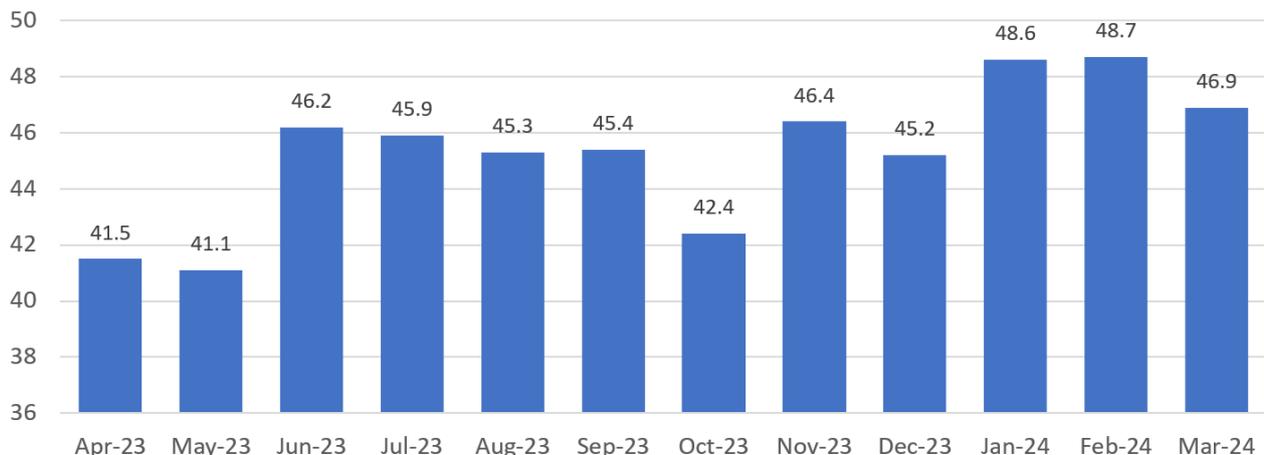
As with other part of the service Sefton’s numbers of children in care, when compared both regionally and nationally, is high. At the end of March 2024 there were 593 cared for children (CLA) with an open episode of care, which represents a rate of 111/10,000 children under 18yrs in Sefton. Since 2020, the rate of children cared for in Sefton has been above the Northwest and statistical neighbours and significantly above the national rate. The current rate of 111/10,000 children are 18% above the Northwest rate, and 59% above the England rate (RIG Q3 23/24).

The rate of cared for children has remained broadly static, with the number fluctuating between 600 - 620 for the period year. However, the number of children has been consecutively below 600 in the last three months. By comparison, were Sefton at the regional rate of approx. 97/10,000 children, the cared for population would stand at approximately 500 children.

We are seeing a steady decrease in these numbers and work is underway to cease inappropriate or ineffective care orders.

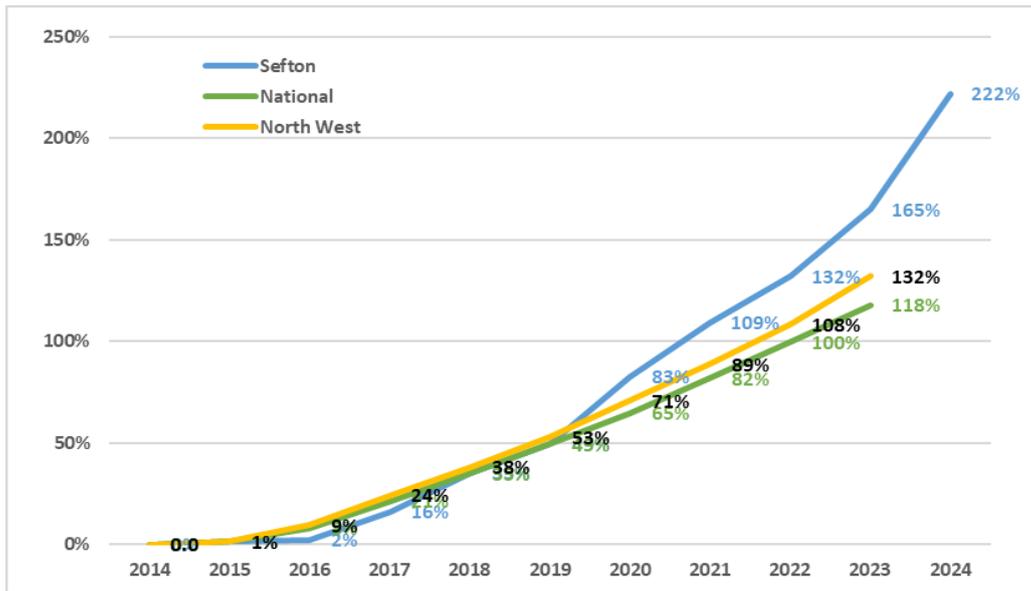
Improvement in Social work practice and a greater range of services to families, included the targeted early help initiative, is helping to support more children to remain safely at home.

## % of Care Experienced Young People in Education



At the end of March 2024, there were 228 young people identified as Care Experienced aged 17 to 21 (with a Relevant and Former Relevant eligibility status). 107 of the cohort (46.9%) are in Education, Employment or Training (EET). The percentage of Care Experienced in EET aged 19 to 21 remain stable at 46% throughout the Q4 period. The EET cohort aged 17 to 18 has remained at 50% at the end of Q3 and Q4, a significant increase compared to 35% in April 2023. EET provisions includes Further Education courses at sixth form colleges or vocational colleges (e.g. Hugh Baird or Southport Colleges), and apprenticeships.

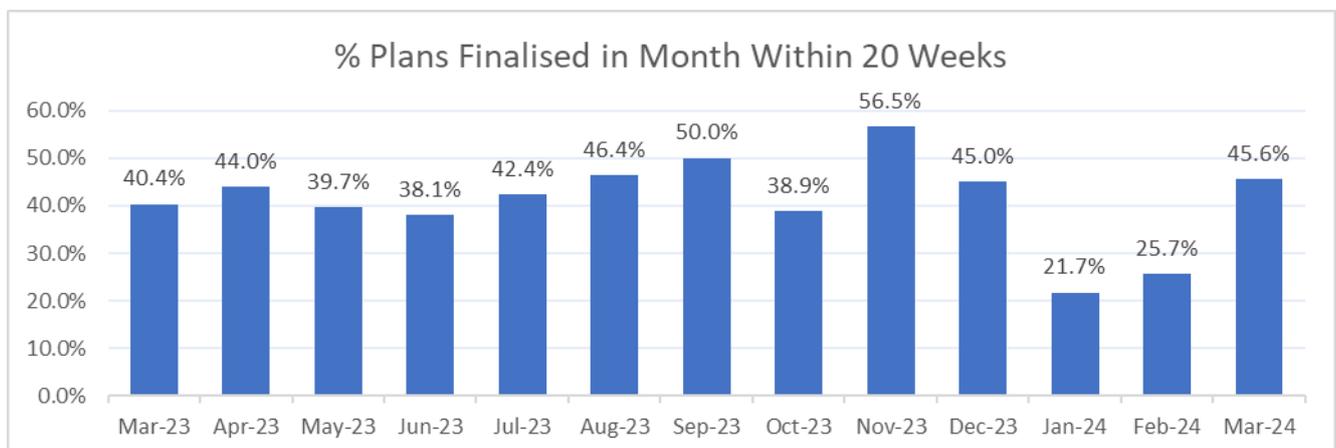
SEND Education, Health & Care Plans



Demand for education, health and care plan assessment continues to increase. In the 2023-24 period, the local authority has received a total of 846 assessment requests up to the end of Q4 (April 2023 to March 2024). This total increased by 213 further assessments solely in Q4 which is almost identical to the 211 requests during Q4 of 2022-23 and a 7% decrease from Q3's total of this year (230).

According to Census 2021, Sefton had a resident population of 279,239 people, with 57,904 children and young people in Sefton (age 0-19) and 74,281 children and young people in (age 0-25). The number of education, health and care plan plans maintained by the local authority, continues to increase in-line with the increase in demand for assessments, as reflected in the graph above. In January 2024 3,317 Children & Young People had an EHC Plan maintained by the local authority (4.2% of the populous), representing a growth approximately 116% since 2019. By January 2023, this number had increased by 14.4% to 2,565 (4.2% of the populous). At the end of Q4, there are now 3,280 Children & Young People had an EHC Plan maintained by the local authority which accounts to 4.5% of the 0-25yr population in the borough and an increase of 21.8% from January 2023's figure.

SEND Education, Health & Care Plan % Plans completed in 20 weeks.



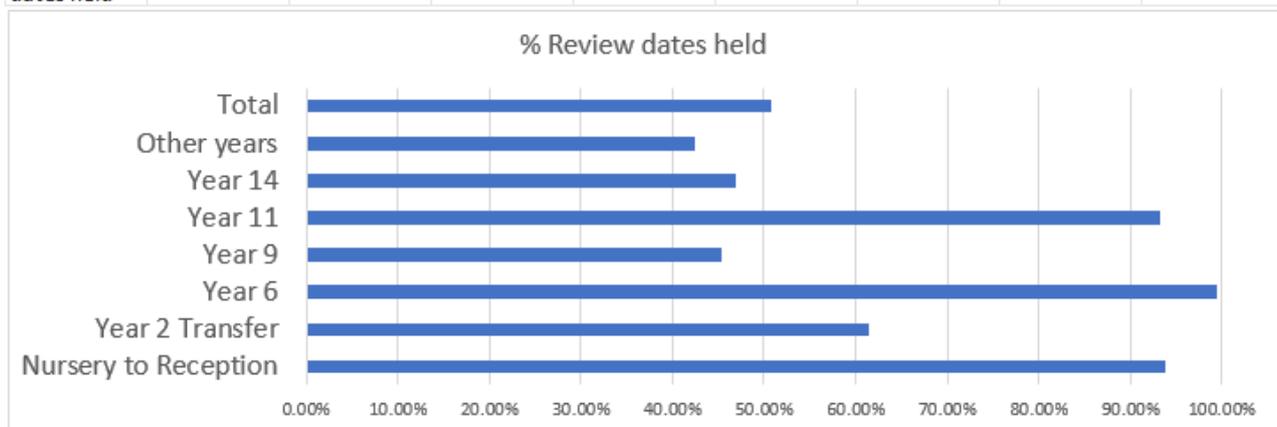
At the end of March 2024 (Q4), the percentage of new Education Health and Care Plans completed with the statutory 20-week timescale was at 45.6%, which represents an overall improvement from 30% at the beginning of 2023 and a 5.2% improvement from March 2023, whilst November 2023 saw the highest performance, at 56.5%. The overall 12-month average performance of the 2023-24 period was 40.8%, and although the National and regional comparators have not been published by the Department for Education yet, this represents an improvement of over 49% when compared with annual average taken at the end of December 2022. Although the comparative performance target for 2023 are still to be released by the Department for Education (DfE), the aspiration is to increase performance to a level at least comparable to other England LAs (which in 2022 was 50.7% on new plans issued within the 20-week time limit, northwest average 62.7% and SN 67.24%), and plans are being developed to achieve a stretched target of 60%. To improve performance the following steps are being taken:

1. Interim Service Manager now in post to operationally manage the team’s performance.
2. Weekly meetings in place with Senior Casework Officer to prioritise cases. Managing those in the backlog and those that can be finalised in 20 weeks.
3. SEND team will be at capacity for staffing by the end of May 2024.

## SEND Education, Health & Care Plans % Reviews Held for 22/23 academic year ending 31/08/2023.

The following table shows the percentage of education, health and care plans reviewed in the 2023/24 academic up to the end of Q4.

	Nursery to Reception	Year 2 Transfer	Year 6	Year 9	Year 11	Year 14	Other years	Total
% Review dates held	93.75%	61.54%	99.45%	45.29%	93.24%	46.90%	42.44%	50.88%

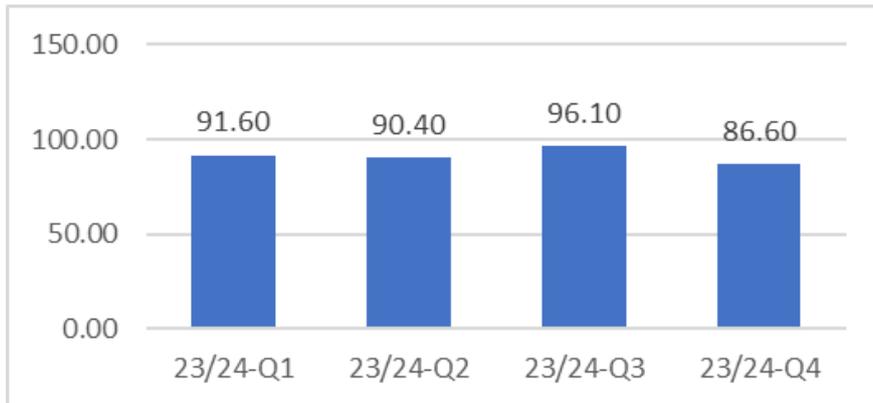


There are no published national or regional performance comparators, and although the overall percentage of reviews completed in-time was 50.88%, the percentages for the key educational transition points (Nursery to Reception, KS2 and KS4) are very close to or above the 94% mark. This is a target that has now been set for reviewing EHCPs for those children in the 2023/24 academic cohort for key stage transitions. Furthermore, the review

of EHCPs for children and young people aged 16+ will also be a priority moving forward, as it is anticipated that this may support a reduction in the overall number of EHCPs being maintained by the local authority where needs have already been met and support may no longer be required.

## Adult Social Care – “Empowering people to live an independent life, exercise choice and control, and be fully informed.”

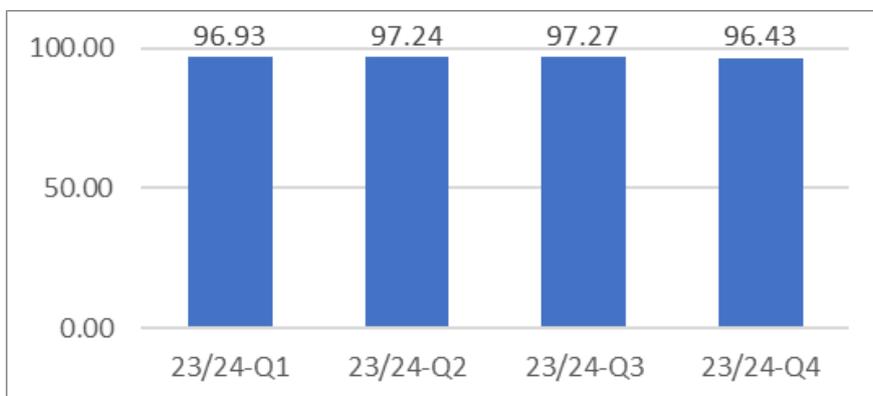
**Proportion of older people 65 and over who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services effectiveness of the service (2B1) (%)**



The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures nationally how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to most people. 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.

Performance on this metric across 23/24 has been consistently good. Q4 saw a drop to 87% of people remaining at home, however we remain above the median score in England, the North West and our statistical neighbours.

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

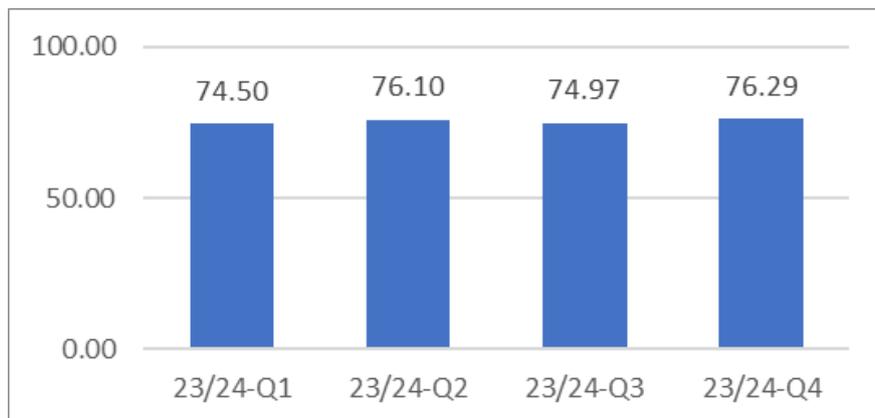


Adult Social Care Services has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable people who have care and support needs. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a national initiative aiming to encourage an outcome focused and a person-centred approach in safeguarding work. We ask those involved in a safeguarding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

Our performance against making safeguarding personal has been good across 23/24 with at least 96% of individuals having their preferred outcomes at least partially met.

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

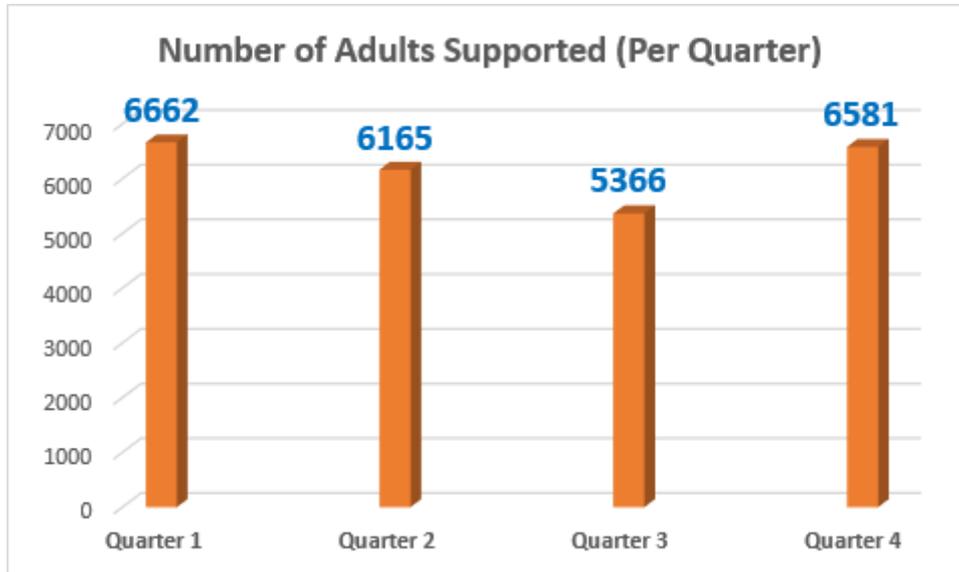


Adult Social Care Service aim to support people to be as independent, wherever possible, living at home and having strong links with their communities. Whilst it is recognised that some people may need long term services, this measure specifically shows the proportion of people whose short-term service resulted in a reduced, or no ongoing, need for support. A key responsibility of Adult Social care Service is to ensure early help and intervention, helping people to delay the need for long term services.

Throughout 23/24 three quarters of people who received a short-term intervention did not go on to receive a long-term service. This performance is in-line with England and the North West (approximately 75% respectively), but marginally below the performance of our statistical neighbours, at almost 80%.

## Health & Wellbeing – “Improving the health and wellbeing of everyone in Sefton and reduce inequality.”

### Access to adult based targeted Active Sefton Services

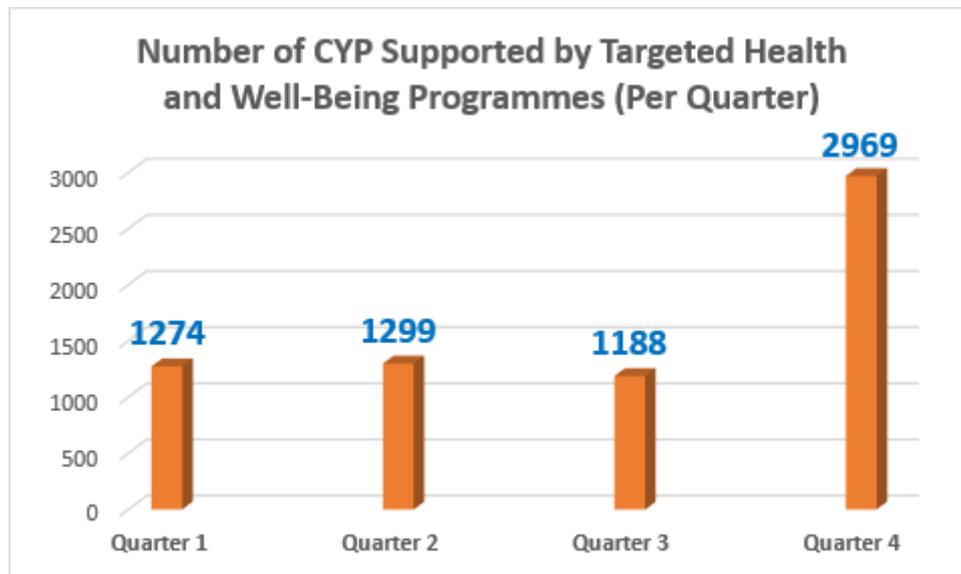


The numbers above represent access to:

- Active Lifestyles (GP Referral and Weight Management) - a 12 week supported programme of physical activity and 6-week Weight Management Programme (Weigh Forward), which aims to provide residents who are above a healthy weight and/or suffer with/are at risk of developing coronary heart disease (CHD) the opportunity to live a more active and healthier lifestyle.
- NHS Health Checks - a statutory programme delivered by the Active Lifestyles team to eligible adults aged 40-74, which is designed to detect early signs of stroke, heart and kidney disease, type II diabetes and dementia.
- Active Ageing Falls Service – a 12-week strength and balance programme for residents over the age of 60 who are at risk of falling or have fallen. The service also incorporates support for social isolation and loneliness.
- Active Workforce - a workplace wellbeing programme, aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of employees by breaking down all barriers leading to improved physical and mental wellbeing.

There has been an increase in referrals between Q3 to Q4 as on trend with the time of year and building back up from the expected drop in Q3. A number of new companies have come on board with the Active Workforce programme which has also supported the increase in numbers once again.

## Number of children and young people supported by targeted health and wellbeing programmes.



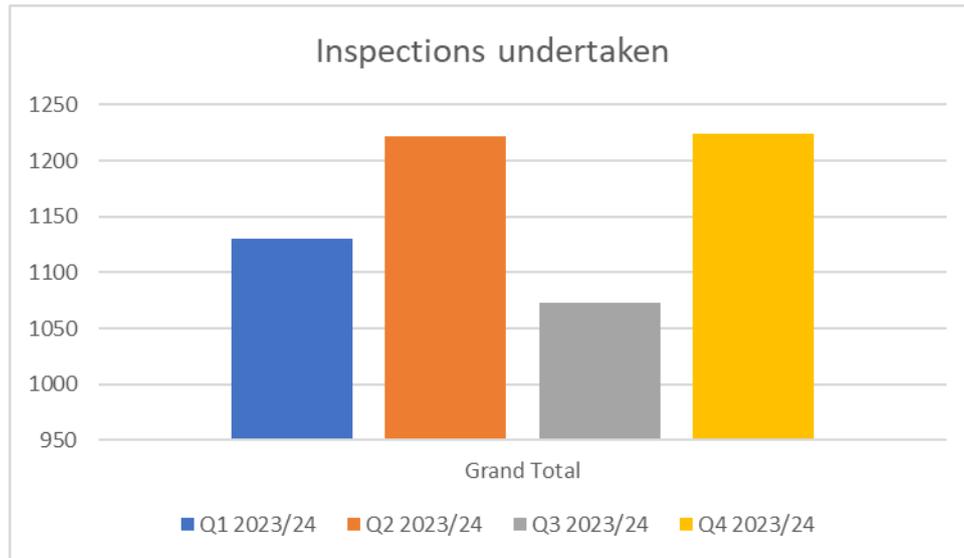
The numbers above represent access to MOVE IT (Weight Management), 1-2-1 Programme (mental wellbeing) and Active Schools Service. There was a further 318 attendances through the February half-term delivery of Be Active and Park Night sessions.

The increase in Q4 is due to a staffing change allowing greater flexibility and support for the programme. Also, the demand from schools in one geographical area peaked significantly. We expect this increase to plateau going forward.

### Public Protection - Inspections Undertaken

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.

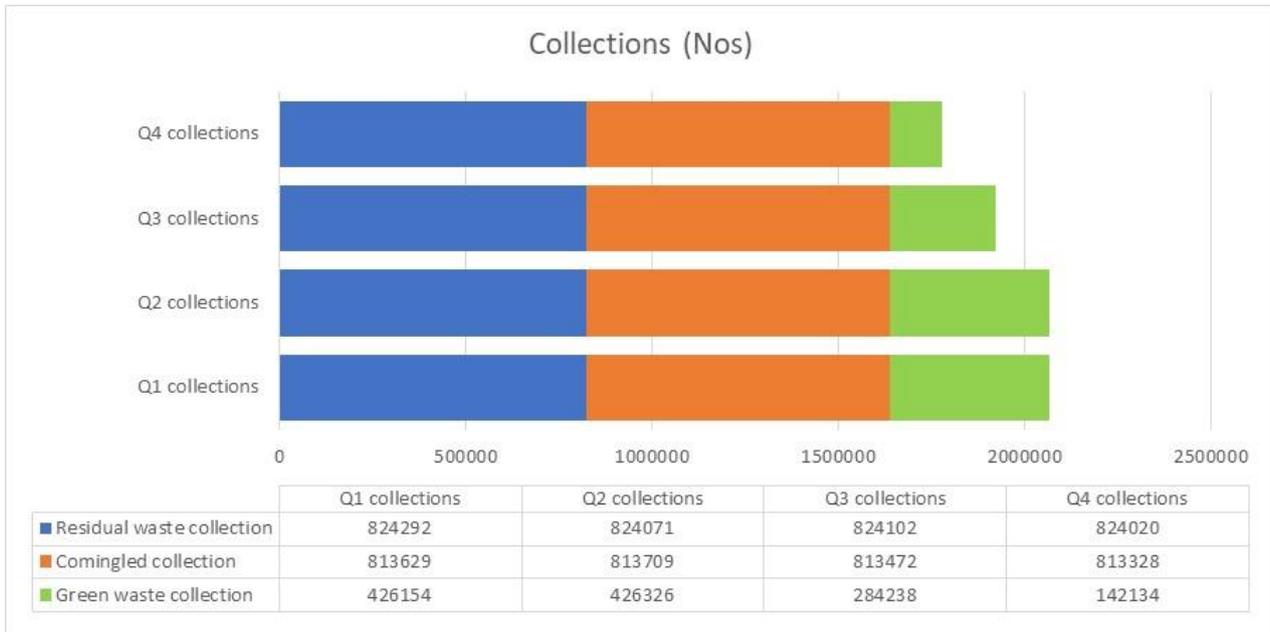
The Food Hygiene and Standards inspections programme is determined by The Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the risk rating of the premises. We have successfully completed the 23/24 FSA inspection programme with all category A-D (the higher risk premises) food hygiene inspections undertaken in line with the programme. The reduced number of inspections undertaken in Q3 was due, in the main, to officers carrying out a targeted health and safety project promoting gas safety in catering businesses.



Animal Feed Surveillance inspections of feed product entering the country through the Port of Liverpool has remained consistent ensuring successful monitoring and prevention of unsafe product entering the food chain. All targets for the Regional Animal Feed Delivery Programme have been achieved and funding secured for 24/25.

Working for Our Communities Every Day – “Working together to deliver affordable services which achieve the best possible outcomes for our residents.”

### Bins Collected



The Waste Management Service continue to deliver a high-quality service provision for the collection of all waste streams from residential properties. It is essential that comingled bins contain the correct recyclable items to prevent contamination once the load reaches the transfer station for onward sorting.

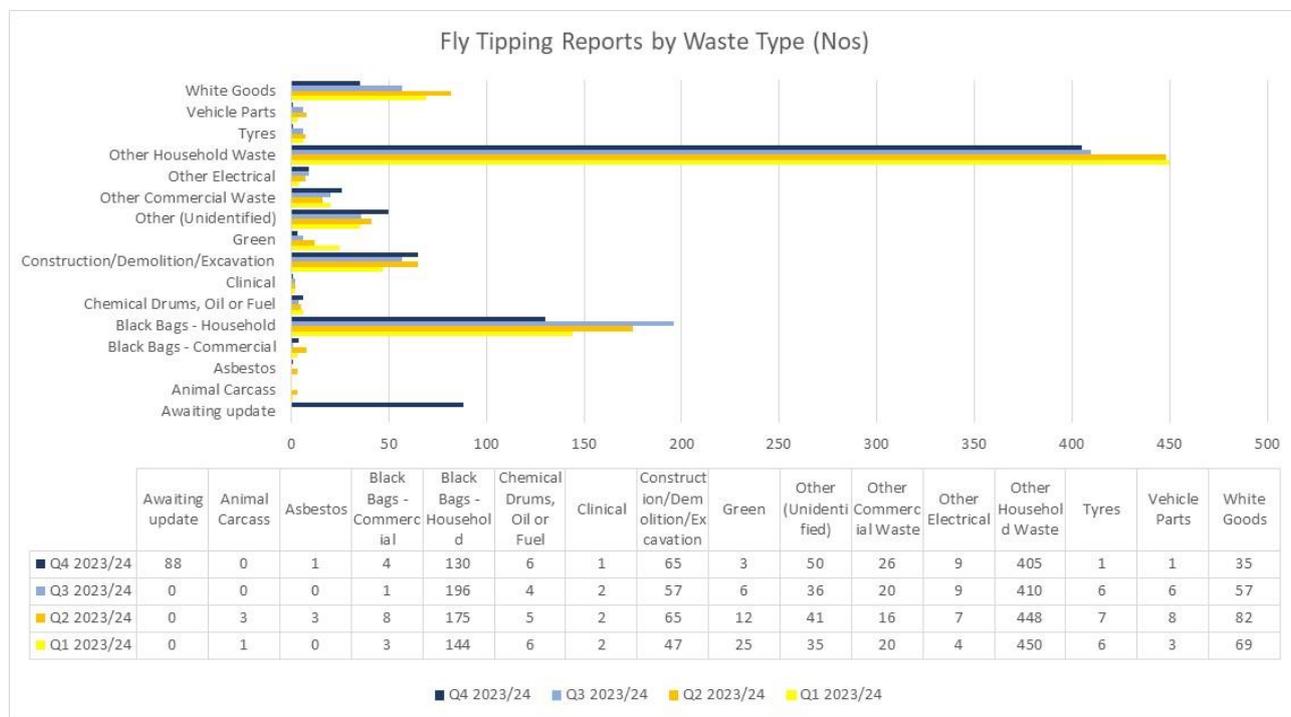
Q3 and Q4 incorporate periods when the cessation of the green waste collection commenced for the winter period. Q3 also includes the Christmas period when a reduced waste collection service was operated due to the Council’s corporate shutdown arrangements and this model of operation often invites an increase in complaints to the service. In Q4 a total of 1.92 million collections were made compared to around 2.06 million collections made in Q1 and Q2. Only 1,815 collections were missed in Q4, which represents 0.1% of all collections in the period.

These statistics are shared with the operational supervisory team through the team meeting process to inform their monitoring activities moving forward.

### Fly Tipping

Fly tipping is defined as "the illegal deposit of any waste onto land that does not have a licence to accept it" as defined by the Keep Britain Tidy Group. Fly-tipping can be a public health hazard and environmental risk, not to mention despoiling the local environment and being an eyesore. It can cause unpleasant smells, attract pests, and create a dangerous environment for children, pets, and wildlife. In its more serious forms, illegally deposited waste can release pollution into the ground, groundwater, any nearby watercourses and into the air, and it can damage soil quality. According to latest government statistics, over 1,000,000 fly-tipping

incidents are dealt with by councils each year – the equivalent of 114 every hour. Two-thirds of reported incidents involve household waste, and around a third were of a vanload or less. Within Sefton, fly tipping continues to be an on-going issue and a blight on the Borough.



In Q4 a total of 825 fly tipping incidents were responded to with black bags and household waste being the highest volumes (130 and 405 respectively). The 2023/24 total was 3,332 incidents or just over 9 a day, demonstrating that the illegal dumping of waste and/or rubbish (typically dumped to avoid correct, safe disposal or disposal costs) is an ongoing problem.

There is a collaborative work approach being developed between the Street Cleansing Service and Environmental Enforcement colleagues to reduce levels of fly tipping through behaviour change and future communication campaigns, also highlighting land ownership and responsibilities where the land is not owned by the Council. Further education is required to assist members of the public to act correctly when disposing of waste correctly.

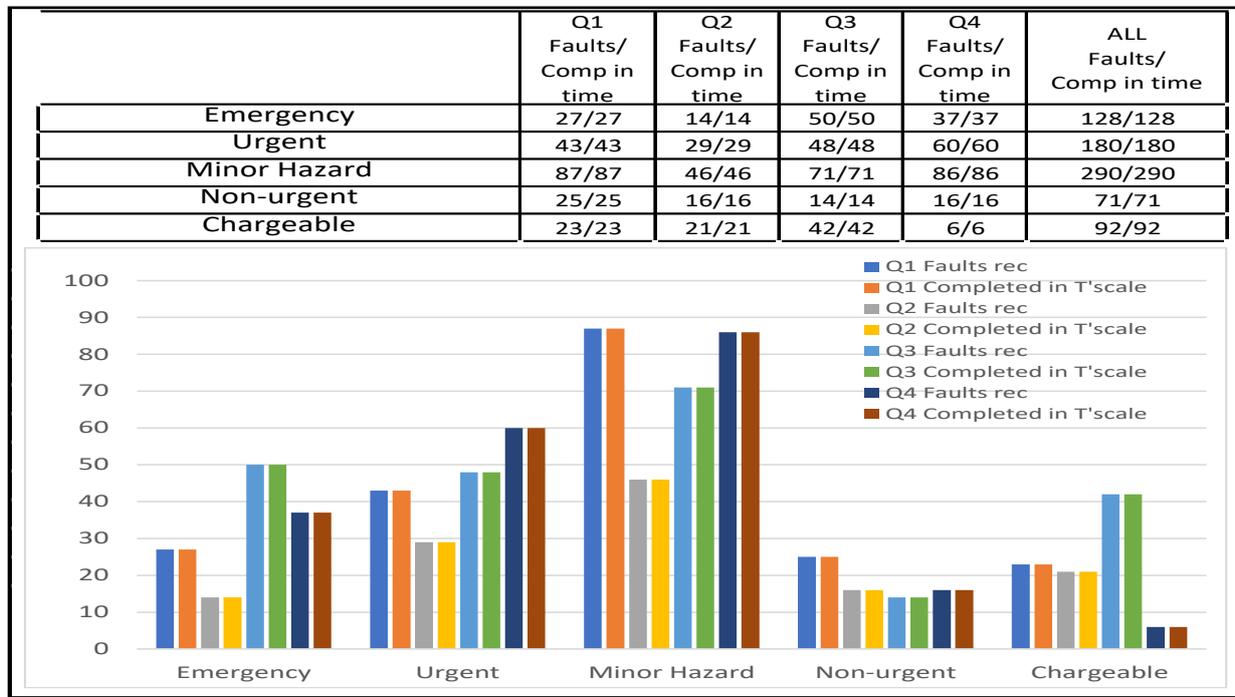
The Council offer a Bulky Household Waste Collection Service at a competitive rate for residents to utilise for the correct disposal of household waste. Members of the public can report incidents of fly tipping via the Council's website at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/bins-and-recycling/litter-and-fly-tipping/fly-tipping/>

Fly tipping is a national problem and the government publish data regarding the volume of fly tipping incidents. Latest figures are available at [Fly-tipping statistics for England, 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fly-tipping-statistics-for-england-2021-to-2022)

Fly-tipping is a crime, which carries serious penalties. In the Crown Court, the maximum penalty is 5 years jail and/or an unlimited fine. In the magistrates' court, persons convicted of fly-tipping can be fined an unlimited amount, jailed for 12 months, or sent to The Crown Court for more severe penalties. The legislation creating the offence is section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. A fly tipping prosecution, brought by the Environmental Enforcement Team, was successfully concluded in Q3 with the defendant pleading guilty to

11 counts of the offences under s.33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The defendant was instructed to pay a total of £8,802.25, consisting of a Fine (£1,166), Victim Surcharge (£466), staff/legal costs (£1,105.25) and Clean-up costs (£6,065).

### 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 Key Performance Indicators and financial penalties that can be applied if they fail to meet the required level of performance.

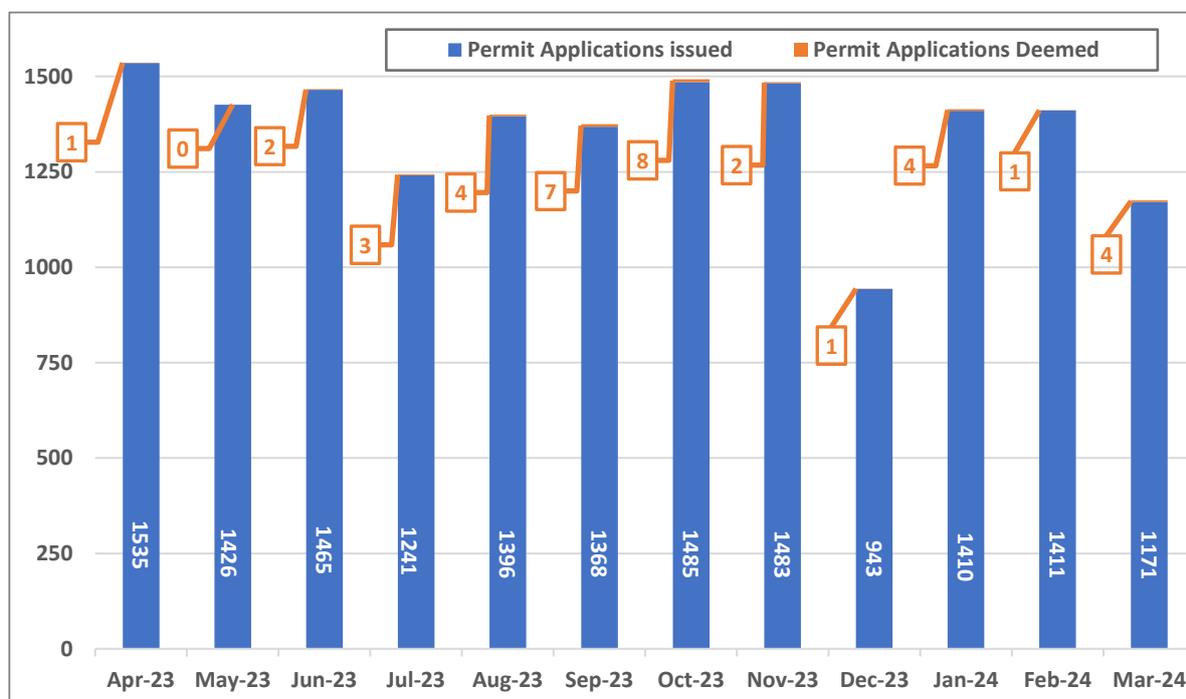
In respect of targets for 2023/24, the KPIs are set in the Contract, which in the case of UTC is a Merseyside-wide contract. The KPI is based on rectifying a set proportion of faults on time in each urgency category, as follows: Emergency 99%, Urgent 80%, Minor Hazard 75% and Non-Urgent 70%. Any non-compliance within a category can result in a 5% financial penalty for that category expenditure, if any group falls below 60% the 5% can be increased to 10% of the total monthly demand works. Sefton’s performance is shown in the table within the above chart and when benchmarked, compares favourably with other authorities using the same contract.

In respect of what is going well in relation to this target, we work well with the contractor across the maintenance contract and a £1.2 million LED retrofit Lamp change programme. We have also been successful in a bid for Green Light Funding of £500k, to provide smarter traffic lights across the Borough.

In respect to improvement, we are one of few authorities with a full recent asset review which we can use to support bids for future funding. UTC is a specialist area and we have struggled

to recruit. We are currently exploring an alternative approach, including potentially a graduate apprenticeship approach.

## 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 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. Ideally there would be zero Deemed Permits, but we occasionally receive permits for roads that are not our responsibility (e.g. a Trunk Road or an unadopted road), and these show as deemed permits because we cannot give permission for those works.

In respect of targets for 2023/24, ideally there would be zero Deemed Permits, but we occasionally receive permits for roads that are not our responsibility (e.g. a Trunk Road or an unadopted road), and these show as deemed permits because we cannot give permission for those works. In respect of what is going well in relation to this target, there are a minimal number of deemed permits (single figures for all months except May), all of which were out of our control.

In respect to improvement, we are challenging the durations requested in permit applications, to reduce occupancy where possible, and following the roll-out of Visual Impairment Awareness Training for staff, we are placing much greater emphasis on ensuring that the layout and management of the works ensure appropriate pedestrian access, taking into account people with disabilities such as visual impairment.

### 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.

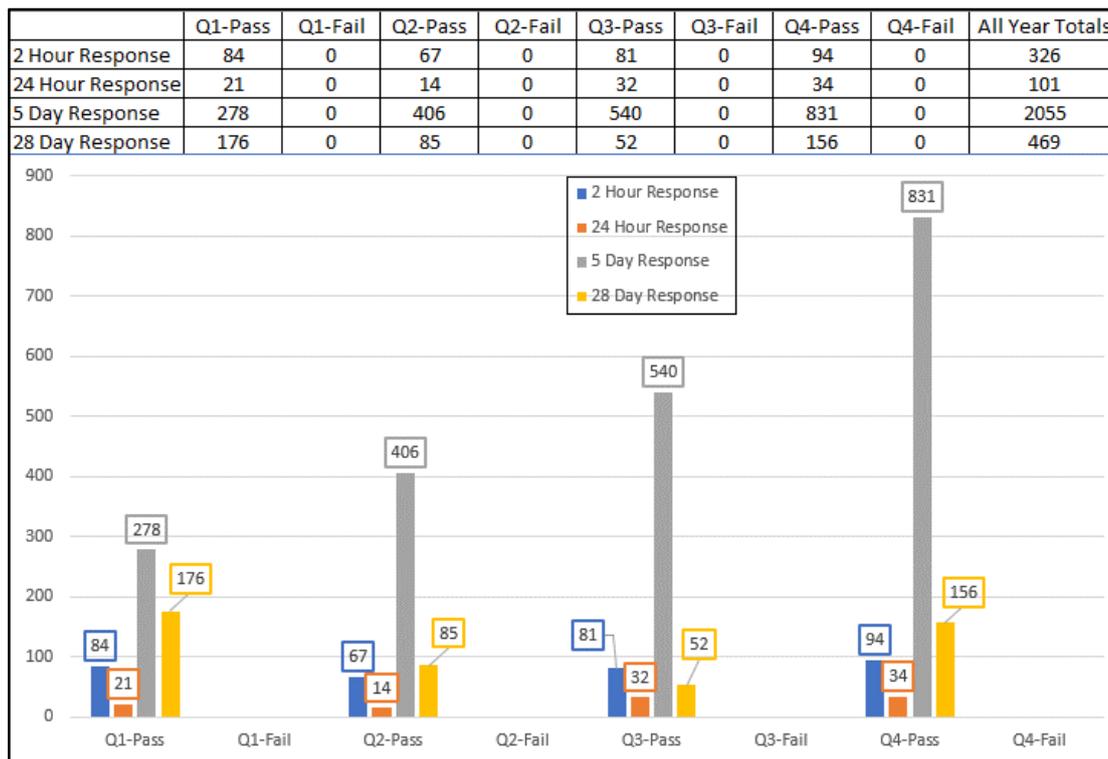
In respect of targets for 2023/24, we have not defined a specific target and it is not benchmarked against other Authorities. Ideally there would be no overruns, but this is beyond our control.

In respect of what is going well in relation to this target, there are a minimal number of overrunning works (0.51% in the last twelve months and 0.36% in the last quarter) which indicate that the works are being managed effectively.

In respect to improvement, this measure is outside our control, as it is dependent upon the performance of the utility companies and contractors undertaking the permitted work. We are reviewing this and intend to replace this measure with a more meaningful one for 2024/25, a measure of the number of permitted works inspected against a target number.

### 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.



In respect of targets for 2023/24, the KPIs are set in the Contract and are based on rectifying a set proportion of faults on time in each urgency category, as follows: Emergency 2hr 99%, Urgent 24hr 99%, 5-day response 95% and 28-day Response 95%. Any non-compliance within a category can result in a financial penalty for that category expenditure and is assessed on a rolling three-month period. The number of faults dealt with in time (pass) and out of time (fail) is shown in the table within the chart above.

In respect of what is going well in relation to this target, excellent collaboration between Sefton, the Contractor and component suppliers has helped to manage performance across the maintenance contract and the £14m Street Lighting Asset (LED Retrofit) project in the face extremely challenging circumstances (e.g. rising costs, workforce shortages, supply chain issues due to Covid, Brexit and war in Ukraine). In 2023, the programme was successfully re-programmed to target highest energy lanterns and thereby reduce in-year budget pressures by reducing highest energy usage more quickly.

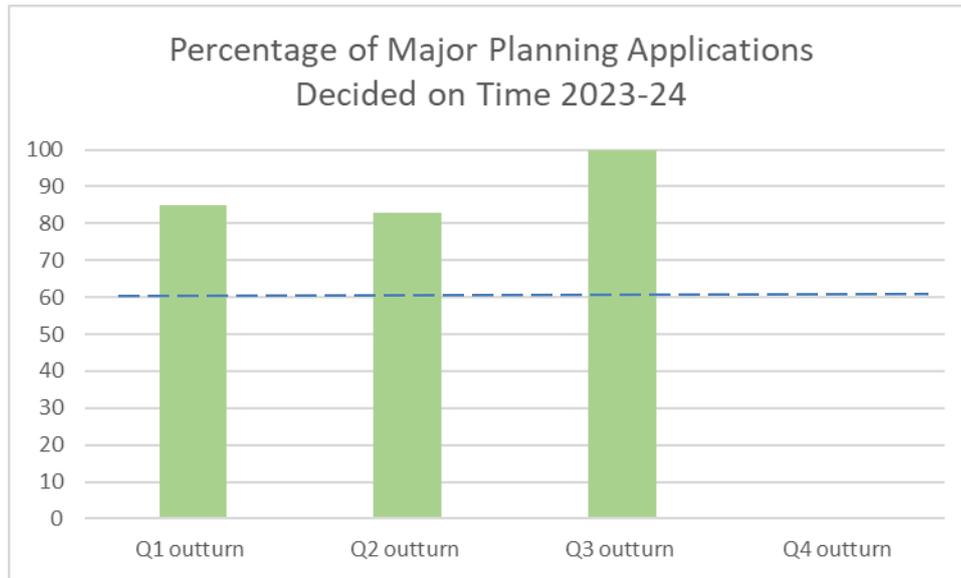
In respect to improvement, this is one of our most highly developed service areas, with a high standard of asset management, financial monitoring, and fault rectification evidence. The Street Lighting Asset project will reduce faults and maintenance costs.

**Inclusive Growth – “Creating more and better jobs for local people.”**

Planning, Business Growth & Investment, Employment & Learning, Tourism, Housing and Regeneration.

**Planning**

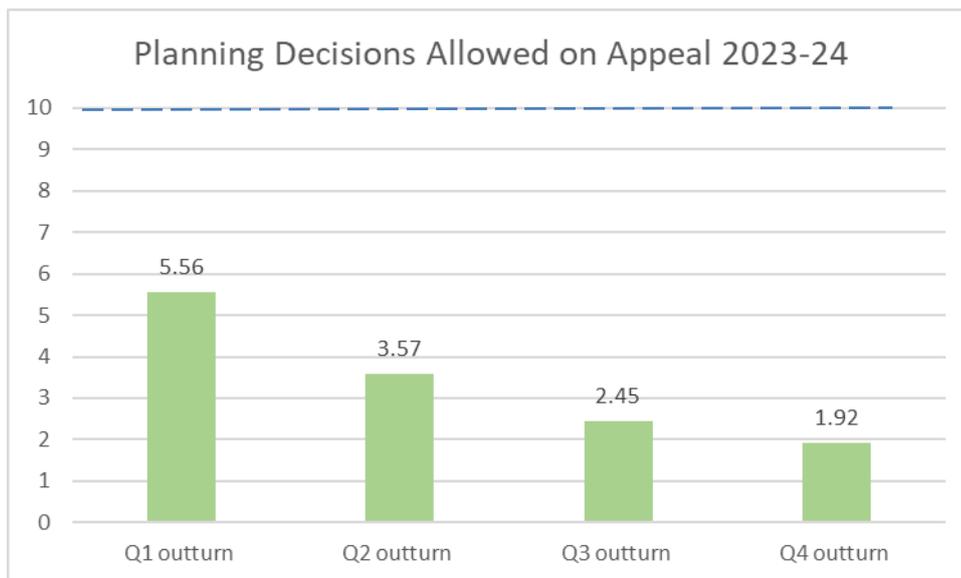
**Speed of decision making**



No major applications were determined in Q4

National Target is 60% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks

**Quality of Decision Making**



National target is a maximum of 10% of Council’s decision making on major applications by appeal over a 2-year period + 9 months

The targets for next year will not change, although depending on the changes to the planning system, the local target for speed may be brought in line with the national 60%.

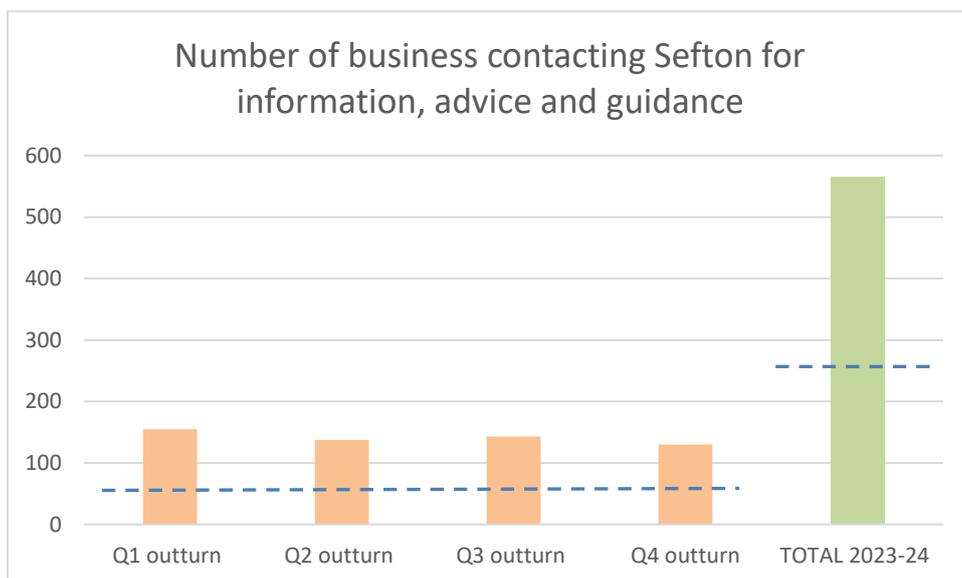
What is going well is that with extensions of time, we are exceeding this target.

We are focusing on increasing the use of preapplication advice and planning performance agreements to help front load the system, which will help reach more decisions in the allotted time frame.

Expedient decision making in planning, consistency of advice and support around the development of project proposals is critical to securing growth and investment, employment, business rates and council tax, infrastructure and social value. We have established a corporate Planning Clinic to help determine Council projects on time.

## Business Growth & Investment

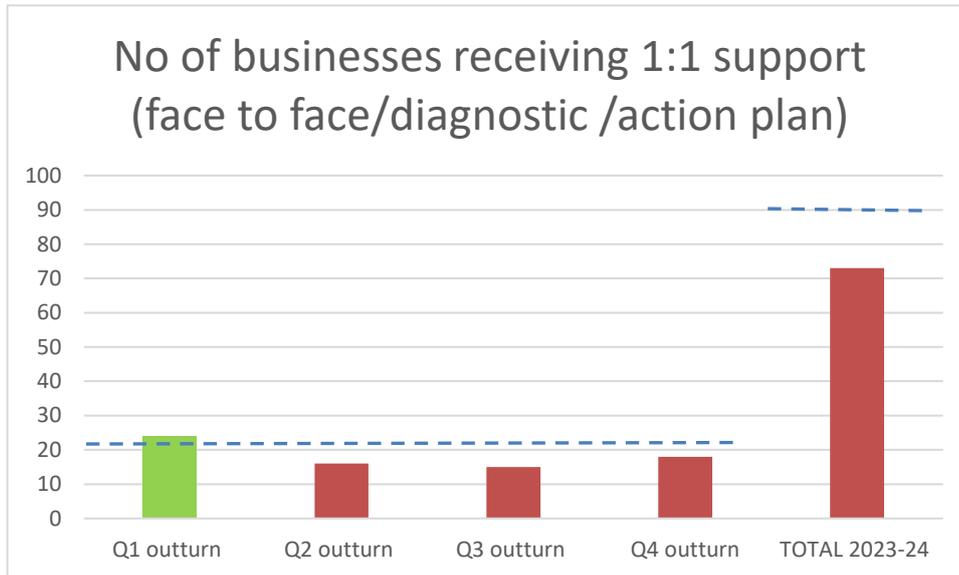
### Contact with Businesses



Local target of 250 contacts per annum (62.5 per quarter)

Target provided is conservative. Based on previous contractual targets given to InvestSefton by funders such as Growth Hub. We are on track to exceed this target as InvestSefton delivers outward engagement activities such as events and workshops that are promoted borough wide and therefore continue to grow awareness of the InvestSefton brand and which in turn helps encourage enquiries to the service. On average InvestSefton receives between 15 – 25 enquiries per week. Not all enquiries go on to receive guidance, some are purely signposted.

**Businesses receiving 1:1 support**

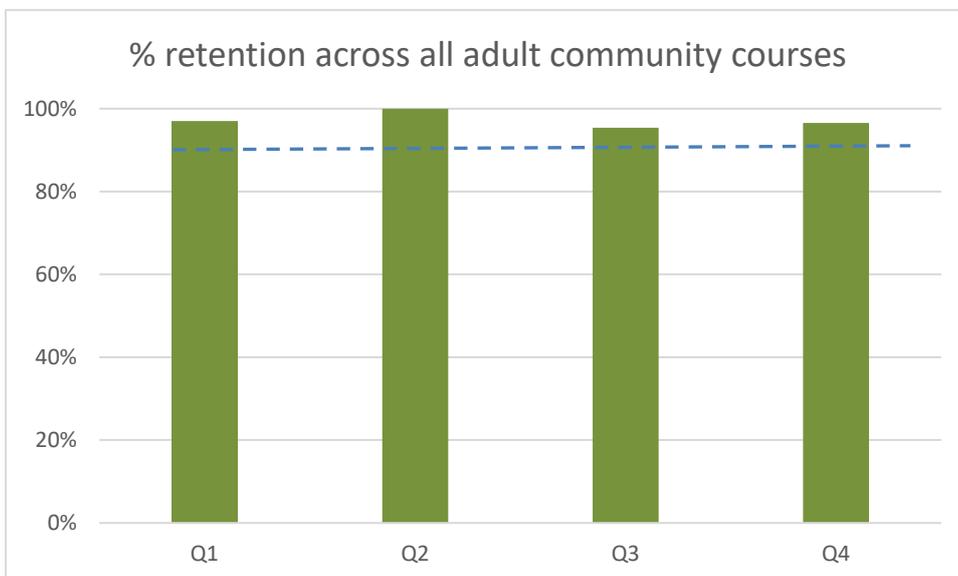


Local target of 90 businesses receiving support per annum (22.5 1:1 support per quarter)

Target based on demand and resource within team, 2 full time business advisers (eqv) and 2 growth hub officers who are business facing and provide 1:1 support. The shortfall in 2023-24 was due to sickness absence within the team, however this is a local target and determined by historic support numbers. Going forward we will reduce our local target in line with demand to 80 assists which include a time intensive 360 diagnostic, action plan and tailored 1:1 to support, this support is not light touch and requires considerable time spent by Advisers supporting the business.

**Employment & Learning**

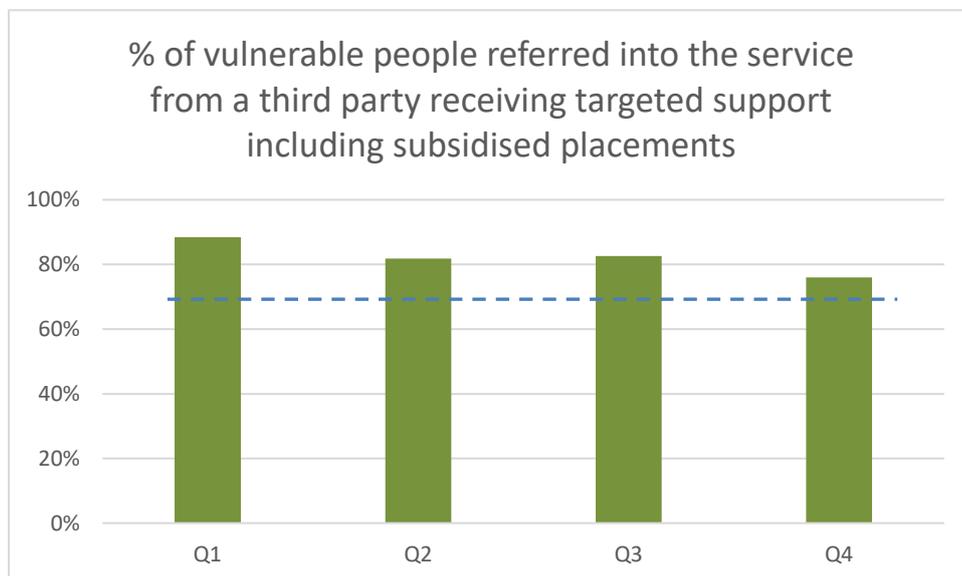
**% Retention across all Adult Community Learning Courses**



Local target is 91% per quarter. A contractual target to indicate best practice across a range of Adult Education contracts.

Where we are ahead of targets our focus is to maintain our current delivery level across all parts of the service.

## Vulnerable People Transferred into the Service



Local target is 72% per quarter.

A local target developed from contractual requirements to ensure that we are meeting our outputs and outcomes.

Where we are ahead of targets our focus is to maintain our current delivery level across all parts of the service

## Performance against other authorities

We aim to ensure we remain in the top performing quartile for 16-18 year olds

Our target is to maintain our current ranking year on year across Liverpool City Region, regionally and nationally. **We are currently ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 151 Local Authorities and 1<sup>st</sup> in the LCR.**

## Tourism

Our aim is a swift recovery back to 2019 levels of tourism volume and visitor expenditure. The measure for this is the number of visitor per year. We aim to increase visitor numbers of 2% year on year (both day and staying). The target for 2023/24 is 5,882,340 visitors. The figures for 2023/24 are not yet available and will be reported in due course.

## Regeneration

### Externally Funded Projects

Our target is to ensure 100% of expenditure verified for projects which are externally funded. **We met this target for 2023-24.**

There are a number of significant Growth and Strategic Investment Projects are external funding and require auditing and checks to ensure funding spend is compliant with the Councils governance

and assurance. Projects such as Crosby Lakeside, Cambridge Road, Southport Town Deal and Bootle LUF/CRP are typical examples where all spend has to be verified before claiming it.

### Funding Claims

**Our target is to ensure that 90% of all claims completed and submitted on time to Audit. We met this target for 2023-24.**

Funding claims are in arrears based on evidenced expenditure ie after the money has been spent it can form part of the claim. The claim has to be compiled and approved by audit who check it has been compiled properly and all expenditure claimed is legitimate. Due to the time this takes most claims are submitted on time, but some can take longer to be approved. Eg queries or longer term retention payments to be claimed after the project has completed.

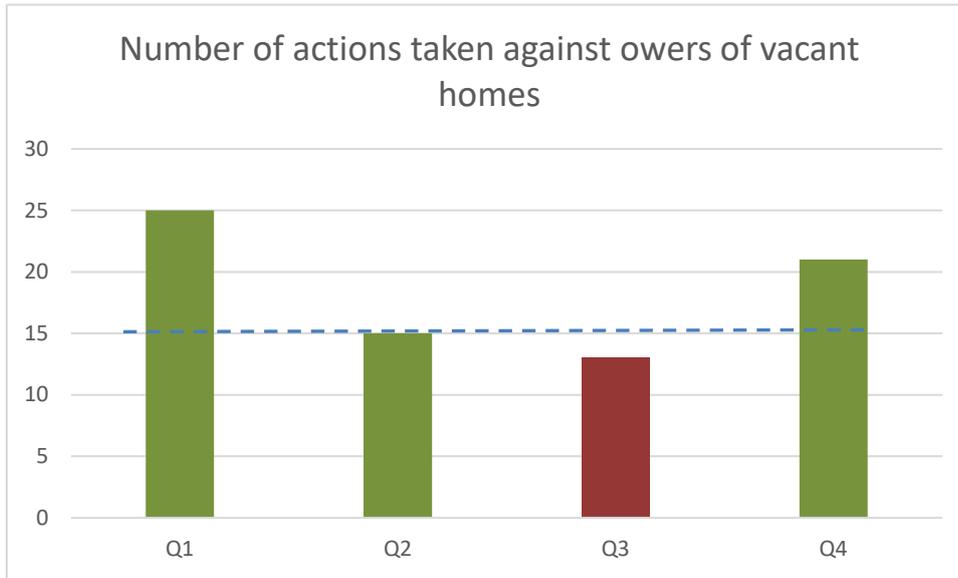
### Housing

#### Number of Landlord Licenses Issued



1,010 Private Landlords registered on Sefton’s Accreditation scheme in 23/24. 158% above the 640 annual registration target. This figure is not benchmarked against other LAs, as not all LAs run schemes and if they do, they vary in size. The target was set to be reasonable and achievable within staff resources.

## Vacant Homes

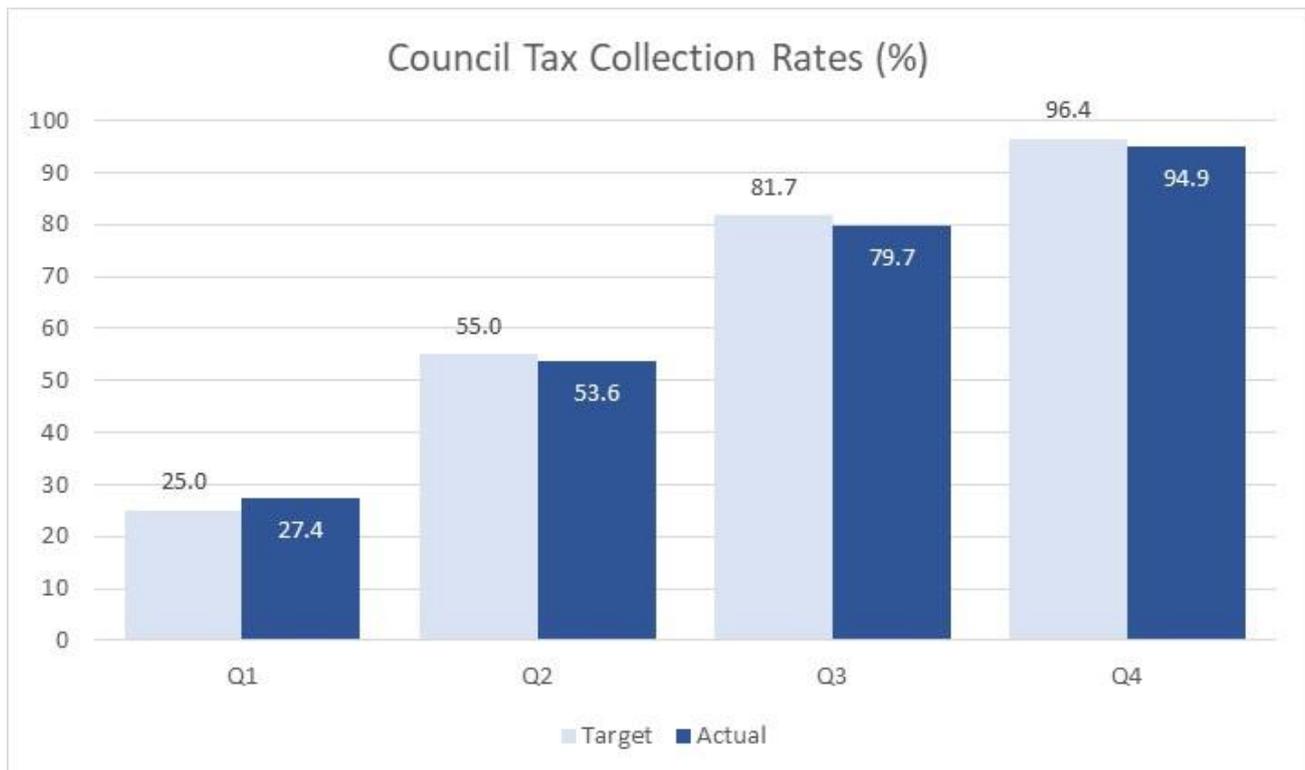


Local target is 15 per quarter.

74 actions taken against owners of vacant homes in 23/24. Above annual target of 60 actions taken.

**Working for Our Communities Every Day – “Working together to deliver affordable services which achieve the best possible outcomes for our communities.”**

## Council Tax



Council Tax collection is currently volatile across the country however the position in Sefton has remained stable over the last 18 months. The Q4 position shows a slight adverse variance against target. Targets reflect previous collection rates, although it should be noted that the targets are higher than the rates achieved during 2022/23. It should be noted that collection performance for Q4 2023/24 is indicative and will be confirmed by the end of June 2024 following publication of national collection data.

The Council will continue to benchmark itself against other Metropolitan Councils, including others in the Liverpool City Region using the annual Government published national collection data.

The Council continues to be pro-active in its management, engagement, collection, and enforcement activities. The Service is continually looking for ways to improve service delivery to ensure residents receiving timely, accurate bills so they know what they should pay when, e.g. increasing automation through use of technology to reduce delays, more web-based information and advice, thereby maintaining collection performance.

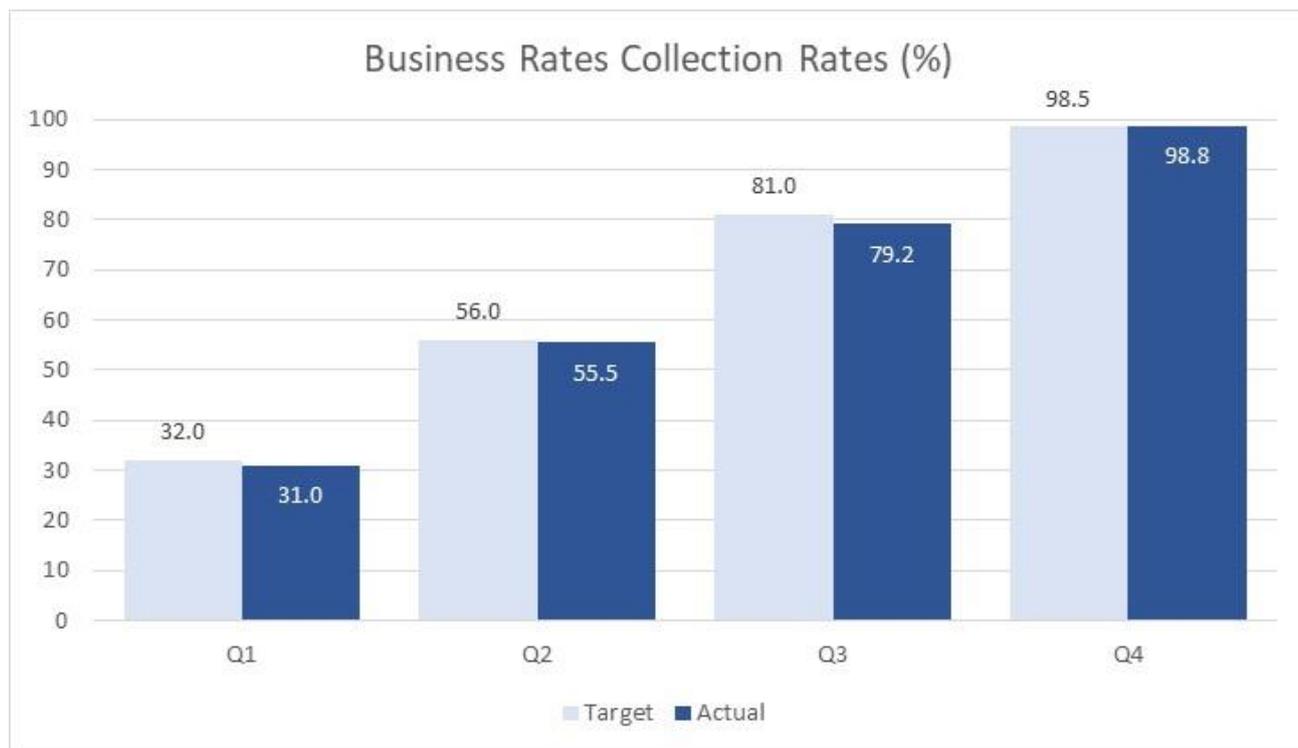
## Business Rates

Business Rates collection has met its target for Q4.

It should however be noted that the figure is indicative and will be confirmed by the end of June 2024 following publication of national collection data.

The Council will continue to benchmark itself against other Metropolitan Councils, including others in the Liverpool City Region using annual Government published national collection data.

As for Council Tax, the Council continues to be pro-active in its management, engagement, collection, and enforcement activities.



## Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme

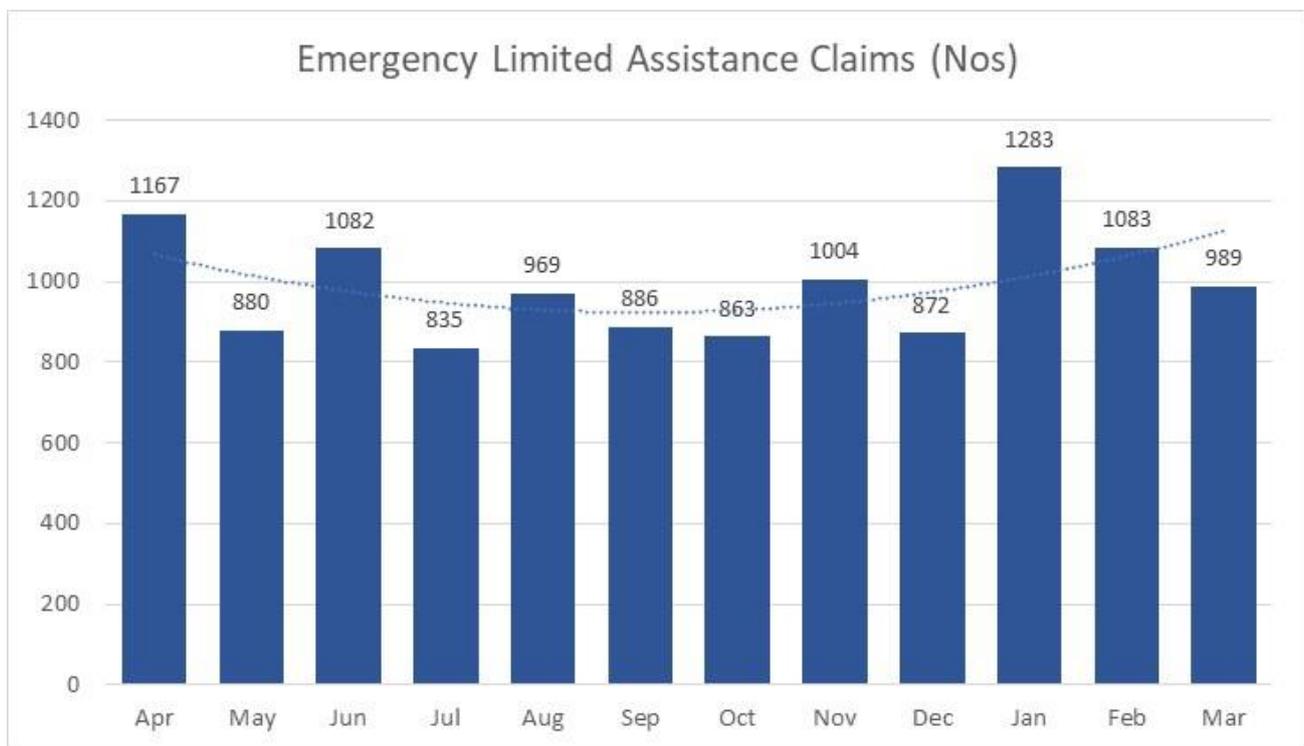
Many local authorities offer a form of local welfare assistance schemes (LWASs), also known as local welfare provision (LWP) or crisis support, where they may be able to help people secure items of furniture, as well as helping with other issues, such as debt advice, food, and fuel poverty. Most local authorities with a scheme only help with the most essential items such as a cooker, fridge/freezer, and bed. Some will also provide a washing machine, sofa, and wardrobe. Many schemes also provide other support beyond furniture, such as help with utility bills and food. Not all councils have these schemes, and some do not provide help with furniture and white goods, which can make benchmarking (demand, volume, core funding and offer) against other local authorities challenging. However, Sefton does collaborate with other local authorities across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) to ensure consistency in provision, share best practice and informing the universal offer across the Merseyside geography. Although the schemes across the LCR are all different, they all have similar application processes, and despite the difference in volumes, the seasonal volumes in demand for support follow a similar pattern.

Sefton's Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme (ELAS) is well established and continues to support local people experiencing severe hardship, a disaster or emergency. Consistently

since 2013, the local authority has responded to more than 10,000 applications per annum. In Q4 there were over 3,300 applications for support, and by the end of Q4 the number of applications received in the year 2023/24 is 11,913 to the end March 2024 compared to 15,978 received at the same point last year. However, the relative fall in demand is attributed to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Open Access Household Support Fund (HSF) providing some applicants with an alternative route for support rather than ELAS.

In respect of the ELAS scheme, there have been 4,180 food vouchers provided, compared to 5,206 provided at the same point last year and there have been 5,329 utility awards, down on the 8,111 the previous year.

The second phase of the Open Access HSF scheme was live from April 2023 through to February 2024 when it was agreed that it should close to new applicants as funding was exhausted. In total 11,500 applications were received with £1.7 Million spent/committed through the Post Office Pay Out Service.



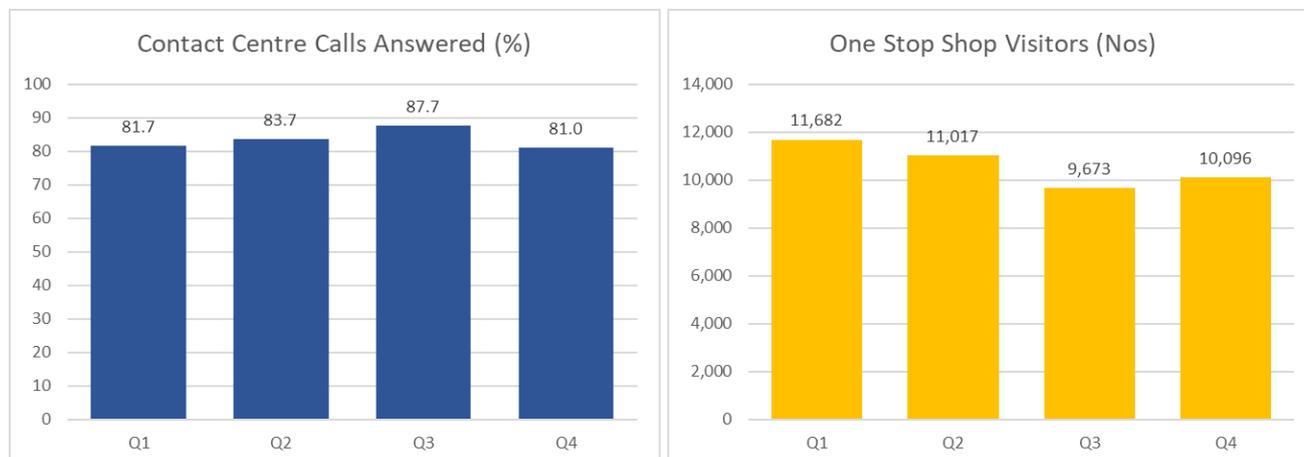
## Customer Services

Customer Services experienced a high volume of calls into the Contact Centre and visits to the One Stop Shops throughout Q4 – especially during March following the dispatch of annual Council Tax bills for 2024/25. In addition, the resumption of the green bin collections started in early March, however there was some confusion with calendar dates displayed online. While this was quickly rectified, the Contact Centre did have to deal with a steady influx of calls. A message confirming the correct collection dates was then prepared and relayed to customers, helping to reduce call volumes.

The exceptionally wet winter weather has also resulted in areas of flooding across the borough, impacting on cleansing crews unable to drive through roads to make daily bin

collections. There were also various reports of outage of lights around Bridle Road and Switch Island with families not having access to any electricity for a number of hours.

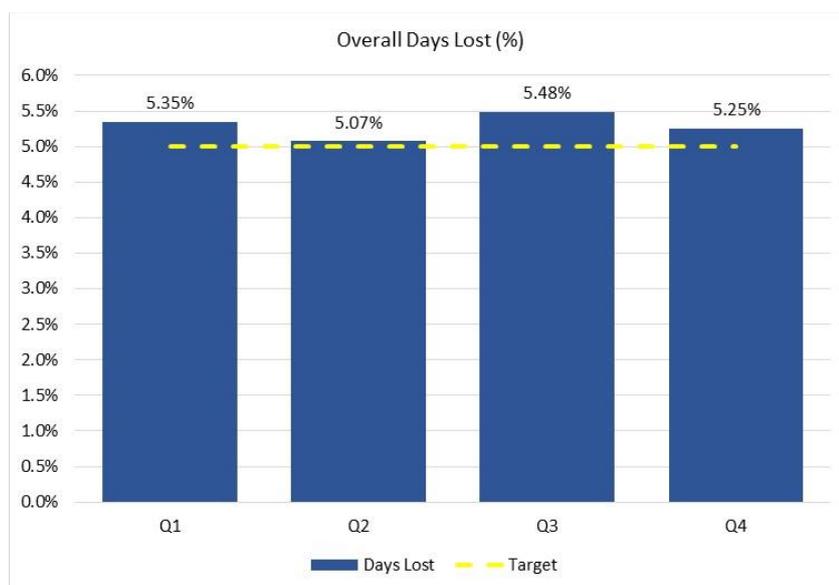
One Stop Shops continue to manage a high volume of enquiries for Taxi-Licensing, Council Tax, and benefits/ financial support as well as general Council related information and advice.



## Sickness Absence

Different local authorities use different methodologies for calculating sickness absence, making it challenging to benchmark and directly compare performance across local authorities in England.

The Office for National Statistics Sickness absence in the UK labour market: 2022, reported that the average sickness absence rate (the percentage of working hours lost because of sickness or injury) in the UK labour market was 2.6%. In the same period sickness absence rates of NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS) staff working in NHS Trusts and other core organisations and NHS Support Organisations and Central Bodies was 4.9%, dropping to 4.5% in April 2023, but 5.4% in the Northwest region.

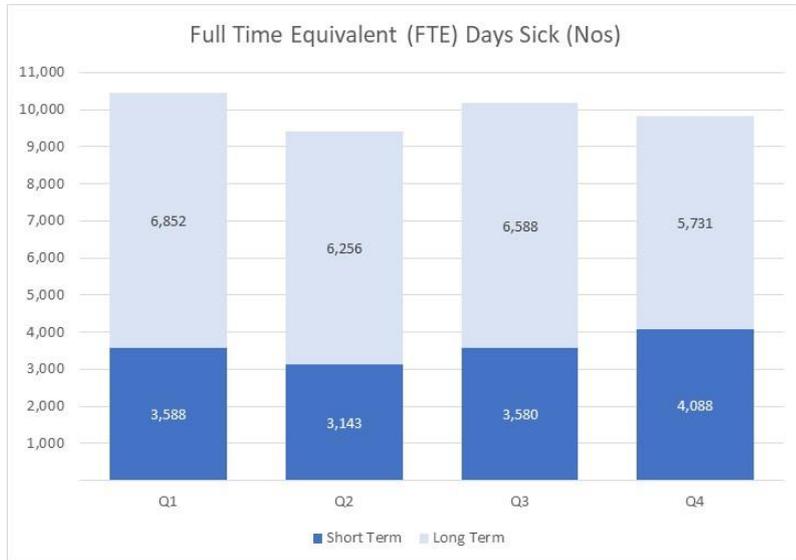
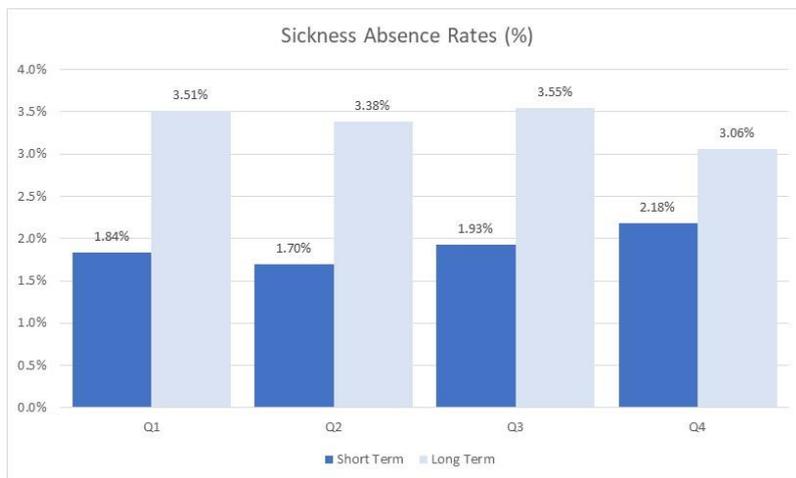


The current overall sickness absence target of 4% for the local authority is indicative, aiding to monitor levels on a quarterly and annual basis across the workforce, and there are naturally

differences in expected sickness levels in individual services, affected by the nature of work in those service areas. An annual target of 5% for 2023/24 could be more realistic baseline considering the external evidence and data.

Short term sickness absence is defined as 20 days or under, and long terms as over 20 days. The calculation for sickness absence is Total Days Sick / Total FTE Days available in a period.

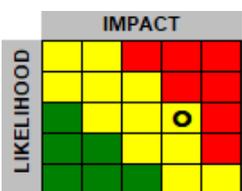
At Q4 the short term sickness absence rate was higher than the previous three quarters. However, this was offset by Q4 also representing the lowest proportion of long-term sickness over the last year.



The Council continues to monitor sickness absence and work with employees to ensure a healthy return to work. In response to the levels of sickness absence each service and the Executive leadership team receive regular, detailed information about short-term, long-term, and overall sickness absence levels, including information about the groups with highest sickness absence rates, and ranked reasons for sickness absence. Managers are routinely provided with clear guidance and support as to how staff can be supported, including the increasing offer of wellbeing assistance programmes for all staff, plus the consistent application of the process to be followed to maximise that support and reduce sickness absence, which should lead to increased attendance and improved performance.

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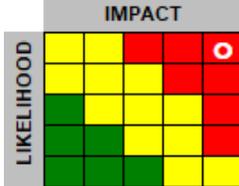
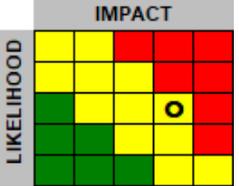
**Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024**

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><b>Causes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Needs budgets are under considerable pressure from increasing numbers of children being diagnosed with complex and life-long SEND related issues.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• The current accounting override whereby the HNF deficit is ringfenced will continue until April 2026, but the increasing accumulative deficit poses a significant financial risk to the council</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Result</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton's High Needs cumulative budget deficit is expected to rise to £35m at the end of 23/24</li> <li>• The estimated deficit on the high needs block continues to be held on the Council's Balance Sheet. Whilst the current DfE regulations do not expect the Local Authority's General Fund to cover accumulated deficits, this is still only on a temporary basis until 2026. The council does not have the reserves or balances to meet this deficit if required in 2026 hence the threat to financial sustainability</li> <li>• This is a significant risk to the council and quarterly monitoring statements will continue to be reported to cabinet and council</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Current treatment and controls</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quarterly reporting to Cabinet and Council should focus on the work program that seeks to improve the support to children, the demand for the service and the financial forecast- it should also take full account of the progress in the DFEE led Delivering Better Value Programme.</li> <li>• Leadership from Sefton's Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education, Assistant Head of Education and the SEN team Managers on how costs can be contained.</li> <li>• Sufficiency statement produced that will drive future strategy and financial sustainability.</li> <li>• Lobbying and engagement of both DfE and MCCLG on financial impact and the need for increased support or confirmation that this will continue to be a DSG issue post 2026</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Review of place and top up levels of funding.</li> </ul>		

**Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Council now part of DfE Delivering Better Value Program-it should be noted however that this is focused on the system and not on delivering financial sustainability therefore the council cannot rely on this programme to meet its key financial objective</li> <li>• Comprehensive quarterly reports to be presented to Cabinet and Council on sufficiency, in house provision, funding and deficit to provide rigor, transparency and inform decision making</li> </ul>
<p><b>Risk owner</b></p>	<p>Assistant Director of Education</p>
<p><b>Proposed actions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the High Needs Review the LA has been working on two specific workstreams with School representatives working on a number of key areas:</li> <li>• Developing a new funding model to support children with EHCPs.</li> <li>• Clarifying high needs funding outside of the EHCP process.</li> <li>• Reviewing provision and placement sufficiency.</li> <li>• Considering new ways of working with SEN children in schools, making them more cost effective and with good outcomes.</li> <li>• Review of the graduated response and supporting SEN leadership in schools.</li> <li>• Sefton has been working in partnership with the DfE since December 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.</li> <li>• The sign off of the High Needs Deficit action plan through the Delivering Better Value Programme was conducted in summer 2023 with a work programme of planned improvements and changes in SEN support for HN children commencing from September 2023.</li> </ul>

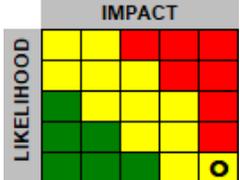
**Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024**

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Financial sustainability beyond 2023/24.			
<b>Causes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The national economy, taking into account inflation and direct government funding which has been reflected in the financial settlement for 2023/24 and planning assumptions for 2024/25 and the demand for services will place substantial strain on the Council's overall medium-term budget.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>The impact on the financial sustainability of the Council is therefore a key risk.</li> </ul>		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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 for the next 3 year period 2024/25 to 2026/27.</li> <li>The Budget reductions could have an adverse impact on residents and communities.</li> <li>The reputation of the Council may be compromised.</li> <li>Financial sustainability could be compromised.</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council set a budget for 2024/25 at its meeting on 29 February 2024. Substantial investment has been made into ASC, CSC and Home to School Transport as part of this and this is where the financial risk exists- robust financial management and monitoring will be required for the delivery of the budget within this approved budget. If there are any variations to the approved budget remedial plans will need to be put in place. The Council does have an appropriate level of general fund reserves however these do not offer the scope to address a budget gap similar to that experienced in 22/23 or 23/24, indeed there is no scope to support an overspend from reserves at all</li> <li>Within that budget report the key issues that need to be addressed within the next MTFP are identified and work will commence from May on refining these assumptions and the potential budget gap for these next 3 years- this will be reported in a revised MTFP that will submitted to Cabinet and Council in September- work will then commence on bridging this gap as part of the agreed budget planning timetable. This is key to the financial sustainability of the Council with the key risks remaining in Adult Social Care and Children's Services- these have been mitigated for in 24/25 by all budget assumptions having been agreed with the DASS and DCS but that risk remains</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	ED CR&CS		

## Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Key financial risk for 2024/25 is delivery of savings within Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care delivering services within the budget agreed with DCS - regular and rigorous financial management, monitoring and reporting is required by SLB</li><li>•SLB will commence work on the 3 year budget plan for 2025/26 to 2027/28 and an updated MTFP will be presented to Cabinet in September 2024</li></ul>
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Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

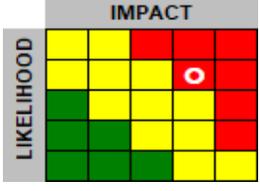
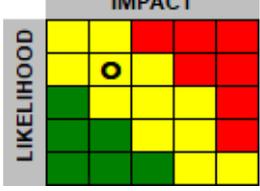
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
The Council is the victim of a cyber-attack.			
<b>Causes</b>	Malware, ransomware, or another virus infects the Council's systems.		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services will not have access to systems and data as standard and will have to fall back on non-ICT delivery methods, albeit without access to key data.</li> <li>• Data breach occurs.</li> <li>• Financial impact of ransom.</li> <li>• Reputational damage</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyberattack prevention measures are in place, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ - Upgraded Council firewalls and active SIEM monitoring service.</li> <li>○ - Anti malware tools</li> <li>○ - Acceptable use policy updated annually</li> <li>○ - LGA Stocktake completed/Cyber 360 completed</li> <li>○ - PSN Accreditation achieved and reviewed annually</li> <li>○ - New security standards for email encryption implemented</li> <li>○ - Further network security in place to reduce risk</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Back-up disaster recovery facility is in place at a separate site, for both cloud based and on premises systems</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Ongoing monitoring in in place via ICT governance arrangements</li> <li>• Anti-virus software is constantly updated across the estate.</li> <li>• Communication to employees regarding the rise in malware attacks is in place, with an enhanced training offer in place.</li> <li>• Review of Cyber Incident planning completed and revised policy released.</li> <li>• Removal of unsupported systems from the network and segregation in place as required and work completed to bring all services into scope of the support contract.</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	ED CR&CS		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ongoing ICT Transformation programme has seen most 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.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing Cyber Security Improvement plan in place.</li><li>• External validation and assurance ongoing linked to improvement plan.</li></ul>
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**Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024**

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>			
<b>Causes</b>	A major incident occurs affecting the Council or the Borough		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of human life, illness, or serious injury</li> <li>• Major damage or destruction to infrastructure, property and/or the environment</li> <li>• Disruption or loss of critical services such as transport, communications, utility services</li> <li>• Reputational or financial harm to the authority</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Response Manual and Major Incident Guidance in place.</li> <li>• Revised Command and Control structure in place which defines Strategic and Tactical level officers.</li> <li>• Emergency Duty Co-ordinators (EDCs) are able to access Resilience Direct containing incident response plans.</li> <li>• Relevant training provided to Emergency Duty Co-ordinators and volunteers on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Five EDCs have now completed Multi Agency Gold Incident Commander (MAGIC) accredited training.</li> <li>• Attendance and participation in Merseyside Resilience Forum and joint planning across Merseyside.</li> <li>• Humanitarian volunteers in place and regular meetings and training now offered.</li> <li>• Continuous development and review of supporting plans.</li> <li>• Service Level Business Continuity plans now completed. Business Continuity eLearning package available to all staff</li> <li>• Business Continuity risk register completed and review on quarterly basis</li> <li>• Business Continuity Policy and strategy have been devised and approved.</li> <li>• BC exercises completed in January 2023 and March 2024 for Senior Leadership Board</li> <li>• Corporate BC plan drafted and endorsed by ELT in January 2024</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	CEX/ED CR&CS		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Business Continuity Management System has been devised and is currently being implemented. This includes the following:</li> <li>• Six monthly review of BC plans and activation exercise undertaken to confirm accuracy of contact details included.</li> <li>• External provider to continually provide support in hosting regular BC exercises for all Exec/Assistant Directors.</li> <li>• Review and update of BC manual ongoing</li> </ul>		

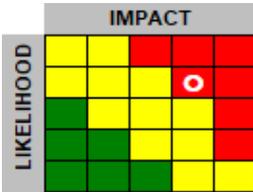
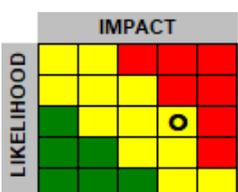
Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Market Failure of Social Care Provision across Adults and Children's			
<b>Causes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Workforce</b> - Capability and capacity of the available workforce to provide domiciliary care and within the care home market</li> <li>• <b>Strategic</b> - Lack of diversity of supply in the market to provide choice and control. COVID legacy effect on Market.</li> </ul>		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Legal</b> -Inability to provide packages of care for service users and fulfil statutory duty of care and sufficiency duty.</li> <li>• <b>Strategic</b> - Lack of alternative providers able to support social care. Increase in placing young people within Borough, by other LAs placing additional pressure on ASC markets linked to transitions</li> <li>• <b>Operational and Financial</b> - Poor quality service provision and high costs. Significant increase in unmet needs of service users due to a fragile market that is not developing</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic</b> - Market Position Statement and refresh of Children's Sufficiency strategy 22-25 allows market management. Strengthen governance via actions and oversight of Executive Commissioning Group/Strategic Commissioning Group. Strategic Commissioning Team more permanent capacity to increase resource. Implementation of Commissioning priorities improvement plan. Delivery of Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025. Implementation of robust and timely Winter Planning/checklist. Regular review of supply chain contracts. Demand Management Programme embedded in adults and children's. Mitigation of market failure by block purchasing arrangements to support hospital discharge. CQC Assurance preparation. Provider Failure Policy updated, regular Cost of Care exercises and Market Engagement Strategies in production to focus on relationship based market management.</li> <li>• <b>Operational</b> - Recommissioning of Local Dynamic Purchasing system for Domiciliary Care. Weekly escalation/ visibility of capacity and costs with AD, DASS and wider system. Maximising learning opportunities across C&amp;M DASS group with key areas of focus.</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	DCS/DASCH		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Operational</b> - Strengthened oversight of Quality Assurance (QA) with dedicated Senior Manager support will add the ability to refocus QA resources on identified areas of Market Risk.</li> <li>• <b>Strategic</b> - Continue to focus on strategic plans to current contracts to ensure Value for Money and objectives are met. Gather intelligence to inform risks and ensure resilience and capacity. Development of new opportunities through Sefton Place Based Partnership development. Children's High Risk/High-Cost Project, Commissioning priorities and full work plan. Recruitment campaign developed with Market with ongoing input from Sefton at Work - Workforce Strategy now developed, and subsequent Market Sustainability Plan roll out 2023/24. Work includes use of International Recruitment funding to be allocated to Providers. Links maintained with LCR on key market risks (capacity, workforce, cost of living, ceasing of covid funding, demand). New Procurement for Domiciliary Care completed. Integrated commission</li> </ul>		

## Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

	<p>arrangements will develop via new place arrangement. Market Sustainability Plan and Fair Cost of Care Exercise to be sent to Central Government mid Oct. National Government Market Sustainability funding applied to Dom Care and Care Homes 65+. Discharge funding now recurrent through the Better Care Fund. Work continues to mobilise a rapid reablement expansion. Linked to ND review. Work jointly with Health to develop approach to reduction of one to one requests. Cost of Care / fee setting work for 2024/25 is commencing, including Care Analytics being commissioned to support with 2024/25 fee setting work, including analysis of impacts of implementing RLW across all ASC sectors. SOP for fee setting in place. Presentation to A&amp;CG by DASS on risk 20 March 2024.</p>
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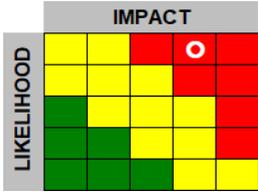
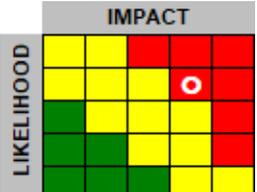
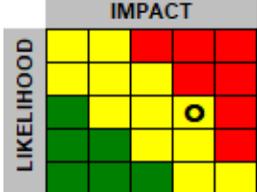
Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

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			
<b>Causes</b>	<p>Increasing expenditure is being driven by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rising number of children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• The rising cost of fuel and living.</li> <li>• Driver and escort shortages, competing for scarce resources.</li> <li>• Parental choice</li> </ul>		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply unable to match demand.</li> <li>• Increased waiting times for service users, impact on school attendance</li> <li>• Financial and reputational risks, financial sustainability of Council could be compromised, Budget pressure cannot be contained.</li> <li>• Capacity of the workforce to meet this demand.</li> <li>• Potential for poor service delivery</li> <li>• Negative socio-economic impact.</li> <li>• High level of media and public interest in the Council's actions</li> <li>• Loss of reputation</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive review of all systems, procedures and contractual arrangements and structures in relation to Home to School Transport has been launched by the council- this is an internal review that will aim to develop a sustainable model that supports children in the Borough</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	Assistant Director of Education		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outcome of the comprehensive review of the system has commenced inc reviewing all commercial arrangements, key cost drivers and all decisions that impact cost over the next 6-9 months is the key activity currently being undertaken.</li> </ul>		

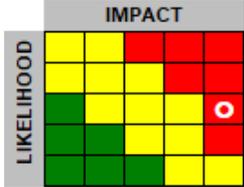
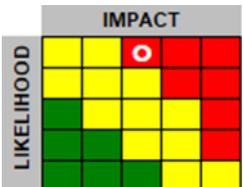
Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Children’s Services - Impact of Regulatory Framework Outcomes			
<b>Causes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council’s Children’s Services are currently rated as Inadequate. As a result, the council is currently delivering its improvement with the support of a Commissioner and DfE advisor.</li> </ul>		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social work practice does not meet the standard required.</li> <li>Services are found to not adequately safeguard children.</li> <li>Reputational damage to the Council and Statutory partners</li> <li>Loss of confidence in partnership arrangements</li> <li>Workforce and financial pressures develop.</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement board established under DfE improvement notice.</li> <li>DfE Advisor supporting Improvement Programme</li> <li>Regular reports to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</li> <li>Self-evaluation has been refreshed and updated.</li> <li>Comprehensive Performance dashboard developed based on required specification</li> <li>Quality Assurance Framework in place</li> <li>Practice Standards in place</li> <li>Triangulation of evidence through audit and peer review, regular auditing, and monitoring of performance.</li> <li>Workforce strategy in place and delivering skilled and stable workforce.</li> <li>Financial plan in place based on DCS requirement.</li> <li>Accommodation in place for consolidated service.</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	DCS		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role of Improvement Board to provide oversight, guidance and support will continue and will meet bi-monthly.</li> <li>The council will continue to progress the delivery of recommendations made by Children’s Commissioner and the Improvement plan.</li> <li>Report progress and risks to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee each cycle in addition to Improvement Board.</li> </ul>		

Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

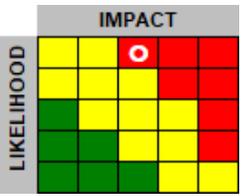
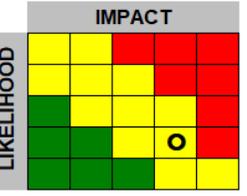
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
Increase in academisation of schools within the borough			
<b>Causes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Agenda</li> <li>DfE sponsored academies for schools in a category.</li> <li>Instability within LA</li> <li>Liverpool Diocese supporting academisation</li> </ul>		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential loss of SLA income</li> <li>Potential loss of LA ability to monitor educational standards.</li> <li>Overall effect on services will mean loss of services and jobs.</li> <li>Impact of timescales between notification of academy order and timing of Cabinet meetings</li> <li>Academisation of Rowan Park (removal of mobile classroom) may result in reallocation of 43 SEN children</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EE team continue to review offer.</li> <li>Engaging with academies to encourage purchase of SLAs.</li> <li>Promote "Sefton Family of Schools" image- working party established to support schools with decision making and to ensure compliance with academies act</li> <li>Review of traded services offer to all schools and academies</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	Assistant Director of Education		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many of the decisions on academisation are out of council control</li> <li>Individual service areas continue to make attractive and robust SLA offers</li> <li>Work being undertaken (April 24) to understand financial impact of current and proposed transfers and how this impacts operating model of council. This will determine impact on MTFP</li> </ul>		

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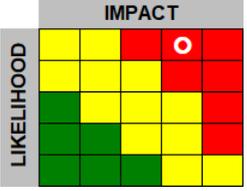
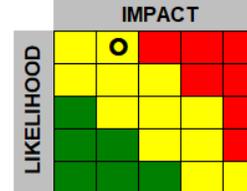
Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Failure to Comply with Sections 1 and 10 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000</p>			
<p><b>Causes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person requesting information from a public authority has a right, subject to exemptions, to be informed by the public authority in writing whether it holds the information, and to have that communicated to him, if the public authority holds it (section 1 of The Freedom of Information Act 2000). Section 10(1) specifies that public authorities must respond to requests within 20 working days.</li> <li>• A public authority which fails to comply with any of the requirements of Part I of the FOIA, may be served with a notice by the Information Commissioner (referred to as an ‘enforcement notice’) requiring the authority ‘to take within such time as may be specified in the notice, such steps as may be so specified for complying with those requirements’ (section 52(1)).</li> <li>• Compliance performance levels differ across the Council, due to the demands on particular service areas. Consistency is required in terms of prioritising responses to FOIA requests so that the Council ensures it responds to requests in a timely way.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Result</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to comply with legal requirements; enforcement action by the Information Commissioner’s Office, damage to Council’s reputation; loss of public confidence, diversion of resource and financial consequences</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Current treatment and controls</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information management and governance, including compliance with the Freedom of Information Act is overseen by the Information Management and Governance Executive Group (IMGEG), which consists of officers with lead responsibilities for key aspects of information compliance (i.e. Data Protection Officer/IG Lead, Senior Information Risk Owner and Chief Legal and Democratic Officer) supported by other officers with key roles relating to IMG.</li> <li>• Each service is responsible for the handling and management of FOIA requests made to their respective service area.</li> <li>• Each service has designated Information Asset Owners and Information Asset Administrators. Policies, procedures, processes and issues are communicated to these officers through the Information Management and Governance Operational Group.</li> <li>• Support, co-ordination, advice and guidance is provided corporately.</li> <li>• The Council has implemented policies, procedures and processes to assist the management of FOIA requests made to the Council.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Risk owner</b></p>	<p>CEX</p>		

<p><b>Proposed actions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SLB to continue to ensure appropriate resourcing, prioritisation and focus on information management and governance across the Council include the following:</li><li>• Monthly reports continue to be sent to Heads of Service with lists of any outstanding FOIA requests, to ensure appropriate action across their service.</li><li>• Monthly monitoring and review by IMG EG of compliance with statutory timescales associated with requests and numbers outstanding.</li><li>• Set targets to ensure compliance with ICO recommendations (95% or more of requests are responded to within 20 working days = good, 90 to 95% of requests are responded to within 20 working days = adequate, fewer than 90% = unsatisfactory).</li><li>• Regular reporting by IMG EG to SLB and Audit and Governance Committee, as necessary, as to the Council's compliance with the FOIA. Compliance statistics to be published on a monthly basis on the Council's website. Q1 statistics will be available at the end of June 2024.</li><li>• Maximise the opportunities from the Council's ICT Transformation to increase and embed effective information management and governance.</li></ul>
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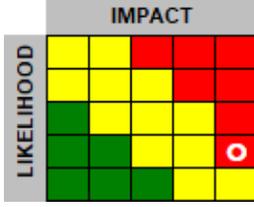
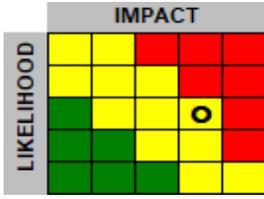
## Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Non achievement of our aim and ambition to secure the best outcome from a CQC assessment, against current local pressures and demands.</p>			
<b>Causes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic</b> - not having in place the right workforce targeted skills, experience and resources to deliver such a significant programme of change, that delivers the best outcomes for Sefton residents.</li> <li>• <b>Workforce</b> - insufficient resources and skills to effectively and responsively meet local demand and pressures across ASC.</li> </ul>		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reputational</b> - CQC rating for the Council will reflect requiring improvement or inadequate impacts across market, residents and partners.</li> <li>• <b>Operational</b> - Unsatisfactory outcomes for individuals/Carers identified, impacting people who access/use services.</li> <li>• <b>Legal</b> - ASC deemed not be effectively discharging statutory duties in one or more areas of the assurance framework and under Care Act duties and obligations with potential SOS intervention.</li> <li>• <b>Workforce</b> - Impact on recruitment and retention of staff, with service disruption.</li> <li>• <b>Financial</b> - Impact of 'new' regulation additional pressures on ASC budget.</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic</b> - Executive Assurance Board (EAB) and ELT monitoring and reporting. O&amp;S reporting. Part 1 Codesigned CQC SA completed. Recent Check and Challenge Session held with LGA following last Peer review which has informed transformation programme for 24/25. Other plans in place include HR and Learning Resource, Comms and Marketing Resource, Sefton Safeguarding Board, Workforce Plans. Health and Social Care, Community Partners Continued Engagement in Place. National and Regional ADASS meetings and ADASS/LGA Guide application.</li> <li>• <b>Financial</b> - Budget setting, and transformation reporting and monitoring.</li> <li>• <b>Operational</b> - ASC Operational Assurance Groups and actions reporting to ELT, EAB and SMT. Practice Forums, Let's Chat, LGA to Peer Review Safeguarding (Jan 24) . C&amp;M Assurance Lead Workshops and Learning. Met with Oldham MBC to review best learning from recommendations from LGA.</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk owner</b>	Executive Director of Adult Social Care (ASC) and Health (DASS)		
<b>Proposed actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strategic</b>- New transformation programme has been identified and signed off for 24/25 for market transformation, professional practice and workforce- links to assurance self assessment.</li> <li>• <b>Governance</b> - Review of current EAB. Consideration/ implementation of an ASC Quality and Improvement Board. CQC Risk Reporting Framework across operational services regarding (Is it Safe, Effective, Responsive, Caring and Well-Led. Completion of Quality Statements and Local Account.</li> <li>• <b>Resources</b> - Identify corporate strategic resources to support 12 month work programme</li> <li>• <b>Data Reporting and Monitoring</b> - Review CQC Outcomes Data, ELT reporting and ensure are robust. Further Review of Dashboard of waiting list dashboard to support strengthen real time oversight for Exec Director</li> </ul>		

Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Ability of the Council to Recruit to its Workforce in order to Deliver its Core Purpose.</p>			
<b>Causes</b>	Due to the contraction of the labour market both nationally and locally the council cannot recruit sufficiently skilled staff in order to meet business need		
<b>Result</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council does not have the capacity to deliver the services it needs to at the pace or standard required.</li> <li>Due to the contraction in the market the council cannot recruit to key roles - over the past 12 months this has been evident in Social Care, Regeneration, Procurement, Performance, Property and Finance</li> <li>Such a scenario places increased pressure on the workforce that cannot be maintained over the long term.</li> <li>In addition to the lack of candidates in the market seeking permanent employment and a reduction in availability of temporary or agency staff, the cost of bringing in temporary cover is increasing exponentially this creating budget pressure</li> </ul>		
<b>Current treatment and controls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council's approach to recruitment and retention has been and will continually be the subject of review. This is a key theme within the recently approved workforce strategy and action plan.</li> <li>The Council is building on the success in some areas will seek to 'grow its own' workforce with the promotion of apprenticeships, the social worker academy and graduate programmes.</li> <li>The Council will seek to continually enhance its culture in order that staff remain in Sefton.</li> <li>The Council will work with Liverpool City Region Partners to recruit talent nationally and look at training and development programmes across the region that will be attractive to potential candidates</li> </ul>		
<b>Risk Owner</b>	ED CR&CS		
<b>Proposed Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The action plan for the workforce strategy details the key activities that will be undertaken to maximise the council's position in the workforce market.</li> <li>Extensive work has been undertaken within Childrens services over the last 18 months to ensure that a skilled and stable workforce can be recruited to and retained. This includes a full review of pay and benefits the development of the social worker academy and the recruitment of overseas social workers. this work will continue to support the service and similar activities and innovation will take place across the council.</li> <li>Work has commenced with Liverpool John Moore's University to determine how pathways can be opened for graduates to join the council both on interim placements and full-time employment.</li> </ul>		

**Appendix B - Corporate Risk Register June 2024**

Risk Description	Previous risk score	Current risk score	Target risk score
<p>Inability to deliver the Requirements and Commitments for the Growth Program and its Associated Projects</p>			
<p><b>Causes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required Capital and Revenue funding not available to deliver the projects for Economic Recovery and Growth. This can be due to unavailability or timing of funds available.</li> <li>• External pressures affecting the construction sector, leading to challenges to project deliverability, affordability or timescales. This includes inflationary cost pressures; 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.</li> <li>• Insufficient internal staffing resource, hindering effective and timely delivery.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Result</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased business failure</li> <li>• Reputational Damage especially on projects declared already in the public domain.</li> <li>• Increased unemployment</li> <li>• Financial and reputational risks to the Council</li> <li>• Impact on communities.</li> <li>• Loss of reputation</li> <li>• Impact of wider economic change on residents, particularly the most vulnerable</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Current treatment and controls</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth Programme and associated Governance and project controls.</li> <li>• Bid process and expertise applied to all existing and new funding opportunities.</li> <li>• Members approval and prioritisation of existing and new projects.</li> <li>• Constant and consistent evaluation and use of Growth Budget.</li> <li>• Opportunities in respect to Capital receipts from asset disposal.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Risk owner</b></p>	<p>ED Place</p>		
<p><b>Proposed actions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively pursue all additional funding available in timely and at the earliest opportunity.</li> <li>• Create and make available Bid Team focused on and challenged with successful bids.</li> <li>• Establish Project Review forums and reporting mechanisms for early visibility of reporting of project progress and any emerging issues - on a project-specific and programme-wide basis.</li> <li>• Proactive external engagement with construction sector and key partners (e.g. LCR CA) to ensure visibility and understanding of risks to the sector and potential mitigants.</li> <li>• Develop and implement procurement strategy to ensure sustained competition, robustness of process and suitable partners for project delivery - Currently being actioned.</li> <li>• Further refine and strengthen capital project planning, delivery and governance measures</li> </ul>		

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## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD7716/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD5816/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

The Council's external Treasury Management Advisors: Arlingclose have provided advice with regards to Treasury Management activities undertaken during the financial year.

### Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Cabinet decision.

Contact Officer:	Graham Hussey
Telephone Number:	0151 934 4100
Email Address:	Graham.Hussey@sefton.gov.uk

### Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

### Background Papers:

There are no background papers to this report

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# Agenda Item 14

## **Background Papers:**

There are no background papers.