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Sefton Council



MEETING: CABINET

DATE: Thursday 7th November, 2024

TIME: 10.00 a.m.

VENUE: Birkdale Room, Town Hall, Southport

DECISION MAKER: **CABINET**

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

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

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

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

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

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

A G E N D A

Items marked with an * involve key decisions

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Subject/Author(s)</u>	<u>Wards Affected</u>	
1	Apologies for Absence		
2	Declarations of Interest Members are requested at a meeting where a disclosable pecuniary interest or personal interest arises, which is not already included in their Register of Members' Interests, to declare any interests that relate to an item on the agenda. Where a Member discloses a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, he/she must withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest, except where he/she is permitted to remain as a result of a grant of a dispensation. Where a Member discloses a personal interest he/she must seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or staff member representing the Monitoring Officer to determine whether the Member should withdraw from the meeting room, including from the public gallery, during the whole consideration of any item of business in which he/she has an interest or whether the Member can remain in the meeting or remain in the meeting and vote on the relevant decision.		
3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting		(Pages 5 - 20)
	Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2024		
* 4	Housing Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism Report of the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director)	All Wards	(Pages 21 - 88)
* 5	Property Pool Plus Administration Procurement Report of the Assistant Director – Economic Growth and Housing	All Wards	(Pages 89 - 92)

* 6	Southport Eastern Access Scheme - Receipt of Capital Funding Report of the Assistant Director - Highways and Public Protection	Dukes; Kew; Norwood	(Pages 93 - 100)
* 7	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure - Receipt of Capital Funding Report of the Assistant Director - Highways and Public Protection	All Wards	(Pages 101 - 106)
* 8	Corporate Mobile Telephone Contract Re-Tender Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(Pages 107 - 110)
* 9	Q1 & Q2 (2024) Corporate Performance Report Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(To Follow)
* 10	Financial Management 2024/25 to 2027/28 - Revenue and Capital Budget Update 2024/25 – November Update Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(To Follow)
* 11	Financial Management 2024/25 to 2027/28 – Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2027/28 Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(To Follow)
* 12	Treasury Management Position to September 2024 Report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial	All Wards	(Pages 111 - 122)

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THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY, 16TH OCTOBER 2024. MINUTES NOD. 51 AND 52 (1) ARE NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL-IN".

CABINET

**MEETING HELD AT THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL, BOOTLE
ON THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER, 2024**

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

45. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkinson and Veidman.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Member	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Councillor Doyle	Minute No. 58 - Procurement of Temporary Accommodation	She is Chair of Bosco Society Ltd; a Trustee of New Start Homes; and a member of the Sefton Supported Housing Group – stayed in the room but took no part in the consideration of the item and did not vote thereon.

47. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

48. ADVOCACY SERVICES PROCUREMENT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director) seeking approval to complete a procurement exercise for Advocacy Services.

Decisions Made:

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That

- (1) approval be granted to commence a procurement exercise to establish new contracts from 1 April 2025 for the provision of advocacy services;
- (2) decisions on the inclusion of both Children's Service and Health advocacy services in the procurement exercise be delegated to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), in consultation with the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health, either as part of the original procurement exercise or throughout the duration of any new procurement framework established;
- (3) decisions on the commissioning / procurement framework model, tender evaluation criteria, contracting models, contract terms and conditions, and service specification to be applied to the procurement exercises, be delegated to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), in consultation with the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education (if the contracts are to include Children's Services advocacy services) and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health, throughout the duration of the procurement framework, and on the basis that they can be contained within existing and approved budget provision for such services;
- (4) contracts to be awarded for an initial contract term of three years with the option to further extend for a period of up to two years, (either as a single extension or via two separate twelve-month extensions) subject to satisfactory performance and demonstration of value for money of the successful supplier/s ,and the required budget being available, and that decisions on the awarding of the contracts, and any permitted extensions thereof, be delegated to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services (if the contracts are to include Children's Services advocacy services) and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health;
- (5) should it be identified during the contractual period that the contracts need to be increased in value to reflect increases in demand for advocacy services and to ensure that Sefton continues to meet its statutory obligations, then delegated authority be given to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), in consultation with the Executive Director of Children's Services (if the contracts are to include Children's

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Services advocacy services) and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health to approve any such increases, under the proviso that the additional expenditure can be met within existing budget provision, falls within the associated delegated authority to approve such an increase, and is in line with the applicable procurement regulations; and

- (6) the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), in consultation with Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health be authorised to implement a maximum 12-month extension to current Adult Social Care commissioned advocacy services contracts, should there be any delay to the procurement exercise and any new contractual arrangements commencing on 1 April 2025.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The rationale for the recommendations in the report had been formulated to ensure that a procurement exercise took place to secure ongoing delivery of Advocacy Services from 1 April 2025.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

49. SEFTON'S CARER SERVICES PROCUREMENT CONTRACT PROPOSAL

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director) outlining the recommended approach to the future commissioning arrangements for all age carers support and advice, currently provided by Sefton Carers Centre. The existing contract would expire in March 2025 and a new arrangement would need to be put in place. The report outlined the estimated number of carers and young carers within the Borough, together with the services offered by the Sefton Carers Centre. The report recommended a procurement exercise to award a 3-year contract award with opportunity to extend the contract subject to a formal review. This would allow support and advice for carers to be aligned to the Carers Strategy for Sefton and would enable the new service to provide longer term continuity to carers and respond to the needs of all carers of both children and adults in the Borough.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the commencement of a procurement exercise to extend and develop Sefton's Carer Service provision in Sefton that will be

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established for up to, and not more than, a five-year period, commencing in April 2025 (3 years +1 year+1 year), be approved; the total Local Authority budget for the contract from April 2025 to be £990,930 and additional Integrated Care Board (ICB) funding for 25/26 is anticipated to be £132,000;

- (2) decisions on the model for the new Carers Service provision, including the workforce strategy, service specification (including young carers service support and provision), quality and cost threshold, initial procurement and tender evaluation process, and any contract variations throughout the life of the new Carers Service provision to deal with any specific additional service delivery requirements be delegated to the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), and the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health,
- (3) contracts be awarded for an initial contract term of three years with the option to further extend for a period of up to two years, (either as a single extension or via two separate twelve-month extensions) subject to satisfactory performance and being able to demonstrate the achievement of value for money of the successful supplier/s and the required budget being available, and that decisions on the awarding of the contracts, and any permitted extensions thereof, be delegated to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health;
- (4) should it be identified during the contractual period that the contracts need to be increased in value to reflect increases in demand for carer services and to ensure that Sefton continues to meet its statutory obligations, then delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), in consultation with the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, and the and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health, to approve any such increases, under the proviso that the additional expenditure can be met within existing budget provision, falls within the associated delegated authority to approve such an increase, and is in line with the applicable procurement regulations;
- (5) throughout the life of the commissioned Carer Support Service provision, delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director), alongside the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education and in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care

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and Health, to make decisions on any amendments to its operation, so as to ensure that such decisions can be implemented in a timely manner and so that the provider is able to operate in a flexible way which addresses any emerging issues and supports wider work such as the further integration of Health and Children Social Care services with Adult Social Care; and

- (6) decisions regarding the pooling of any other funding between Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care and the Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board for Sefton, be delegated to the Executive Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing who is also the ICB Place Director for Sefton, in consultation with the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education and the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families and the Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care and Health.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To follow Sefton Council's procurement cycle to ensure that commissioning arrangements for the provision of a Carer Support and Advisory Service within Sefton were directed by Sefton, to meet its demographic requirements, were in place to meet the assessed needs of Sefton's residents, so that future decisions on commissioning and market management could be made in a timely manner and to put in place new contractual and service delivery arrangements which both sought to ensure market sustainability and reduced disruption to Service Users.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

1. Maintaining the status quo – The current provider arrangement was an extension of an Agreement, and a new contract was required that was robust and up to date in terms and conditions with defined and agreed contractual lifespan.

50. RE-PROCUREMENT OF THE KOOTH YOUNG PEOPLE'S ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICE.

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Public Health that sought approval:

1. To undertake a Direct Award under Process C of the Health Care Services Provider Selection Regime (PSR) 2023, including publication of a notice to make an award to the existing provider (as set out in schedule 3 PSR 2023) to Kooth PLC from 1 January 2025 for a core period of 3.25 years with the option to extend for a further 2 x 1-year periods, subject to satisfactory on-going performance and value for money being evidenced; and
2. To give delegated authority for the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Public Health and

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Wellbeing, to authorise and execute extensions to the contract within the terms of the Direct Award.

The report indicated that Direct Award Process C was a method under the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023 that allowed a relevant authority to award a new contract to an existing provider when an existing contract was due to expire, and the existing provider was satisfying the existing contract and likely to satisfy the new contract.

The following appendix was attached to the report:

- Health Equity Assessment Tool

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the Director of Public Health, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member - Public Health and Wellbeing, be authorised to make a Direct Award to Kooth PLC from 1st January 2025 for the provision of low-level online mental health support under Process C of the Provider Selection Regime. Advice has been taken from Procurement colleagues and a procurement evaluation exercise has been carried out and concluded to ensure Kooth is demonstrating satisfactory on-going performance and value for money; and
- (2) the Director of Public Health, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member - Public Health and Wellbeing, be authorised to exercise any extension options within the terms of the Direct Award.

Reasons for the Decisions:

1. The current contracts would expire on 31 December 2024.
2. The existing provider, Kooth PLC, was satisfying the original contract and was likely to satisfy the proposed new contract meeting the selection criteria for Direct Award Process C.
3. Assurance of satisfactory performance was evidenced against the five key criteria for assessing provider eligibility under Direct Award Process C:
 - Quality and innovation
 - Value
 - Integration, collaboration, and service sustainability.
 - Improving Access, reducing health inequalities, and facilitating choice.

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- Social Value

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

1. Direct Award Process A – while the service required highly specialist trained staff and digital infrastructure which limited the number of providers able to provide the required services, it was not considered that the existing provider was the only capable provider and the Council was not concluding a framework agreement. Therefore, Direct Award Process A was not appropriate.
2. Direct Award Process B – it was not a contracting arrangement where people had a choice of providers, nor where the number of providers were restricted by the authority. Therefore, Direct Award Process B was not appropriate.
3. Most suitable provider process – where the relevant authority was able to identify the most suitable provider, this option might be considered without running a complete process. This process was not required as the existing provider met the criteria for Direct award process C. Therefore, most suitable provider process was not appropriate.
4. Competitive Process – The local authority was satisfied with the service that Kooth PLC provided and did not wish to undertake a competitive tender commissioning exercise when this would likely result in very little interest and potentially result in service instability.
5. To not re-commission the Kooth service – this option was rejected as it opened the Council to reputational risk and would create a gap in the continuity of care that was currently offered to children and young people.

51. PROCUREMENT OF A TEMPORARY PACKAGE OF CARE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education seeking approval to re-procure an existing care and support package for a child for up to a period of 6 months, to allow time to conduct a procurement to identify longer term care and support. The procurement exercise would call off the Pseudo Dynamic Purchasing System (PDPS) which had been approved for the Liverpool City Region. The report indicated that the current contract would expire on 12 October 2024 and also sought permission to procure longer term care and support for the child.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools and

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Families, be delegated the authority to conduct a procurement exercise for an individual package of care and enter a contract with the selected provider for a maximum period of 6 months (until the end of the 2024/25 financial year) with an annual value of up to £811,200 whilst longer term arrangements are procured; this care and support arrangement is jointly funded between Sefton Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB Sefton Place who will be party to the procurement exercise;

- (2) any inflation or additional costs relating to the lifetime of the 6-month contract and the longer term 3-year contract which will follow be delegated to the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Children Schools and Families, within financial standing orders and within the current scheme of delegation;
- (3) the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Children Schools and Families, be granted delegated authority to award the contract resulting from the procurement exercise outlined above and the procurement of the long-term care, with Cheshire and Merseyside ICB party to the decision-making relating to this procurement;
- (4) the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Children Schools and Families, be delegated authority to enter longer term contracting arrangements of up to 3 years with Cheshire and Merseyside ICB for the care and support for the child; the Executive Director - Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing (Place Director) and the Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Health and Deputy Leader to be consulted in respect of the longer-term arrangements leading to the transition to adult services;
- (5) the Executive Director - Children's Social Care and Education be delegated authority to identify another provider should the care break down over the life of the contract; and

Rule 46

- (6) it be noted that the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) had given their consent under Rule 46 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules for this decision to be treated as urgent and not subject to "call in" on the basis that it would result in the breach of Public Contracts Regulations 2015, as the call-in period would delay the commencement of the re-procurement.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The recommended proposal would ensure that:

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- (1) The Council carried out its duty in relation to cared for children under the Children Act 1989, to ensure they were safeguarded and welfare promoted.
- (2) It would allow adequate care support to be in place while an appropriate, longer-term placement was sought, in consultation with Adult Social Care.
- (3) The Council's spend was compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations following the expiration of the current waiver on 12 October 2024.
- (4) The re-procurement activity provided the opportunity to achieve better quality and value through increased competition.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Option 1 – To extend the current waiver. Extending the current waiver by any more than 2 days would take the contract amount over the threshold and would be in breach of the Contract Procurement Regulations.

52. MARITIME CORRIDOR SCHEME PHASE 1 - RECEIPT OF CAPITAL FUNDING

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director of Highways and Public Protection indicating that schemes over £1m in value required Council approval and the necessary funding needed to be included within the Council's Capital Programme. The first Phase of the Maritime Corridor Scheme was expected to cost approximately £12.3m. Subject to approval from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, a Grant Funding Agreement would be received for this amount.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate for £12.303m externally funded using the Levelling Up Fund and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) for the delivery of Maritime Corridor Phase 1 scheme pending the receipt and sealing of a grant funding agreement from the LCRCA; and
- (2) the delivery of the first Phase of the Maritime Corridor Phase 1 scheme be approved.

Reasons for the Decisions:

By approving the recommendations the Council would be able to include the funding in the Capital Programme and let the contract for the delivery of the Maritime Corridor Phase 1 Works.

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Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No alternative options have been considered.

53. MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSING LANDLORD COMPLAINTS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Housing that explained the requirement for the Council to appoint a Member Responsible for Complaints for its council housing landlord services in order to comply with the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) statutory Complaint Handling Code (the Code). The report also sought to identify the role of the Member Responsible for Complaints within the Council and provide an update to the Council's Housing Advisory Board, as previously reported to the Cabinet.

The following appendix was attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 – Member Responsible for Complaints Role Expectations.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the appointment of the Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways to the role of Member Responsible for Complaints as required by the Housing Ombudsman Service in compliance with the statutory Complaint Handling Code, be approved; and
- (2) the Membership for the Housing Advisory Board and the proposal to create the Shadow board in October/November 2024 subject to diary availability, be noted.

Reasons for the Decisions:

- 1 Officers were continuing to work up the operational requirements for the Council Housing Programme and this would progress with the appointed housing management agent in place.
- 2 In accordance with the HOS the Member Responsible for Complaints was recommended to be the Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways.
- 3 Creation of the Shadow and later full Housing Advisory Board would provide added governance and oversight to the management of the Council's homes which would further develop as the Council Housing Programme grew. Training opportunities would be explored and identified where relevant for Housing Advisory Board Members as well as any Members and/or officers with specific identified roles such as those identified within the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

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If the Council did not identify a Member Responsible for Complaints, it would be non-compliant with the statutory Complaint Handling Code published by the Housing Ombudsman. Alternatively, the Council could identify a Member who was not the Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways. However this would not align with guidance from the HOS which advised that the role for Local Authorities should be a lead member or a Councillor who had oversight in the Cabinet for housing.

54. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2024/25 TO 2027/28 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2024/25 – OCTOBER UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial informing the Cabinet of:

- 1) The current position relating to the 2024/25 revenue budget.
- 2) The progress made on transformation within Sefton New Directions.
- 3) The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2024/25.
- 4) The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of August 2024:
 - The forecast expenditure to year end.
 - Variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members.
 - Updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects.

Appendix A to the report set out the Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27

Decisions Made:

That

Revenue Outturn

- (1) the current position relating to the 2024/25 revenue budget be noted;
- (2) the actions being taken to refine forecasts and identify mitigating efficiencies to ensure each service achieves a balanced position, be noted;
- (3) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2024/25 revenue budget be recognised and it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed, and remedial actions put in place, to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved;

Sefton New Directions

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- (4) the progress made on transformation within Sefton New Directions be noted, together with the fact that a detailed report will be provided to it as shareholder at the November meeting outlining how a sustainable budget will be set for 2025/26 and how this will enable financial sustainability in the long term;

Capital Programme

- (5) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme, as set out at paragraph 8.1 of the report, be noted;
- (6) the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 August 2024 of £19.011m, as set out at paragraph 8.08 of the report; and the latest full year forecast is £88.566m, as set out at paragraph 8.7 of the report, be noted;
- (7) it be noted that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director Corporate Service and Commercial to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council, as set out at paragraphs 8.10 - 8.12 of the report.

Reasons for the Decisions:

To ensure that the Cabinet was informed of the current position in relation to the 2024/25 revenue budget.

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

To keep Members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2024/25 and agreed allocations for future years.

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

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

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

55. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To comply with Regulation 5(2) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England)

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Regulations 2012, notice had been published regarding the intention to consider the following matter in private for the reason set out below.

Decision Made:

That, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following 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.

56. PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION - EXEMPT APPENDIX

The Cabinet considered exempt information provided by the Assistant Director - Communities in relation to the Procurement of Temporary Accommodation (Minute No. 58 below refers).

Decision Made:

That the exempt information be considered as part of the report in relation to the Procurement of Temporary Accommodation (Minute No. 58 below refers).

Reasons for the Decision:

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

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

57. RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

Decision Made:

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

58. PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director -Communities indicating that as part of the Council's statutory function in discharging its duties under the Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Council must provide interim accommodation while it made enquiries if it had reason to believe that an applicant might be:

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- Homeless
- Eligible for assistance, and
- In priority need.

These functions were delivered through the Council's Housing Options service and accommodation requirements sourced from a mix of Council stock, Commissioned Providers and accommodation providers from the private sector. Since August 2023 there had been a 67% increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation. Consequently, the Council had needed to source an increasing amount of accommodation from the private sector. This report outlined a strategy for procuring good quality, furnished, and maintained accommodation for eligible homeless households through a mix of dispersed temporary accommodation.

The following Appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix A – Financial and Commercially Sensitive Information
- Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) authorisation be granted for the Assistant Director - Communities to conduct a procurement exercise evaluated on the basis of the most advantageous tender, to commission accommodation providers to deliver temporary accommodation to eligible homeless households entering into a contract for a minimum of 2 years plus 1 optional year (2+1); and
- (2) delegated authority be granted for the Assistant Director of - Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Communities and Partnership Engagement, to award the Contract(s) resulting from the procurement exercise and to award any extension or amendment thereof following a review of the original award.

Reasons for the Decisions:

- (i) To ensure that there was access to sufficient provision of temporary accommodation to meet a growing need.
- (ii) Costs associated with the provision of temporary accommodation were reduced.
- (iii) That accommodation provided was of a consistently good standard as set out in the terms of the contract.
- (iv) To ensure that the Council was compliant with Public Procurement Regulations.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

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1. Lease self-contained dispersed properties from registered providers for use as temporary accommodation.

There was high demand for affordable accommodation across the housing market and from social housing provided by registered providers.

Risk: Reduction in social housing accommodation available.

If social housing properties were used for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation it would reduce the availability of affordable accommodation for Sefton residents. The impact of this could lead to further rises in homelessness as some households could find themselves in unaffordable private sector tenancies.

2. Lease empty properties directly from landlords in the private sector and manage the accommodation internally.

This option was high cost and resource intensive for the Council to deliver at present. The accommodation provided would need to be maintained, furnished, and managed by the Council. The Council did not currently have the resources to deliver this.

Risk: Financial risk associated with the time it would take to recruit and develop a new service to manage this function.

The initial costs for setting up the service from recruitment and training plus other costs for establishing the properties as homes, for example, providing furniture and utensils.

3. Do nothing.

The Council could continue to spot purchase from the open market at nightly rates agreed at the time of booking.

Risk: Lack of availability and fluctuating costs.

During holiday seasons and when there were large events in the city region, the price of booking accommodation during those periods increased. There were also fewer options available during those periods.

Although the lowest rate was negotiated at the time of booking accommodation there was some uncertainty regarding the long-term costs of providing the accommodation due to how quickly the market could change depending upon demand at the time.

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Cabinet Report

Report Title: Housing Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism

Date of Meeting	7 November 2024
Report to:	Cabinet
Report of:	Executive Director Adult Social Care and Health
Portfolio:	Adult Social Care and Health
Wards affected:	All
Is this a key decision:	Yes
Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No

Summary:

To seek approval of the Housing Strategy for people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism.

This strategy has been commissioned on a Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M) footprint as part of the commissioning work programme.

The strategy has been jointly produced with the Housing Learning and Improvement Network and will support a framework for all commissioners when assessing local housing need for this cohort of people and supporting new developments, alongside general housing to meet those needs. This also follows on from the work commissioned on behalf of C&M by Campbell Tickell in 2022.

Over the next 10 years, it is estimated that Cheshire and Merseyside will need 1,700 additional supported housing dwellings to meet the identified housing needs of people with learning disabilities and/or Autism. It is estimated that there is also a need for 400 general needs homes, typically social housing for rent over the same period. Sefton's requirements is 246 units of accommodation.

The Strategy will also support: -

- Sefton's Corporate Plan 2024-2027 in helping to meet some of the priority actions with the Adult Social Care section.
- Sefton's Housing Strategy 2022-2027 and the relevant themes: meeting people's housing needs, tackling barriers to obtaining suitable housing for the most

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vulnerable and enabling people to live independently.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the Cheshire and Merseyside Learning Disability and Autism Housing Strategy as set out in Appendix 1.
- (2) Delegate authority to Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to approve & monitor delivery plan.
- (3) Authorise the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to undertake any procurement exercise in relation to appointing preferred Registered Providers of Social Housing.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

1.1 There has been an absence of a coordinated regional policy, and this brings the commissioning intentions in to one key document, which can be shared with key stakeholders.

1.2 Several of our care and support providers work across local authority boundaries, and the strategy will ensure a consistent approach when cross boundary working.

1.3 There may be a future requirement to jointly commission services across local authority areas within Cheshire and Merseyside, especially where there are low volume but complex cases, and this strategy could support any joint developments.

Background

1.4 The 9 local authorities in Cheshire and Merseyside (Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Warrington, and Wirral) with NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care System (ICS) work together to commission and deliver the right mix of housing, care and health services required by people with learning disabilities and autistic people who have care/support needs.

1.5 The purpose of this Housing strategy for people with learning disabilities and autistic people is to set out the requirement for and the opportunities to develop excellent quality housing and supported accommodation to meet the needs of the population of people with learning disabilities and autistic people in Cheshire and Merseyside. This includes people who are living with their families/informal carers, people living in supported housing, people living in care homes, people who are inpatients, and young people who are known to the local authorities and NHS and who will become adults over the next 5 years.

1.6 We want to encourage the development of housing and supported accommodation options that are available for people who need housing to rent and for some people who may benefit from home ownership. We intend to co-produce the delivery and implementation of this strategy with the people who will be living in this housing and supported accommodation.

1.7 By working together through this strategy, the local authorities and the NHS will ensure that:

- Housing, health, and care services for people with learning disabilities/autistic people are proactively commissioned to meet rPage 22ds;

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- Young people who are transitioning to adult services will have more choice in relation to their future housing needs.
- People will in most cases have a tenancy with associated tenure rights;
- Housing will be well designed to meet people's needs as appropriate;
- People will have access to personalised care and support as well as access to 'core' support services where this is appropriate; and
- Capital funding for housing development will be sought through NHS England and/or Homes England as appropriate.

1.8 This strategy is aimed at:

- Housing organisations that provide mainstream and supported housing, including those currently operating in the Cheshire and Merseyside area and those who may consider operating here in the future;
- Support and care organisations that provide services for people with learning disabilities and autistic people with care/support needs; and
- Community organisations in the Cheshire and Merseyside area with an interest in housing and supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities and autistic people with care/support needs.
- As per many authorities Sefton is experiencing increasing numbers of young people in transition to eligibility for adult social care who will need housing, including supported housing. Trends amongst this cohort include:
 - Greater complexity of support needs
 - More people who have needs linked to Autism.
- Through this strategy we will commission and enable a wide range of housing and supported accommodation, including specialist and supported housing, which enables people to live independently in their communities, including:
 - Mainstream housing for individuals with personalised care and support;
 - Supported housing that is suited to people who need their own self-contained accommodation or shared housing, with a mix of personalised and shared care and support but can live near other people who may have care/support needs and within local communities; and
 - Housing and supported housing that is adapted in a variety of ways to meet the needs of people who need an accessible home and/or a home that is adapted to meet their support needs, as well as personalised care/support.

1.9 In 2022, Cheshire and Merseyside Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Commissioners worked with Campbell Tickell, a Business Management Consultancy in London, to produce a report on the future numbers of Adults with Learning Disabilities and Autism who may require care with accommodation as an alternative to acute based hospital care within a community setting. In 2023, Cheshire and Merseyside Commissioners used the data from the Campbell Tickell exercise to work with the Housing Learning and Improvement Network to develop a gap analysis to inform the development of the Learning Disability and Autism Housing strategy.

1.10 The Gap analysis showed Sefton requires an additional 246 Supported Living units by 2033 would be required to meet demographic demand.

1.11 In Sefton we anticipate that the 246 units will be delivered through a variety of means including but not limited to: -

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- Sefton Council Housing Programme
- Preferred Housing Partners
- Remodelling of current provision
- Increase in shared lives placements.
- Home Ownership for people with Long-Term disabilities (HOLD)
- Better utilisation of general needs housing.

1.12 The approach for new accommodation to meet our needs is proposed to be undertaken through co-production with our key stakeholders in terms of what our housing offer looks like and where we would like it in the borough.

1.13 We will ensure we explore what opportunities we may have within our own council housing programme to assist with meeting our needs whilst supporting the wider Housing Strategy including point IN3.1 of the action plan which states: -

- Approval and implementation of Housing Pathway document and processes; delivering streamlined access to supported living, in addition to housing provision for all cohorts of vulnerable people including older persons and those with disabilities, for example those with learning disability and/or Autism, physical impairment and mental health.

1.14 Alongside the co-production we will ensure market engagement via the CHEST is also undertaken to ensure the housing market understand our needs and aspirations.

1.15 A procurement exercise would then be proposed to be undertaken to ensure we have a preferred providers list to support us in the delivery of the 246 units who meet certain criteria set out by the council and co-production group.

1.16 We acknowledge there will always be a need for more specialist/emergency accommodation as a requirement in the borough that the wider market will be able to respond to whereby preferred providers cannot meet a need.

1.17 The wider market may also present opportunities for the council to consider at any point which may be considered if the criteria for joining the preferred provider list can be met through the appropriate procurement route.

1.18 As per recommendation 2 & 3 the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care will have oversight with regular updates of the implementation plan and progress on a bi-annual basis.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 There are no direct financial implications regarding the strategy. Should any decisions need to be made around capital investment for any future opportunities this will be brought through the relevant governance route dependent on financial delegation.

3. Legal Implications

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3.1 The Council has a duty under the Care Act 2014 in that a fundamental component of the Act is the 'suitability of accommodation' in meeting the at home care and support needs of older and vulnerable people.

3.2 Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 which requires local authorities in England to review supported housing in their areas and develop strategies.

4. Corporate Risk Implications

4.1 Risk that without adequate and appropriate accommodation residents will be placed in more restrictive, less efficient accommodation and in some cases out of borough. To mitigate against this risk the strategy sets out the demand and an implementation plan will then be put in place.

5 Staffing HR Implications

5.1 No direct staffing implications.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the recommendations and adopt the Strategy.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 1) To have a single strategy for each local authority, but this would not have supported any cross boundary working, or the regional requirements on an NHS Integrated Care system region. This was option was rejected to have a more efficient oversight of the housing market across the C&M region.

Equality Implications:
The strategy aims to enhances the diverse types of accommodation to meet needs of residents with and Learning Disability and or Autism.
Impact on Children and Young People:
With enhanced housing options available to residents with a Learning Disability and or Autism there could be an impact in terms of Children and Young people in being able to have more interaction with family members. Young people who are transitioning to adult services will have more choice and options in relation to their housing needs.
Climate Emergency Implications:
The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral impact.

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(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial (FD.7802/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5902/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

- The draft strategy was shared with Sefton Officers; Cabinet Members; MerseyCare; People First; Carers Centre; Autism Sub-Group; and Cheshire and Merseyside partners and providers for feedback, alongside local self-advocacy groups.
- Feedback was given to the Housing Learning and Improvement Network and Cheshire and Merseyside colleagues to inform the strategy. A draft strategy has also been shared in an easy read format as per appendix 2.
- The draft strategy was shared with internal colleagues from Housing, Adult Social Care and Commissioning who also provided feedback to the Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

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 1 - Housing Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism

Appendix 2 - Easy Read Housing Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism

Background Papers:

- 1) Campbell Tickell - Assessment of future accommodation with support needs – April 2023
<https://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/documents/s124847/Assessment%20of%20future%20accommodation%20with%20support%20needs.pdf>

August 2024

A man with short brown hair and a slight smile is wearing a red and black plaid flannel shirt over a black t-shirt. He is standing outdoors in front of a white picket fence and green foliage. A semi-transparent dark red banner is overlaid on the lower half of the image, containing the title text.

Housing Strategy: People with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism

Cheshire and Merseyside

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The 9 councils in Cheshire and Merseyside with NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board have developed a Housing Strategy for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Our vision is:

To achieve the best quality of life we can for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to live independently, with personalised care and support.

We will do this by securing the provision of good quality housing and supported housing and making Cheshire and Merseyside a place where people with learning disabilities and/or autism with care and support needs can live well and thrive.

What we mean by housing and supported housing

Through this strategy we will facilitate and commission a wide range of housing and supported housing that enables people to live independently in their communities, including:

- General needs housing for individuals with personalised care and support.
- Supported housing that is suited to people who need their own self-contained housing or shared housing within local communities, with a mix of personalised and shared care and support.
- Housing and supported housing that is adapted in a variety of ways to meet the needs of people who need an accessible home and/or a home that is adapted to meet their support needs.

Over the next 10 years, it is estimated that Cheshire and Merseyside will need approximately 1,700 additional supported housing dwellings to meet the identified housing needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism. It is estimated that there is also a need for approximately 400 general needs homes, typically social housing for rent over the same period.

Delivery

To deliver this Housing Strategy for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, signatories share a commitment to consider the following actions (whether an action is right for a particular partner will depend on the level and local strategy etc:

- A. Commission and enable a mix of housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism by:
- Reviewing the use of shared supported housing.
 - Commissioning new supported housing that is required to meet identified need.
 - Increasing the number of Shared Lives carers.
 - Commissioning the housing required by people currently living in inpatient settings.
 - Making Home Ownership for people with Disabilities.
- B. Secure additional mainstream, general needs housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism through:
- Direct provision by Councils with retained housing stock.
 - Working with local Registered Providers to meet the wider housing need as identified in this strategy, including using existing stock where appropriate.
 - Leasing from private landlords.
 - Supported housing providers developing and/or procuring additional move on accommodation.
 - Reviewing the use and suitability of Choice Based Lettings for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.
- C. Put in place a quality assurance framework for supported housing commissioned by the Councils which measures the benefits and impact for people living in supported housing:
- Identifying all supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism people that has the status of 'supported exempt accommodation' in the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act.
 - Develop regionally agreed quality assessment and assurance criteria, that demonstrate the Councils' expectations in relation to the quality of supported housing including value for money.
- D. Facilitate and encourage housing providers to deliver a wide range of housing and supported housing options that meet identified need, including:
- Discussing/agreeing with housing providers, including the largest social housing providers in the Cheshire & Merseyside region, how they can contribute to the delivery of the housing strategy, both in relation to supported housing and access to general needs housing.
 - Identifying gaps in the supported housing provider market (in terms of capability and capacity) and approach potential providers from outside of Cheshire/Merseyside to encourage new 'entrants' into the local supported housing market.

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E. Maximise the use of a wide range of capital funding for development of adapted and supported housing, by:

- Engaging with supported housing providers and other Registered Providers to maximise capital investment that they can bring to the development of the housing and supported housing required.
- Developing a strategic relationship with NHS England and with Homes England to maximise investment from the Affordable Homes Programme in the supported housing required.
- Considering the potential for supported and adapted housing to form part of the affordable housing contribution on larger development sites, including in relation to section 106 agreements.

F. Put in place governance and decision-making processes that enable the Councils in Cheshire and Merseyside and their NHS partners to collaborate effectively to implement this housing strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cheshire and Merseyside

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are partnerships that bring together NHS organisations, councils and others to take collective responsibility for planning services, improving health and [reducing inequalities](#) across geographical areas.

Cheshire and Merseyside ICS is one of the largest and most complex Integrated Care Systems in England. Cheshire & Merseyside has a population of 2.7 million people and comprises 9 councils, 17 NHS Providers and 375 GP practices.

The 9 councils within the Cheshire and Merseyside ICS are referred to as the Cheshire and Merseyside Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (C&M ADASS). C&M ADASS is a voluntary collaborative between the 9 councils in Cheshire and Merseyside (Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Warrington and Wirral) working across the Integrated Care System footprint of Cheshire and Merseyside. The Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (C&M ICB) is a statutory body who are responsible for planning and funding most NHS services in the area. Representative from C&M ICB and C&M ADASS will meet regularly to take collective responsibility for improving the services provided to people with a learning disability and/or autism across the sub-region. Representatives from partner organisations attend regular learning disability and autism work stream meetings, chaired by a nominated director, during which progress towards the delivery of this strategy will be discussed and best practice shared.

Transforming care is a national programme led by NHS England which is all about improving health and care services so that more people with learning disabilities and/or autism can live in the community, with the right support, close to home and have the same opportunities as anyone else. The Cheshire and Merseyside Transforming Care Partnership consisting of the 9 local authorities and the C&M ICB commissioned work to undertake an assessment of need for future accommodation with support needs in 2022 for people with a learning disability and/or autism across the Cheshire and Merseyside sub region. The evidence from that needs assessment was used to inform this strategy.

Representatives from C&M ADASS and ICB may identify further work, that should be commissioned collaboratively at a sub-regional level to further the delivery of this strategy. This work will be coordinated by the C&M ADASS LD and Autism project group / C&M ADASS Transformation programme.

Our intentions

C&M ADASS members and the C&M ICB work together in order to commission and deliver the right mix of housing, care and health services required by people with learning disabilities and/or autism who have care and support needs.

The purpose of this housing strategy for people with learning disabilities and/or autism is to set out the requirement for and the opportunities to develop good quality housing and supported housing to meet the needs of the population of people with learning disabilities and/or autism in Cheshire and Merseyside. This includes:

- people who are living with their families/informal carers,
- people living in supported housing,
- people living in care homes,
- people who are inpatients, and
- young people who are known to the councils and NHS, who will become adults over the next 5 years.

We want to encourage the development of housing and supported housing options that are available for people who need housing to rent and for some people who may benefit from home ownership.

We intend to consult on the delivery of this strategy with the people who will be living in this housing and supported housing.

We will work in partnership, engage and consult with lead commissioners from the 9 councils, NHS commissioners, housing providers, care and support providers within Cheshire and Merseyside and the voluntary sector who can support the principles and/or support delivery of this strategy.

Further stakeholders may be identified who could support the principles and/or delivery of this strategy.

Each council may have their own existing housing strategy. However, councils are encouraged to adopt the principles of this strategy and consider how they may contribute to the recommended actions (see annexe 1) in alignment with their local strategy. Therefore there are no predetermined roles and responsibilities for each council, decisions would be taken by individual councils on the level of participation they wish to take in delivery of this strategy.

Our NHS partners know that access to safe, secure, and affordable housing has a huge impact on the health of our population and are a key partner in funding and developing specialist supported housing. Providing the right accommodation in the community supports people with a learning disability and/or autism to access services in a more appropriate environment.

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Having enough quality housing with care and support or specialist housing can prevent inpatient admissions and a lack of appropriate housing with care and support can cause delays in discharge pathways from inpatient settings.

Funding

It is acknowledged that some individual councils and NHS partners within Cheshire and Merseyside may already be accessing funding, lobbying for additional funding and working with their local market to access funding to develop housing for people with learning disability and/or autism.

Funding Challenges

Reductions in central government grants, increased demand for services, and inflationary pressures means councils may have limited financial resource for capital funding and may depend on accessing external capital funding to be able to deliver this strategy. Furthermore Cheshire and Merseyside ICB are experiencing similar financial pressures. As a Cheshire and Merseyside ICS system, these budgetary pressures cause significant funding challenges in delivering this strategy.

There are real challenges to accessing capital funding and investments for councils and NHS partners. These include, but not limited to:

- There is no guarantee capital funding options will be approved
- Limitations on available sources of capital funding
- Limited amounts of funding could mean there may not be enough to deliver a housing project in full.
- Requirements for accessing funding, such as matched funding, as councils and NHS partners have existing capital budgetary constraints.
- Grant funding conditions can impose rent standards that are not achievable for specialist supported housing, impacting the viability of schemes
- Further borrowing for councils and NHS partners are not always an option or there may be a reluctance to do so in the current financial climate.
- Time constraints in accessing capital funding as well as restrictions and/or requirements attached to funding streams may limit the ability to deliver this strategy
- Financial implications due to ongoing costs relating to future resource spend and maintaining and/or operating an asset for long term sustainability.
- Councils and NHS partners not having the resources to meet timescales within any funding requirements
- Risk of overrunning costs
- Funding options may have already been accessed by some of the 9 councils and/or NHS partners
- Lack of buy in and investment from housing developers

Intended benefits of this strategy

The benefit of doing this strategy at a sub regional level are to maximise opportunities where there would be added value to access funding and/or jointly commission and to promote a coordinated approach to the development of services and to share best practice across the footprint.

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By working together through this strategy the councils and the NHS will ensure that:

- Housing, health and care services for people with learning disabilities and/or autism are proactively commissioned to meet peoples' needs.
- People will in most cases have a tenancy with associated tenure rights.
- Housing will be well designed to meet people's needs as appropriate.
- People will have access to personalised care and support as well as access to 'core' support services where this is appropriate.
- Capital funding for housing development will be sought though NHS England and/or Homes England as appropriate.

Context

There are a number of local and national policies that affect the supported housing sector and which will influence the delivery of this strategy in terms of the types of housing and supported housing that are commissioned and developed. Key relevant national policy includes:

- The recent Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act including new National Supported Housing Standards.
- The Building the Right Support Action Plan , published in 2022, updates the original Building the Right Support from 2015, reinforces the importance of people with learning disabilities and/or autism having a good home.
- Building the Right Home sets out guidance and principles for housing for people with a Learning disability and/or autism that need specialist and supported housing.

This is shown in detail in annexe 1.

This strategy supplies expertise specific to meeting the housing needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism and is intended to feed into and support existing strategies and policies in place across the Cheshire and Merseyside area. The Liverpool City Region produced a statement of its housing ambitions in 2019 and the councils have strategies which set out targets and priorities for housing in their own locality.

Housing and care and support providers should ensure they are aware of and take account of these local and national policies in relation to developing housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Our intended audience

This strategy is aimed at:

- Housing organisations that provide mainstream and supported housing, including those currently operating in the Cheshire and Merseyside area and those who may consider operating here in the future.
- Support and care organisations that provide services for people with learning disabilities and/or autism with care and support needs.

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- Community organisations in the Cheshire and Merseyside area with an interest in housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism with care and support needs.

2. VISION AND AMBITION

Our vision

Our vision is to achieve the best quality of life we can for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to live independently, with personalised support and care.

We will achieve our vision by:

- Securing the provision of good quality housing and supported housing where people with learning disabilities and/or autism with care and support needs can live well and thrive.
- Developing a range of housing and supported housing over the next 5 years and beyond, that are tailored to reflect the identified needs within our local communities.
- Ensuring that support and care services, delivered to people within supported housing and those living in general needs housing, are effective in promoting people's wellbeing and independence.

This strategy will make a positive difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities and/or autism by having a greater mix and range of housing options, including:

- General needs housing for individuals with personalised care and support.
- Supported housing that is suited to people who need their own self-contained accommodation or shared housing, with a mix of personalised and shared care and support, but are able to live in close proximity to other people who may have care and support needs and within local communities.
- Housing and supported housing that is adapted in a variety of ways to meet the needs of people who need an accessible home and/or a home that is adapted to meet their support needs, as well as personalised care and support.
- Housing for people who have a live alone plan for a variety of reasons and who need an individual property either with or without specialist features to enable them to live in the least restrictive way.

3. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To achieve our vision, the strategic objectives of this housing strategy are:

A. To improve the range of housing and supported housing options for people with learning disabilities and/or autism

Over the next 5-10 years we will encourage a mix of housing and supported housing that meets the needs identified in our local communities. This will involve providing a spectrum of housing options and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, including:

- renovating existing properties and
- developing new homes.

B. To influence the design and quality of housing and supported housing

The councils with their NHS partners want to influence the design and delivery of the types of housing and supported housing that are developed in the following ways:

- We will work with housing providers to identify the most suitable locations based on local intelligence about where people want to live.
- We want to facilitate and encourage a range of housing and care and support providers to work in Cheshire and Merseyside to ensure the mix of housing and supported housing services delivered reflects local needs.
- Housing and supported housing should be of the highest quality standards and have care and support services from providers who are registered with the CQC as appropriate.

C. To plan for and manage demand for housing and supported housing

We are planning ahead to meet the changing and future needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism. To do this we will:

- Influence the development of housing and supported housing to ensure there is the right mix of accommodation available to meet people's current and future needs.
- Include the development of and access to additional housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.
- Aim to ensure that Local Plans incorporate the need for specialist and supported housing and that these housing needs are part of local housing strategies and planning policies.

D. To encourage opportunities to invest and develop

The councils with their NHS partners want to promote investment in housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. To make this happen we will:

- Share our market intelligence to inform and influence the decisions of housing and care and support providers.
- Where possible, seek to use local authority and NHS resources, such as land and buildings, to facilitate the development of housing and supported housing.
- Engage in a dialogue with housing and care and support providers about the types of housing and supported housing required by people with learning disabilities and/or autism.
- Seek to create a business environment where housing and care and support providers have the confidence and assurance to invest in Cheshire and Merseyside.
- Support housing providers to remain viable and deliver growth plans that include provision for adapted properties and supported housing in recognition of the higher costs of delivering and maintaining this type of accommodation for housing providers.

Due to the limited financial resources available both to councils and the NHS, it is important for all partners to work together to make best effective use of all of the levers available at a sub regional level, so that the benefits of that can be filtered out at local levels.

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4. CONTEMPORARY HOUSING AND SUPPORTED HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND/OR AUTISM

To promote contemporary practice in the development and delivery of a range of housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, we have set out design guidance to influence future housing development.

Design guidance to housing and support providers

To assist housing and support providers we have provided guidance in relation to some of the characteristics of the housing and supported housing that we are seeking:

- Some individuals may find it difficult to live with others in a shared setting and therefore there is the need for self-contained accommodation, including separate front doors, ideally built in a cluster model to enable efficiencies around the care delivery.
- We encourage housing providers to deliver homes to space standards that are consistent with suggested space standards (54m² for a 1-bed dwelling) within extra care housing/supported housing . It is important to note that some people with learning disabilities and/or autism may need homes that exceed these space standards.
- New accommodation may need to include a staff sleep in space, to allow night-time staff to be accommodated.
- Some people need more bespoke accommodation; whatever housing is developed will need to be adaptable to meet diverse needs. Accommodation needs to be future proofed so that it can be used for a range of people and is able to accommodate innovative technology. The use of assistive technology (AT) should be promoted to ensure that people are able to be as independent as possible; it could in turn help to reduce care costs. Assessments for the use of AT should form part of people's care and support assessments and plans.
- Locations for developments are important in order that people can be supported to access the community. Therefore, we suggest that most new developments should be based in proximity to semi-urban / urban areas, which would provide ease of access to transport and activities. However, a small number of people may not be able to cope with suburban / urban environments and may need the peace and tranquillity of a more rural setting.
- Some of the people we are seeking to commission housing and support for have experienced trauma in their lives. Good design can mitigate the negative effects of trauma.

⁵ https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Contributors/Design-Principles-For-Extra-Care-Housing-3rdEdition.pdf

Examples of contemporary practice in housing and support for people with learning disabilities and/or autism

We have identified a range of contemporary practice examples in relation to the design of housing and support that reflects the needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism with care and support needs, including the need for a range of housing adaptations and the creation of trauma informed environments for some people.

These are shown in annexe 3.

5. NEED FOR HOUSING AND SUPPORTED HOUSING

The estimated need for housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism is based on evidence from:

- Analysis of work undertaken by Campbell Tickell for Cheshire & Merseyside in 2022.
- Qualitative evidence from commissioners from the councils in Cheshire & Merseyside.

Detail in relation to evidence of need for housing and supported housing is shown in annexe 4.

Quantitative evidence of need

Cheshire and Merseyside Transforming Care Partnership commissioned Campbell Tickell in 2022 to undertake an assessment of the need for 'future accommodation with support needs' over a 10 year period from 2022/23 to 2032/33.

This assessment identifies need for 'accommodation with support needs' to 2032 for each of the nine councils at Cheshire & Merseyside level. Based on the report from Campbell Tickell, 'Accommodation with support needs' is taken to mean 'supported housing'.

Table 1 shows the estimated level of need for supported housing for each local authority and for Cheshire & Merseyside to 2032/33. The table below shows that a total of 1,679 supported housing units will be required across Cheshire & Merseyside over the period to 2032/33 to meet the needs that have been identified (including some adjustments to take account of the projected Learning Disability population). This is an indicative number of units and the actual number required could vary upwards or downwards, depending on the number of relets and other factors (Campbell Tickell, 2022).

In addition there are 54 'patients' in hospital settings who are NHS 'Specialised as Commissioned Patients'.

⁴ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Events/HAPPI-Hour-Trauma-Informed-Design-within-Learning-Disabilities-Environments/>

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Table 1. Estimated need for supported housing to 2032/33

Local authority	Need for Supported housing by 2032/33
Cheshire East	160
Cheshire West & Chester	261
Halton	189
Knowsley	152
Liverpool	104
St Helens	160
Sefton	246
Warrington	148
Wirral	259
Total (Cheshire & Merseyside)	1,679

Source: Campbell Tickell, 2022

It is possible that some of this estimated need for supported housing could be met through the use of Shared Lives accommodation. This is shown in table 2. This suggests a need for c.165 additional Shared Lives places over the period to 2032/33.

It is estimated that there is a need for c.380 additional general needs housing units over the period to 2032/33. This is shown in table 2.

It should be noted that the estimated need for additional Shared Lives accommodation would reduce the estimated need for supported housing over the period to 2032/33.

Table 2. Estimated need for Shared Lives and general needs housing to 2032/33

Local authority	Needs for Shared Lives and general housing 2032/33
Cheshire East	58
Cheshire West & Chester	58
Halton	12
Knowsley	30
Liverpool	108
St Helens	28
Sefton	16
Warrington	26
Wirral	46
Total (Cheshire & Merseyside)	382

Qualitative evidence of need

Qualitative evidence of need has been derived from insights and evidence from commissioners about local trends and the nature of future need for supported housing and housing in their area for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. This is shown in annexe 4.

Gap analysis: Summary

The quantitative and qualitative evidence of need for housing is summarised below.

The total estimated need is for an additional 1,679 units of 'supported housing' by 2032 across Cheshire & Merseyside, the equivalent of 120 additional units per annum (since 2022). This is taken to mean increased need predominantly for self-contained supported housing.

It is estimated that there is a need for an additional c.165 Shared Lives places by 2032.

It is estimated that there is a need for c.380 units of general needs housing by 2032.

All councils in Cheshire & Merseyside have a need for additional supported housing over the period to 2032.

Qualitative local evidence indicates the following trends in relation to current and future need for housing:

- There is evidence of increasing need for general needs housing, generally 1 bed units to rent from social landlords.
- There is a need for additional self-contained supported housing.
- There is limited evidence of additional need for shared supported housing. Any shared supported housing commissioned in future needs should be well designed and future-proofed, for example to accommodate people with reduced mobility. Some existing shared supported housing is likely to be decommissioned.
- There is some evidence of need for additional Shared Lives places.
- There is a need for additional respite accommodation for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. Some of this need could be met through the development of 'clusters' of self-contained flats where a dwelling is used as respite accommodation.
- There is very limited evidence of need for either residential care or nursing care as people live in suitable housing in the community. However, some people with very complex support needs, for whom a housing based option is not appropriate, are likely to live in residential/nursing care settings. Councils will determine locally with their partners and stakeholders any transition required from the use of residential care to supported housing or other housing options.
- The number of people currently living in acute hospital settings is low but will continue to decline as people move to housing based alternatives in the community.

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Developing a housing pathway

To meet this range of housing needs, we have identified the need for a housing pathway which includes a mix of housing and supported housing options, which offer people different housing choices, from general needs housing with packages of care and support tailored to individuals' needs through to supported housing options with 24/7 support.

This pathway of housing and supported housing options is required, in part, to reduce the use of inpatient settings and residential care, as well to maximise the range of housing options for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. The councils and their NHS partners want to make it easier for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to access these housing options.

It should be emphasised that a move to one housing option may not be permanent and there is an assumption that some people will move between different housing options in response to changing needs and circumstances.

A wider range of housing and supported housing options will include:

- A. General needs housing where a person receives personalised care and support.
- B. Accessible housing, for example bungalows, for people who need an adapted home along with personalised care and support.
- C. Small 'clusters' of flats where a person has their own self contained home with some communal spaces, such as a shared lounge, with personalised care and support alongside shared care (for example in relation to overnight support).
- D. 'Step down' supported housing, particularly for younger people.
- E. In the majority of cases we would expect people to rent their homes and be tenants; in some cases access to home ownership, such as through the Home Ownership for people with Long Term Disabilities (HOLD) scheme , may be appropriate. The councils and their NHS partners will seek to identify people with learning disabilities and/or autism who may benefit from the HOLD option and housing providers that are willing and able to deliver this option.
- F. Other housing that may be relevant to some people with learning disabilities and/or autism, such as extra care housing and co-housing.
- G. In a minority of cases, shared supported housing where a person has a room (which may have an ensuite shower/bathroom) and shares the other facilities with other residents.
- H. Short term 'crisis' supported housing, for example to facilitate inpatient admission avoidance.

² <https://www.ownyourhome.gov.uk/scheme/hold/>

³ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/brick-by-brick/>

Housing option D and H are important as they may be used to facilitate short term housing needs and/or 'transitions' between different accommodation/housing options.

To access any form of housing and supported housing people should be:

- Registered with the local authority responsible for housing so their housing need is formally recorded and recognised. This may require a degree of flexibility in relation to local connection policies as some people with learning disabilities and/or autism may need to live in an area that is different to where they currently live or originally came from.
- Assessed by the relevant local authority and the NHS in order that appropriate care and support can be commissioned and provided.

To facilitate this housing pathway, particularly for people who are in inpatient settings, it is recognised by the councils and their NHS partners that through this strategy:

- There is a need to develop a smoother pathway and encourage a multi-agency approach for people who are inpatients and identified as being clinically ready for discharge. This will be guided by the NHS England Brick by Brick report.
- There is a need to meet the accommodation needs of the most challenging groups to house, for example people with forensic needs. This may require consideration of the needs of individuals to live in areas where, for example, they may not have a local connection.
- In relation to people who are on the discharge pathway and do not have a home to return, the councils will seek to prioritise people in these circumstances within each authority's homelessness policy in a consistent way.
- The councils and their NHS partners will seek to develop specialist housing advice and advocacy for people to assist in understanding and navigating the housing options available to them.

6. SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING THE HOUSING MARKET

The local authority commissioners want to strengthen their relationships with housing providers, particularly Registered Providers in the North West, who wish to collaborate with us to help fulfil our strategic ambitions:

- Widening the housing choices for people with a Learning Disability and/or autistic people and improving the quality of housing available, especially by improving the supply of supported housing and general needs housing.
- Promoting a coherent approach between local provision of housing, care and health as an integrated system.
- Commissioning and facilitating support for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to rent or buy their own home.
- Considering and meeting the sensory needs of autistic people in relation to housing; actively drawing attention to sensory considerations that can be made to an environment to improve the sensory experiences and wellbeing of autistic people.

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Our approach to working closely with a range of providers of housing and supported housing are set out below.

Access to general needs housing

Commissioners across Cheshire and Merseyside are seeking to work with housing providers to secure increased access to general needs housing, both in the social housing sector and private rented sector (recognising that there are different housing benefit implications of these approaches), for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. This involves working directly with Registered Providers and through councils' Housing Options Strategies.

This may be an option for people who no longer need to live in a supported housing setting and/or for people who don't need supported housing in the first instance. We are keen to avoid an assumption that supported housing is the 'default' housing option.

We are aware that there is considerable demand in many areas for social rent and affordable rent general needs social housing and that in some areas the private rented sector is not affordable.

We are also aware that access routes into general needs social housing, such as choice based lettings systems, too often don't enable people with learning disabilities and/or autism to have fair access or quick access, where this may be necessary. The councils will seek to ensure that choice based lettings systems recognise that people may require reasonable adjustments linked to their sensory or physical needs and support needs to be recognised in the application process.

We know from discussion with housing providers that there is an opportunity to work together and collaborate with them and with councils' housing options teams, to identify and secure additional opportunities for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to have improved access to general needs social housing and housing in the private rented sector .

Developing supported housing

The councils recognise the need for housing providers to have long term funding confidence, particularly when investing in supported housing.

Local authority commissioners will collaborate with ICB commissioners on joint opportunities to deliver new schemes and review existing provision reflecting a cohort of people who have jointly funded care and health services.

We are seeking innovative approaches from our housing partners, for example, delivering a range of housing sizes, types and tenures, including potentially remodelling existing supported housing, that will be appropriate to the needs of various groups in the community, in line with our strategic aims.

When working with housing providers and care and support providers the local authority partners would like:

- To be involved at an early stage in considerations and discussions regarding the reconfiguration or disposal of existing supported housing provision.

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- To agree priority notification/nomination rights on existing and new supported housing. This may include developing local lettings and allocations policies for specialist and supported housing schemes to manage allocations and make best use of the resources.
- To understand whether you own and/or lease housing for the purposes of providing supported housing and to understand your funding model. Where housing is leased we want to be satisfied that this model is sustainable and in the interests of the intended residents.
- In response to our commissioning intentions/plans, we are seeking providers to develop proposals for housing and supported housing which are effectively tailored to meet local need and to consult with us and relevant professionals prior to and during the implementation of these proposals.
- In response to our commissioning intentions/plans, supported housing providers who are not currently operating in the Cheshire and Merseyside area to get in touch with us and talk through their plans for development of supported or specialist housing so we can advise on what our needs are and how you might be able to meet them.

The councils with their NHS partners will seek to work with a range of capital funding partners to deliver this strategy, including Homes England and NHS England. Where possible, we will also seek to use local authority and NHS resources, such as land and buildings, to facilitate the development of housing and supported housing.

The councils with their NHS partners will undertake ongoing market engagement to:

- Build strong relationships with housing and supported housing providers.
- Stimulate and encourage the local supported housing market.
- Work with housing and supported housing providers in a collaborative way.
- Understand how we can work with supported housing providers to jointly manage market risks and challenges.

The councils will work closely with providers of residential care services to understand the long term need for residential services and where appropriate, work with providers to:

- Maximise the opportunities for people living currently in residential care to move to housing based alternatives with personalised care and support.
- Work with organisations that provide residential care services who are interested in opportunities to transition to the provision of housing based alternatives with personalised care and support.

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7. ENSURING THE QUALITY OF HOUSING AND SUPPORT

The councils and their NHS partners want to ensure that all supported housing services are of good quality. This means both the accommodation and the care and support services (as applicable) being of good quality.

This will include supported housing providers and care providers meeting legislative and regulatory requirements as appropriate (Charity Commission, Regulator of Social Housing, the Care Quality Commission and Community Interest Companies regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority).

The councils will draw on the Government's guidance National Statement of Expectations for Supported Housing as a basis for expectations of supported housing providers in terms of contemporary practice in the delivery and management of accommodation with support services.

The councils' approach to ensuring that supported housing is of a good quality anticipates the intent of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act. The councils anticipate that their approach to ensuring the quality of accommodation with support services will likely include:

- A licensing scheme for all supported housing providers. The licensing scheme will be developed by all the councils. All providers of supported housing in Cheshire and Merseyside will be required to be licensed by the relevant local authority in order to provide supported housing.
- Only providers of supported housing that are licensed by the councils will be able to access specified and exempt accommodation housing benefit status.
- The councils will also review the quality of the provision of support/care in supported housing services to ensure customers are getting the support they need and require.
- Assessment of the value for money provided by supported housing services, ensuring they are affordable for the councils and for the people who live in them.

In the meantime, before the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act is implemented, the councils will draw on the evidence and learning from the Government's Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP) to working with providers of supported housing services to ensure that both the quality of accommodation used for supported housing and the support services provided are of a good quality.

8. DELIVERY OF THIS STRATEGY

Delivery of this strategy includes recommendations that different actors at different levels may consider doing at a local level either as an individual council or in collaboration with other councils and/or NHS partners. These recommendations are optional for each individual council and the decision to take each recommendation forward is to be made at a local level.

² Supported housing: national statement of expectations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

¹⁰ Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 publications - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament

¹¹ Supported Housing Improvement Programme prospectus - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

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This strategy is designed to be flexible around the needs, context and existing strategies and policies of each locality.

The councils will work jointly to focus on enabling the development of and access to housing and support options across Cheshire and Merseyside to meet identified need.

The councils will work in partnership with Registered Providers and other housing developers/providers to develop specialist and supported housing to meet the needs of local people identified in this strategy.

Our summary recommended action plan to deliver this strategy is in Annexe 1.

The councils with their NHS partners are committed to working alongside people who need housing and supported housing identified in this strategy. We aim to:

- Co-produce with a range of people with lived experience the commissioning of housing/ supported housing services, and
- Work with people with lived experience in relation to managing the quality of supported housing and measuring the impact it has on people's lives.

This strategy is part of a dialogue with the organisations and individuals that are interested in delivering housing and supported housing options for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

ANNEXE 1 DELIVERY PLAN

Introduction

This implementation plan sets out recommended actions and approaches that the Cheshire and Merseyside councils, NHS Partners and other partners may choose to take to enable delivery of this strategy for people with learning disabilities and/or autism 2024-2033.

Responsibilities for each recommended action have been identified to be undertaken at the most appropriate level.

Responsibilities within the recommended actions are defined in the table below:

Place	Individual council and its partners at a local level
Cheshire & Merseyside	Cheshire and Merseyside councils
Cheshire & Merseyside/ NHS	Cheshire and Merseyside councils and NHS at Cheshire and Merseyside ICB level
Place/NHS	Individual council and local NHS partners at local level

Timescales have been left to be completed by the Cheshire & Merseyside councils and their NHS partners. Partners may wish to adopt this template or embed their agreed actions into existing local plans / delivery programmes.

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Addressing the need for additional mainstream, general needs housing

Increasing the provision of, predominantly, 1-bedroom self contained housing to rent in the social housing sector and private rented sector can help to both mitigate the need for supported housing (with floating support as necessary) as well as enabling the most effective use of supported housing in terms of facilitating appropriate move on to general needs housing, including for people with learning disabilities and/or autism who don't need/no longer need supported housing.

Summary of recommended actions

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
<p>1 Given the overall level of demand for affordable general needs housing, this is likely to require a level of strategic intervention by Councils to generate more affordable housing to rent for people with learning disabilities and/or autism through, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct provision by Councils with retained housing stock • Leasing from private landlords. • Working with local Registered Providers to meet the wider housing need as identified in this strategy, including using existing stock where appropriate. • Supported housing providers developing and/or procuring additional move on accommodation. 	Place	
<p>2 Review the use and suitability of Choice Based Lettings for people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there is a role for 'sensitive' lettings and use of local letting plans to enable some people with learning disabilities and/or autism to access general needs social housing. • To recognise and take account of the adaptations for people who may have sensory environmental needs. 	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
<p>3 Determine the level of floating support services and similar community support services (e.g. KeyRing type models) required to support people living in general needs housing.</p>	Place	
<p>4 Councils to consider planning policy and delivery mechanisms to support the delivery of more 1 bed dwellings as part of the housing development mix</p>	Place	

Commissioning and delivering housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism

Summary of recommended actions

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale																						
<p>1 Review the use of shared supported housing. Identify shared supported housing that is no longer fit for purpose and requires replacement with other housing options for residents.</p>	Place																							
<p>2 Identify and commission new supported housing that is required to meet identified need drawing on good practice from the region and from elsewhere. Targets over the period to 2032/33</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="137 801 916 1554"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="137 801 651 999">Local authority</th> <th data-bbox="651 801 916 999">Need for Supported Housing by 2032/33</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 999 651 1055">Cheshire East</td> <td data-bbox="651 999 916 1055">160</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1055 651 1111">Cheshire West & Chester</td> <td data-bbox="651 1055 916 1111">261</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1111 651 1167">Halton</td> <td data-bbox="651 1111 916 1167">189</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1167 651 1223">Knowsley</td> <td data-bbox="651 1167 916 1223">152</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1223 651 1279">Liverpool</td> <td data-bbox="651 1223 916 1279">104</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1279 651 1335">St Helens</td> <td data-bbox="651 1279 916 1335">160</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1335 651 1391">Sefton</td> <td data-bbox="651 1335 916 1391">246</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1391 651 1447">Warrington</td> <td data-bbox="651 1391 916 1447">148</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1447 651 1503">Wirral</td> <td data-bbox="651 1447 916 1503">259</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1503 651 1554">Total (Cheshire & Merseyside)</td> <td data-bbox="651 1503 916 1554">1,679</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Local authority	Need for Supported Housing by 2032/33	Cheshire East	160	Cheshire West & Chester	261	Halton	189	Knowsley	152	Liverpool	104	St Helens	160	Sefton	246	Warrington	148	Wirral	259	Total (Cheshire & Merseyside)	1,679	Place	
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<p>3 Increase the number of Shared Lives carers who can support people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism. Targets over the period to 2032/33</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="137 1727 916 2049"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="137 1727 651 1834">Local authority</th> <th data-bbox="651 1727 916 1834">Need for Shared Lives 2032/33</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1834 651 1890">Cheshire East</td> <td data-bbox="651 1834 916 1890">16</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1890 651 1946">Cheshire West & Chester</td> <td data-bbox="651 1890 916 1946">26</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 1946 651 2002">Halton</td> <td data-bbox="651 1946 916 2002">19</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="137 2002 651 2049">Knowsley</td> <td data-bbox="651 2002 916 2049">15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Local authority	Need for Shared Lives 2032/33	Cheshire East	16	Cheshire West & Chester	26	Halton	19	Knowsley	15	Place													
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Halton	19																							
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Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Liverpool 10		
St Helens 16		
Sefton 24		
Warrington 15		
Wirral 26		
Total (Cheshire & Merseyside) 167		
<p>4 Housing/supported housing for current inpatients and people who maybe at risk of inpatient admission:</p> <p>Identify and commission the housing required by people currently living in inpatient settings.</p> <p>As part of commissioning this housing, develop accommodation with design features and services that will support people outside of hospital and reduce admissions to acute services.</p> <p>Where appropriate, for some people leaving inpatient settings, it will be necessary to ensure that their housing/supported housing is consistent with any restrictions linked to Court of Protection, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and/or Ministry of Justice requirements.</p> <p>Where people are at risk of losing their current accommodation on being admitted to an acute hospital setting, the councils will work with housing and accommodation providers, as part of their homelessness prevention activities, to try to ensure that people do not lose their housing at point of admission.</p> <p>Where people are already in an acute setting and they are on a pathway to clinical discharge, the councils and their NHS partners will collaborate in relation to the Duty to Refer arrangements where a person may be at risk of homelessness if the housing/supported housing they need is unavailable.</p>	<p>Cheshire & Merseyside/NHS</p> <p>Cheshire & Merseyside/NHS</p> <p>Place/NHS</p> <p>Place/NHS</p> <p>Place/NHS</p> <p>Place/NHS</p>	

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Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
11 The councils and their NHS partners will update the assessment of need for housing and supported housing on a regular basis. The assessment will include evidence of young people (from school year 9) who may transition to eligibility for adult social care at 18 years and who may need housing/supported housing.	Cheshire & Merseyside/NHS	
12 Put in place arrangements to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-produce with a range of people with lived experience the commissioning of housing/supported housing services, and • Work with people with lived experience in relation to managing the quality of supported housing and measuring the impact it has on people's lives. 	Place	

Quality assurance framework for supported housing commissioned by the Councils which measures the benefits and impact for people using supported housing as well as value for money

To deliver the proposed approach to supported housing quality assurance as set out in the housing strategy, the following actions are proposed.

Summary of recommended actions

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1 Identify all supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism that has the housing benefit status of 'specified accommodation' including the categories of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exempt accommodation • Managed properties 	Place	
2 Develop a shared set of quality assessment and assurance criteria, that demonstrates the Councils' expectations for specialist and supported housing including value for money. This should cover both support services and accommodation standards drawing on the learning from the Supported Housing Improvement Project to date (for example in St Helens), the National Statement of Expectations for Supported Housing, Building the Right Home and Building the Right	Cheshire & Merseyside	

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Support, as well as any locally specific factors. Draw on in-house contractual and performance management standards and procedures that apply to existing supported housing.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
3 In anticipation of the implementation of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act, bring together a group of Council colleagues from revenues and benefits, adult social care (including safeguarding expertise), housing standards (environmental health/private sector housing standards), children’s services (in relation to vulnerable young people) and planning and housing to consider a shared approach to licensing supported housing (including for people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism) and the implementation of supported housing quality standards.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
4 Through this group (above) risk assess existing supported housing for people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism in terms of either known or likely risk/s in relation to poor quality support and/or accommodation.	Place	
5 The Councils to engage with supported housing providers in planning for the implementation of the Supported Housing Act and assess the risk of providers potentially withdrawing from the market and Councils’ responses to this.	Place	

Facilitate the supported housing market to encourage the delivery of a wide range of supported housing options that meet identified needs.

To deliver the proposed approach to facilitating the supported housing market as set out in the housing strategy, the following actions are proposed.

Summary of recommended actions

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1 Hold a ‘launch’ event for the housing strategy with housing providers and care and support providers.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside/NHS	

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Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
2 Hold meetings with a range of housing providers, including the largest social housing providers, in the Cheshire & Merseyside region to discuss/agree how they can contribute to and support the delivery of the housing strategy, both in relation to supported housing and access to general needs housing.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
3 Meet with representatives of the private rented sector in Cheshire/Merseyside to discuss/agree how they can contribute to and support the delivery of the housing strategy	Place	
4 Establish a learning disability supported housing provider forum/fora that will meet regularly with Council Officers to discuss supported housing development and operational practice issues.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
5 Identify gaps in the supported housing provider market (in terms of capability and capacity) and approach potential providers from outside of Cheshire/Merseyside to encourage new 'entrants' into the local supported housing market.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	

Funding of supported housing development

To deliver the proposed approach as set out in the housing strategy, the following actions are proposed.

Summary of recommended actions

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1 Maximise the use of a wide range of potential capital funding sources for supported housing development including:	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
1a <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the proposed engagement with supported housing providers and other Registered Providers to maximise capital investment that they can bring to the development of the supported housing required. 	Place	

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1b • Seek to develop a strategic relationship with NHS England, Homes England and Cheshire and Merseyside to maximise investment from, respectively, the NHS capital programme and the Affordable Homes Programme in supported housing, including consideration/discussion of grant rates for supported/specialist housing.	Place/Cheshire and Merseyside	
1c • Consider the potential for supported and adapted housing to form part of the affordable housing contribution on larger development sites, including in relation to s.106 agreements.	Place	
1d • Encourage Place/Cheshire to engage with NHS England about using the NHS capital grant & Merseyside/NHS funding to develop the most specialist forms of housing		
1e • Agree with ICS partners the most effective use of the Better Care Fund to support delivery of the housing strategy.	Place	
1f • Capital funding from Councils (subject to appropriate business cases).	Place	

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Governance and decision-making

To deliver the proposed approach as set out in the housing strategy, ensuring that the Councils have the necessary governance and decision-making structures in place to facilitate a coordinated approach to commissioning, funding and reviewing supported housing, the following actions are proposed.

Summary of recommended actions

Recommended Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1 Develop a Cheshire and Merseyside Learning Disability Strategic Housing Delivery Group, with appropriate representation from the Councils, as the regional steering/decision making group for housing and supported housing for people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism. Ensure the membership also includes representatives from relevant external partners, e.g. the NHS/ICS and housing providers.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	
2 Establish reporting arrangements into this Group to oversee the delivery of the housing strategy.	Place/Cheshire & Merseyside	

ANNEXE 2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

There are a number of local and national policies that affect the supported housing sector which will influence the delivery of this strategy in terms of the types of housing and supported housing that are commissioned and developed.

Housing and care and support providers should ensure they are aware of and take account of these local and national policies in relation to developing housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

Local context

Cheshire East

The Learning Disability Strategy 2019-2022 (My life My Choice) identifies the Council's intentions are to:

- Work with local housing and social care providers to provide a range of housing and care options for people to choose from. This includes adapting their current home, living alone with support, living with a small number of people in shared housing, or moving outside their local area only if they want to or if it's necessary to meet their needs.

- Collect resources to help councils transform the local housing offer for people with a Learning Disability or autistic people.
- Reduce the number of people in permanent residential settings and supporting them to live in the community
- Develop a plan for children and young people in residential settings to return to their family home or move to greater independence
- Work with partners to ensure appropriate housing options and support are available

Cheshire West and Chester

The aims of the Cheshire West Place Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy for Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism 2021-2025 are that:

- More people with learning disabilities and/or autism will be supported to live a good quality and meaningful life
- People with a Learning Disability and/or Autism will be supported to live, work, socialise and be as independent as possible throughout their life, within the local community, close to family, and friends.
- Support for people with a Learning Disability and/or Autism will be person-centered and effective to help ensure that they can achieve their goals, aspirations, and person-centered outcomes.
- People with a Learning Disability and/or Autism and their carers can access the appropriate level of information and advice when they need it.
- People with a Learning Disability and/or Autism feel safe in their Community.

Halton

Halton's Market Position Statement 2023-2026 identifies that:

"It is anticipated the number of 'own front door' schemes will increase, as demand for this housing option is high as it provides individuals with their own self-contained accommodation but within a wider, safe and supported environment. Discussions are currently taking place for another 'own front door' scheme in Runcorn to provide a further 10 individual tenancies.

We will also look at opportunities for core and cluster developments as demand shifts for individuals with more complex needs from shared supported tenancies to individual tenancies."

¹² [Cheshire East Council My Life, My Choice: A Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities in Cheshire East 2019-2022.](#)

¹³ [Cheshire West Place Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy for Adults with a Learning Disability and/or Autism 2021 - 2025](#)

¹⁴ [Cheshire East Council My Life, My Choice: A Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities in Cheshire East 2019-2022.](#)

¹⁵ [Cheshire West Place Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy for Adults with a Learning Disability and/or Autism 2021 - 2025](#)

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Knowsley

Through the 2022-2026 ASC Market Position Statement , the Council is seeking to work with and encourage a range of providers to support people with Learning Disabilities – it is encouraging a mixed market of providers who can deliver personalised support and accommodation. The Council will be particularly focusing on encouraging small and local providers to enter the market.

Liverpool

The Liverpool 2020-25 Market Position Statement sets out the intention to develop a minimum of 400 independent homes with support for adults with Learning Disabilities and other people, by 2025. It states “All adults with Learning Disabilities should have the opportunity to live as independently as they are able to, within their own tenancies or accommodation where possible with packages of care that they have full control over and that meet their individual needs, supporting them at different ages and stages of life to live full lives”.

Sefton

The Sefton 2019/20 Market Position Statement states “All existing and new accommodation needs to reflect the increasing incidence of physical disability and mobility difficulties amongst those with Learning Disabilities and appropriate sensory adaptations undertaken for individuals with Autism. It states “Adults with Learning Disabilities will be supported to be as independent as possible. Primary consideration is for people to be offered excellent care at home supported within their own communities. If a higher level of care is required, then alternatives such as extra care schemes should be available and lower-level supported housing services such as KeyRing type schemes.”

St Helens

The People’s Plan 2021-2026 has an objective to expand and improve mental health services and services for people with a Learning Disability and/or Autism. The Adult Social Care Integrated Commissioning Strategy 2022-2024 , identifies that:

“By September 2023, we will have a costed housing and support plan that delivers a suitable range of housing options for the next five years, in partnership with a preferred housing provider.”

Warrington

The 2021 Learning Disability Strategy seeks to provide a range of appropriate and quality housing options that allow individuals to choose a home that meets their changing needs. The strategy also aims to promote independence, choice and control for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. The council will annually review the Warrington Housing Strategy (2018-28) to ensure appropriate housing is delivered locally, and it will ensure the commission of appropriate, supported housing provision to meet local need.

¹⁴ [Liverpool City Council: Market Position Statement: Adult Social Care and Homelessness 2020 - 2025](#)

¹⁷ [Sefton Council: Adult Social Care Market Position Statement](#)

¹⁸ [St Helens Council: St Helens People’s Plan 2021-2026](#)

¹⁹ https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/media/5892/P2-ASC-Integrated-Commissioning-Strategy/pdf/P2_Adult_social_care_IC_strategy.pdf?m=638170897815870000

²⁰ [Warrington Borough Council: Learning Disability Strategy](#)

Wirral

The Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Autism strategy 2022-2027 reflects the NHS Long Term Plan and the Transforming Care programme, which aim to improve and widen access to mental health support, reduce health inequalities, and provide community-based care for autistic people and those with intellectual disabilities. It also aims to:

- Support more autistic people to live in the community, with the right support, and close to home
- Working with partners to ensure appropriate housing options and support are available
- Building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care
- Reducing reliance on specialist hospitals and inpatient care.

National context

There are a range of national policies that will influence how the Cheshire and Merseyside councils commission and regulate supported housing, including for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

In October 2020 the Government published the Supported housing: national statement of expectations. This set out the expectations of councils and of providers of supported housing in relation to, for example, understanding the need for supported housing and ensuring that supported housing is of a good quality, both in terms of the accommodation and the service. This was for guidance only, however since this was published, the Government has set out its intention to deliver improvements in supported housing the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act (below).

More recently the Government has established the Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP) and made available funding to a number of Councils to deliver this programme locally, including in Cheshire and Merseyside (St Helen's Borough Council). The programme is intended to support Councils to improve the quality of supported housing, both the accommodation and support services, through greater local scrutiny.

The recent Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act makes provision for the regulation of supported exempt accommodation, and makes provision for local authority oversight of, and enforcement powers relating to, the provision of supported exempt accommodation. It is expected that Councils will have new statutory powers and duties to regulate supported housing locally. The Act provides new powers to councils in relation to:

- A licensing scheme for providers of supported housing.
- Producing local assessments of need for supported housing and developing strategic plans based on that evidence.

²¹ [NHS Cheshire and Wirral Partnership Autism Strategy 2022 – 2027](#)

²² [Supported housing: national statement of expectations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

²³ [Supported Housing Improvement Programme prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

²⁴ [Supported Housing \(Regulatory Oversight\) Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

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The Act also sets that there will be new National Supported Housing Standards that will apply to providers of supported housing and councils' role in checking these standards are being met.

This will mean that all supported housing that is developed for people with learning disabilities and/or autism where it falls within the definition of 'supported exempt accommodation' (which is likely to be the majority of housing developed through this strategy) will be subject in the future to regulation by the Cheshire and Merseyside councils, including licensing housing providers to permit them to develop and operate supported housing.

Over recent years long lease-based models of supported housing have come under scrutiny by the Regulator of Social Housing, particularly the governance and financial arrangements of some Registered Providers that lease all or most of their supported housing stock from other organisations. The Cheshire and Merseyside councils will take account of the regulatory status of providers of supported housing in its approach to managing the quality of supported housing services, including in relation to housing providers' access to higher rates of housing benefit.

In addition there is a range of national policy and practice that housing and support providers should be aware of in relation to developing housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism:

The Building the Right Support Action Plan , published in 2022, updates the original Building the Right Support from 2015, reinforces the importance of people with learning disabilities and/or autism having a good home.

Building the Right Home sets out guidance and principles for housing for people with a Learning Disability and/or autistic people that need specialist and supported housing.

The Care Quality Commission's Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture (RSRCRC)²⁸ published in 2018 sets out more clearly than in any previous CQC guidance what the specific expectations are of care providers both in terms of registration of supported housing services and inspection. As well as meeting the standard CQC regulations that apply to care providers there is an explicit focus on the service model, i.e. the model of care. This is influenced by the Service model for commissioners of health and social care services. This sets out 9 principles that commissioners should apply in commissioning and contracting for services for people with Learning disabilities, and by implication, that care providers will need to deliver. CQC emphasises that it expects providers to comply with the guidance in Building the Right Support. In addition, in RSRCRC, CQC is clear about its other requirements and expectations of care providers, specifically:

- Providers need to be able to evidence that there is a need for a service, in this case supported housing, and that local commissioners have agreed to the service being developed.
- Providers need to be able to show that the size, setting and design of the service (this means the setting as well as the design of the care service) meets peoples' expectations and is aligned with current best practice.
- The service needs to enable people to have access to their local community. The care model and the location of the service mean that people are supported to access ordinary community life in response to their needs and wishes.

²⁸ [Supporting people with a learning disability and/or Autism who display behaviour that challenges, including those with a mental health condition. \(2015\). LGA/ADASS/NHSE](#)

- Providers need to be able to evidence that the model of care and the associated policies and procedures are in line with best practice. This is reinforcing that CQC expects providers to avoid care practices that are reliant on restrictive practices or seclusion and instead are focussed on promoting people's strengths.

All housing and supported housing services which provide CQC regulated care, developed through this strategy, will need to be consistent with Building the Right Support and RSRCRC.

ANNEXE 3 EXAMPLES OF CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE IN HOUSING AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND/OR AUTISM

We have identified a range of contemporary practice examples in relation to the design of housing and support that reflects the needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism with care and support needs, including the need for a range of housing adaptations and the creation of trauma informed environments for some people.

Review of existing shared supported housing services

Commissioners across Cheshire and Merseyside are seeking to work with housing and support providers to review existing supported housing services, particularly 'shared' supported housing services (i.e. where a person has a room in a house and shares the communal areas with other tenants).

We have identified an over supply of shared housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism across Cheshire and Merseyside, particularly small scale shared housing with 24/7 support. Problems with this type of supported housing include:

- Properties that are no longer fit for purpose, e.g. they may not be accessible.
- Relatively high void rates and prevalence of long term voids.
- A reducing preference for shared types of housing amongst people with learning disabilities and/or autism, for example in relation to compatibility issues including issues regarding young people sharing with older people. However, Some recent consultation outcomes with young persons indicate that they are more inclined to be comfortable with the principle of a shared property with fellow young people as a step-up to independence and preparing for them moving on to independent homes.
- Poor value for money.

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However, we are also aware that through some recent consultation with young persons, some people are more inclined to be comfortable with the principle of living in a shared property with fellow young people as a step-up to independence and preparing for them moving on to independent homes.

We know from discussions with housing providers that there is an opportunity to review their existing portfolios of shared supported housing.

As a guide, we have provided some examples of councils that have worked with supported housing providers to review and in some cases reconfigure or decommission existing supported housing to address these types of issues.

These reviews have typically involved:

- A review of the long term suitability of the properties as supported housing.
- Consideration of costs to adapt and modify properties and whether this is feasible and realistic.
- Undertaking up to date care assessments of tenants, including by trusted assessors from care providers.
- Discussions with tenants, advocates and families about alternative housing options.
- Identification of housing options that reflect tenants' needs and that will better suit people's needs in the longer term.
- Commissioning and development of alternative housing options.

Oxfordshire County Council. Shared supported housing services were developed as an alternative to residential care in the 1990s and 2000s. This had become the default housing option for many people with Learning Disabilities. The County Council with its NHS and housing partners, undertook a strategic review of the portfolio of shared supported housing and at the same time has been developing a wide range of new build supported housing and extra care housing services, alongside supported housing options for people with the most complex support needs. This has resulted in a wider range of housing options being available for people with learning disabilities and/or autism with shared supported housing no longer being the predominant housing model.

Worcestershire County Council. Since 2015, the County Council has had a programme of developing new build supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism which has resulted in over 400 new homes being developed. These have been developed in partnership with a range of housing providers including large Registered Providers and smaller, specialised housing providers. This has included supported housing options for people with moderate support needs (not requiring 24/7 support) as well as people with complex support needs who need bespoke supports including 24/7 support. This housing development programme has meant that fewer people have moved to shared supported housing, as most new development has been of self-contained dwellings, and some people have been able to move from shared supported housing and residential care, into new self-contained supported housing.

New supported housing development

Commissioners across Cheshire and Merseyside have commissioned a range of high quality housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, including people with complex support needs.

There is identified need for additional types of self-contained supported housing that meet the housing and support needs of a range of people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

As a guide to the types of future housing development, we have provided examples locally and from elsewhere of housing and supported housing that is effective in meeting the needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autism, including people with complex support needs.

An example of new build accommodation for people with Learning Disabilities is Anvil Court a scheme in Hampshire directly developed, financed and owned by Hampshire County Council. It is a block of 10 1-bed flats with an additional 3 wheelchair adapted bungalows. This supported housing scheme has 24/7 care on site and is aimed at people with Learning Disabilities with a range of care and support needs.

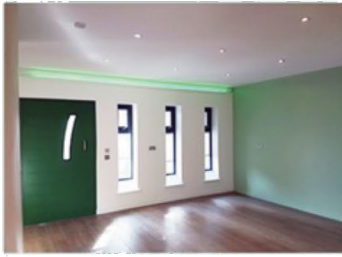


In relation to people with very complex support needs an example of a bespoke supported housing scheme has been developed by Choice Support in Kirklees with capital funding from NHS England. This is an example of a supported housing scheme, including 6 self-contained units with staff facilities, designed for people with complex needs which includes features such as curved (and removable) internal walls, and soft impact finishes to floors and walls.

³⁰ <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/adultservices/Extra-Care-Younger-adults-Brochure-2020.pdf>

³¹ <https://www.choicesupport.org.uk/stories/transforming-care-mayman-lane>

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Oxfordshire County Council has commissioned two purpose-built supported housing schemes for people with complex needs . These have been directly developed and are managed by Cherwell District Council. Each scheme has 6 self-contained units and is designed for people with an Autism diagnosis who require specialist accommodation and support and they are intended for people with complex support needs who find it difficult to share support or accommodation.



Karbon Homes' development of five supported two-bed bungalows in Walker, Newcastle are designed specifically for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. The kitchen of each bungalow leads on to a private patio area with bedrooms on the most private and quietest side of the buildings. Externally, the layout includes secure external gardens and allotment areas with the bungalows positioned as far as possible from any noise in the parking area and access road.



Access to general needs housing

As a guide, we have provided examples of councils and housing providers that have worked with housing providers and other organisations to improve access to general needs housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

ForHousing has designated a block of general needs social housing in Salford for use by people with Learning Disabilities. This is creating both 'low level' supported housing and 'move on' housing for people who no longer need to live in supported housing where higher levels of care and support are provided. This is making general needs social housing available to people with learning disabilities and/or autism who need a self-contained home that is managed in a sensitive way by a social landlord.

Golden Lane Housing (GLH) is a Registered Provider (of social housing) and a charity that specialises in providing housing for people with Learning Disabilities. GLH operates a scheme that it refers to as 'Great Tenants'. This is a scheme where GLH takes out a lease on a privately owned property that will meet the housing needs of a person with Learning Disabilities/autistic person (or a group of people). GLH 'vets' private landlords and their properties to ensure that they are compliant with relevant standards (such as having gas and electrical safety certificates and appropriate smoke and carbon monoxide alarms) and then acts as the landlord to the tenant/s (which also helps to resolve any housing benefit related issues). GLH typically takes out leases of up to seven years with private landlords; whilst it does not provide permanent housing, it is often a medium to long term housing option which, in effect, turns a private sector let into a social housing let (typically as a form of supported housing).

https://www.glh.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GLH_GT-for-professionals.pdf

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ANNEXE 4 NEED FOR HOUSING AND SUPPORTED HOUSING

The estimated need for housing and supported housing is based on evidence from:

- Work undertaken by Campbell Tickell for Cheshire & Merseyside ADASS in 2022.
- Qualitative evidence from commissioners from the councils in Cheshire & Merseyside.

Quantitative evidence of need

Cheshire and Merseyside Transforming Care Partnership commissioned Campbell Tickell in 2022 to undertake an assessment of the need for 'future accommodation with support needs' over the 10 year period from 2023 to 2033.

This assessment identifies need for 'accommodation with support needs' to 2033 for each of the nine councils and at Cheshire & Merseyside level. Based on the report from Campbell Tickell, 'Accommodation with support needs' is taken to mean 'supported housing'.

The Cambell Tickell needs assessment for supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autism is focused on those individuals who are inpatients or at high risk of inpatient admission and/or those who are eligible for adult social care services. The cohorts are:

- Inpatients in hospital or specialist units.
- Those on the Dynamic Support Databases who are high risk.
- Residents in care homes.
- Young people who are transitioning to adult services.
- People living with a family carer.

The method used estimates future need for 'accommodation with support needs' net of 'relets' within existing supported housing services.

Table 1 shows the estimated level of need for supported housing for each local authority and for Cheshire & Merseyside to 2033.

The table below shows that a total of 1,679 supported housing units will be required across Cheshire & Merseyside over the next 10 years to meet the needs that have been identified (including some adjustments to take account of the projected Learning Disability population). This is an indicative number of units and the actual number required could vary upwards or downwards, depending on the number of relets and other factors (Cambell Tickell, 2022).

In addition there are 54 'patients' in hospital settings who are NHS 'Specialised Commissioning Patients'.

Table 1. Estimated need for supported housing to 2032/33

Local authority	Need for Supported housing 2032/33
Cheshire East	160
Cheshire West & Chester	261
Halton	189
Knowsley	152
Liverpool	104
St Helens	160
Sefton	246
Warrington	148
Wirral	259
Total (Cheshire & Merseyside)	1,679

Source: Campbell Tickell, 2022

It is possible that some of this estimated need for supported housing could be met through the use of Shared Lives accommodation. Based on work undertaken by the Housing LIN with other councils to estimate need for different types of housing and accommodation for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, it is assumed that approximately 10% of the identified need for supported housing could be met through the provision of Shared Lives accommodation. This is shown in table 2. This suggests a need for c.165 additional Shared Lives places over the period to 2032/33.

It was outside the scope of the assessment undertaken by Campbell Tickell to estimate the need for mainstream 'general needs' housing amongst people with learning disabilities and/or autism. However, the assessment by Campbell Tickell did identify/estimate the level of 'relets' within supported housing as being 7% per annum, which identified an overall level of relets within supported housing services across all councils of c.190 per annum (shown at Campbell Tickell report in table at paragraph 6.2.12).

Based on work undertaken by the Housing LIN with other councils to estimate need for different types of housing and accommodation for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, it is assumed that approximately 20% of relets may relate to a need for general needs housing. This is shown in table 2. This suggests a need for c.380 additional general needs housing units over the period to 2032/33.

It should be noted that the estimated need for additional Shared Lives accommodation would reduce the estimated need for supported housing over the period to 2032/33.

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Table 2. Estimated need for Shared Lives and general needs housing to 2032/33

Local authority	Need for Shared Lives 2032/33	Need for general needs housing 2032/33
Cheshire East	16	58
Cheshire West & Chester	26	58
Halton	19	12
Knowsley	15	30
Liverpool	10	108
St Helens	16	28
Sefton	24	16
Warrington	15	26
Wirral	26	46
Total (Cheshire & Merseyside)	167	382

Qualitative evidence of need

Qualitative evidence of need has been derived from insights and evidence from commissioners about local trends and the nature of future need for supported housing and housing in their area for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

This is summarised below in relation to different 'cohorts' of people and their circumstances from evidence from all nine councils.

Current accommodation setting	Summary of evidence of need for housing/ accommodation
People living with family carers/ informal carers	<p>Trends are mixed. Some councils (LAs) have seen an increase in numbers of adults aged 18 moving away from a family setting, and/or support of informal carers, into supported housing with care services. However, other LAs have continued to see informal carers providing a home and care and support for their family member with learning disabilities/Autism.</p> <p>For those informal carers who do wish to retain their caring responsibilities, LAs recognise the need to provide support to those carers in order for this to be sustainable.</p> <p>To support these carers there is a need for provision of additional respite accommodation.</p>

Current accommodation setting	Summary of evidence of need for housing/ accommodation
	<p>Most LAs are experiencing older carers being concerned about what will happen to their family member of they are no longer able to care for them.</p> <p>Some LAs are seeing fewer older carers who are retaining caring responsibilities, into older age. LAs recognise that there is a need to plan with older carers to avoid crisis situations from arising, for example where there may be a cohort of people who are aged 50+ living with older family carers who will need a range of housing options to move to over the next 5-10 years.</p>
<p>Young people in transition to adult social care eligibility</p>	<p>Many LAs are experiencing increasing numbers of young people in transition to eligibility for adult social care who will need housing, including supported housing. Trends amongst this cohort include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater complexity of support needs • More people who have needs linked to Autism <p>Some LAs have identified modest increases in need for Shared Lives accommodation.</p>
<p>People living in Shared Lives</p> <p>People living in residential care</p>	<p>Some LAs have plans to either maintain current capacity or develop and grow their Shared Lives services.</p> <p>All LAs have seen a reduction in the number of people with learning disabilities and/or autism living in residential care.</p>
	<p>This reflects people moving to supported housing, extra care housing and Shared Lives instead of residential care.</p> <p>Some LAs are also identifying people who are currently living in residential care who may benefit from a move to supported housing.</p> <p>LAs are now only developing or funding residential care models for those individuals with the most complex needs.</p>


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Current accommodation setting	Summary of evidence of need for housing/ accommodation
<p>People living in nursing care</p>	<p>The majority of LAs have very small numbers of people placed in a nursing setting.</p> <p>In some instances NHS Continuing Health Care (CHC) teams and Integrated Care Board (ICB) partners commission these services.</p> <p>LAs are not seeing individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism requiring general nursing care at an older age.</p>
<p>People living in hospital settings</p>	<p>There are relatively low numbers of people in hospital settings/assessment and treatment beds.</p> <p>LAs recognise that some people moving from hospital require larger and/or adapted properties to meet their needs.</p> <p>LAs are working with their NHS partners to support discharges from these acute settings for people to return to community based accommodation.</p> <p>LAs also recognise that there are also people who are in community settings or other forms of accommodation settings who also need very robust specialist accommodation.</p>
<p>People living in shared supported housing</p>	<p>Most LAs are seeing some evidence of decreasing demand for the use of shared supported housing, particularly amongst younger people.</p> <p>However, LAs recognise that there is an ongoing role for shared supported housing and that for some people this works well, for example, where people are very settled and/or would be at risk of potential social isolation in self-contained housing.</p> <p>Some LAs are actively looking to decommission some shared supported housing services, particularly where there are 'matching' and compatibility issues, that are creating long term voids and/or voids that cannot be filled, and/or where the properties are of poor quality or not 'future proofed' (i.e. in terms of adaptability for people with mobility related needs).</p>

Current accommodation setting	Summary of evidence of need for housing/ accommodation
	<p>In these circumstances, some LAs are working with housing providers to decommission or remodel shared housing, for example where the properties are no longer fit-for-purpose.</p> <p>Most LAs are not seeking to commission new shared supported housing services.</p>
<p>People living in self contained supported housing</p>	<p>All LAs are experiencing increasing preference/need for self contained forms of supported housing.</p> <p>Most LAs have already either developed this type of supported housing and/or have plans to develop/ commission further capacity of this type of supported housing, in response to increasing need.</p> <p>LAs are finding that individuals are preferring this model of housing as it provides a higher standard of living, with greater privacy, better accessibility and dwellings that are Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant.</p> <p>LAs are also experiencing increased need for the use of technology enabled care in this type of housing, to complement staff support, which allows individuals a much greater sense of independence and these models allow for a better economy of scale with the delivery of the core care.</p>
<p>People living in general needs housing with support</p>	<p>There are typically fewer people living in general needs housing than in supported housing services.</p> <p>However, the majority of LAs are experiencing increasing and unmet need for people to live in general needs housing, typically in social housing, with an appropriate care and support package.</p> <p>This increased need is coming from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who do not want or need supported housing in the first place • People who no longer need to live in supported housing, i.e. they wish/need to 'move on' from supported housing to general needs housing

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Current accommodation setting	Summary of evidence of need for housing/ accommodation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People with very complex support needs who need to live alone and for whom supported housing is often not appropriate in meeting their needs. <p>LAs recognise that there is scope to improve the application process for and allocation of social housing through Property Pool Plus or other Choice Based Lettings systems in order for it to work more effectively and sensitively for people with learning disabilities and/ or autism.</p> <p>Most LAs are working with Registered Providers to develop an increased supply overall of general needs social housing (typically 1-bed units).</p>



To achieve the best quality of life we can for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to live independently, with personalised support and care.

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Cheshire and Merseyside Housing Strategy for people with learning disabilities and autistic people-Summary

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Cheshire and Merseyside Housing Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities and Autistic People-Summary

In this document you will find:



Introduction

About this **strategy**



Vision

What we aim to achieve through this **strategy**



Needs

What the housing needs are over the next 10 years



Delivery

How we will achieve our aims and meet the housing needs over the next 10 years:

- A. Commissioning**
- B. General Needs Housing**
- C. Quality Assurance**
- D. Housing Providers**
- E. Capital Funding**
- F. Governance**

Introduction



When we say **strategy** we mean a big plan of what we need and how we will make it happen.



This is an easy read **summary** of the full **strategy**. That means it does not have all of the details but it does have enough information for you to understand what we need and how we will make it happen.



This strategy has been developed by NHS Cheshire, Merseyside Integrated Care System and the 9 local authorities in Cheshire and Merseyside.

The 9 local authorities are:

- ✓ Warrington
- ✓ Liverpool
- ✓ St Helens
- ✓ Halton
- ✓ Knowsley
- ✓ Cheshire East
- ✓ Cheshire West
- ✓ Sefton
- ✓ St Helens



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The Vision

Vision means what we are hoping to see:



The best quality of life we can get for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people.

We will do this by:



- making sure we have enough good quality housing and supported housing



- making Cheshire and Merseyside a place where people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people with care and support needs can live well and **thrive**

Thrive means that you do much better than okay, you do well and you succeed in life.

Needs



This strategy will support us to **commission** a wide range of housing and supported housing so that people can live independently in their communities.



To **commission** is to provide the funding for a service or a piece of work. It involves finding out what is needed and a contract for the organisation that is chosen to do the work.



The range of housing will include:

- **General needs housing** for individuals with personalised care and support.

General needs housing is housing that is available to anyone in the community.



- Supported housing that is suited to people who need to live on their own or in shared housing in the community, with a mix of personalised and shared care and support.



- Housing and supported housing that is adapted in a variety of ways to meet people's needs. This might mean adaptations for accessibility. It might mean that it is adapted to meet support needs.

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- To meet the housing needs of people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people over the next 10 years we will need:



X 1,700

- Around 1,700 supported housing homes across Cheshire & Merseyside



X 400

- Around 400 general needs homes, usually social housing for rent



Delivery

Achieving our aims and meeting the housing needs over the next 10 years.



A. Commissioning

We will **commission** and provide a mix of housing and supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people by:



- Reviewing the use of shared supported housing



- **Commissioning** the new supported housing that is required to meet the need that we know about



- Increasing the number of Shared Lives carers

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- **Commissioning** the housing needed by people who are living in hospital settings at the moment



- Making Home Ownership for people with Long – term Disabilities (**HOLD**) more available

HOLD is a home ownership scheme for people with long term disabilities.

B. General Needs Housing

We will secure extra general needs housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people by:



- Using social housing that we already have access to



- Working with local **Registered Providers** to meet the wider housing needs in this big plan

Registered Providers are the social landlords that we know and work with.



- **Leasing** from private landlords
Leasing is a type of renting agreement.



- Supported housing providers developing and/or buying more housing to help people move in to permanent homes.

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- Reviewing the use and suitability of **Property Pool Plus or Choice Based Lettings** for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people

Property Pool Plus or Choice Based Lettings is the scheme that allows you to choose where you live and the type of property you live in if you are on the housing register.



C. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance means how we will make sure that the services and homes we have are good enough.



We will put in place a **quality assurance** framework for supported housing commissioned by local councils which measures how the housing and support makes things better for people living in supported housing.

We will do this by:



- Identifying all supported housing for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people that has the status of 'supported exempt accommodation' in the Supported Housing Act



- Developing quality **assessment and assurance criteria**, that demonstrate the Councils' expectations in relation to the quality of supported housing including value for money

Assessment and assurance criteria means a list of things that we will check are in place and being done well.

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D. Housing Providers

Housing Providers are organisations that build, own and rent housing in our communities.



We will support and encourage **housing providers** to deliver a wide range of housing and supported housing options that meet the needs we know about.

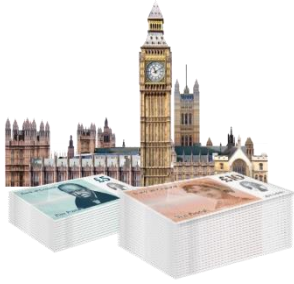
We will do this by:



- Talking with **housing providers**, including the largest social housing providers in the Cheshire & Merseyside area. This might be through supported housing or **general needs housing**.



- Finding the gaps in the supported housing provider market. This includes what providers are able to do and how many properties they have. Contact providers from outside of Cheshire/Merseyside to encourage them to develop their offer into this area.



E. Capital Funding

Capital Funding is money available from the government, banks and other organisations in this case for the development of housing.



We will make the most of the use of a wide range of **capital funding** for development of adapted and supported housing.

We will do this by:



- Working with providers to make the most of the capital funding that they can bring to the area to develop the housing and supported housing we need



- Developing our relationship with Homes England to make the most of investment from the Affordable Homes Programme for the supported housing we need



- Look at where it is possible for supported and adapted housing to be part of the **affordable housing contribution** on development sites

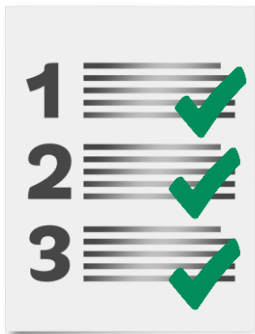
The **affordable housing contribution** is the housing that organisations are made to include when they are building a new development of houses. This is to make sure that we do not ONLY have very large and expensive homes.

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F. Governance

Governance means the things we will put in place to make sure things are run properly. To make sure the rules are followed and no laws are broken.



We will put in place governance and decision-making **processes** that make it possible for the local authorities in Cheshire Merseyside with their NHS partners to work together well. This is needed to make what is in this housing strategy possible.

Processes are the details of how things should be done.

Report Title: Property Pool Plus Administration Procurement

Date of meeting:	7 November 2024		
Report to:	Cabinet		
Report of:	Assistant Director of Place - Economic Growth & Housing		
Portfolio:	Housing & Highways		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

To seek Cabinet authority to undertake a procurement exercise for a new service contract in connection with the administration of the Council’s social housing register; manage the Council’s social housing allocations policy and its nominations arrangements with Registered Providers of social housing. Further, to seek delegated authority to award a new contract following the procurement exercise.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) Cabinet authorises Officers to conduct a procurement exercise to appoint an external service provider.
- (2) Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth & Housing), to approve the resulting post procurement contract award in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways, together with any extensions.
- (3) If any of the current service staff with TUPE entitlement have an entitlement to LGPS pensions, Cabinet authorises officers to enter into arrangements to ensure that the new service provider enters into an admissions agreement and bond in relation to the affected staff in order that there is no financial risk or liability to the council from the future arrangements.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

- 1.1 The Council has statutory duties to have a policy for the allocation of social housing accommodation and the maintenance of a housing needs register. In addition, there is the

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function to manage the Council's Nomination Rights with all Registered Providers who have housing stock in Sefton, which sit alongside these duties.

- 1.2 Housing & Investment Service Officers have considered the options in relation to the service arrangements the Council might adopt to deliver these duties and concluded that the option to commission the service with a suitable external service provider is the preferred option.
- 1.3 The (sub-regional) Property Pool Plus allocations policy, associated housing register and service delivery arrangements were adopted in 2012. Since then, One Vision Housing (OVH) have been commissioned to provide these functions and services on behalf of the Council.
- 1.4 The current contract with One Vision Housing to deliver the administration of Property Pool Plus runs until August 2025, so the Council wishes to begin the procurement exercise as soon as it is able to.
- 1.5 The procurement is for a service to manage the social housing register; manage the Council's social housing allocations policy and its nominations arrangements with Registered Providers of social housing.
- 1.6 It is proposed to offer the service for a 5-year period, with options to extend for up to 2 years. The contract will include break for convenience clauses, which will allow the Council to serve notice to terminate the contract on the yearly anniversary of the contract. The notice period will be 6 months from service of the notice to terminate.
- 1.7 The anticipated value of the contract should it run for the maximum length of 7 years would be around £630,000. Under Schedule 3 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 the closest description is Administrative Housing Services. This falls under the Light touch regime so the procurement isn't captured under the full regulations. This procurement process will be carried out in line with the Council's Contract Procedure rules.
- 1.8 It is proposed that the basis of evaluation will utilise the MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) approach taking into consideration a balance between Quality and Cost.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 There is an existing revenue budget to help fund the operation of administering an allocations service, which is currently performed by OVH, on behalf of the Council.
- 2.2 The service is currently delivered by OVH. Some staff involved in operating the current service are likely to have TUPE rights. If any of the OVH staff have an entitlement to LGPS pensions the Authority will be under an obligation to ensure that the new provider enters into an admissions agreement and bond in relation to the affected staff. Assuming that is the case, Cabinet authority to enter into those arrangements is sought at the outset with there being no financial risk or liability to the council from the future arrangements.
- 2.3 Delivery of the service will rely upon the Property Pool Plus IT system, which the Council acquired and has an ongoing contractual arrangement with the IT supplier. Access of this IT system would need to be transferred to a new Provider if the tender is won by a Provider other than the incumbent Provider.

3. Legal Implications

- 3.1 LAs must adhere to the law regarding the allocation of Social Rented Housing, as set out in the Housing Act 1996, Part 6 Allocation of Housing Accommodation.

4. Risk Implications

- 4.1 The Council has statutory duties arising under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 and any regulations made there under from time to time relating (inter alia) to the requirement to have a policy for the allocation of social housing accommodation and the maintenance of its housing needs register.
- 4.2 Pursuant to the Deregulation and Contracting Out Act 1994 and the Local Authorities (Contracting Out of Allocations of Housing and Homelessness Functions) Order 1996 (the "Contracting Out Legislation") as amended, the Council is permitted to contract out various functions under Part VI and Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 to the extent permitted by the Contracting Out Legislation.

5 Staffing HR Implications

- 5.1 The service is currently delivered by One Vision Housing (OVH). Some staff involved in operating the current service are likely to have TUPE rights, as per para 2.2 above.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 Given the legal, financial and reputational risk of this service being delivered for the residents of Sefton as part of a wider sub-regional scheme it is recommended that Cabinet look to approve the recommendations given in this report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

1. *Explore a shared service with other LCR Councils.* However, at this point in time this option isn't available, as initial scoping work with other LCR Councils has been unable to prove concrete economic benefits with this option. Other LCR Councils have now made the decision to bring the administration of Property Pool Plus in-house, which has largely ruled out a shared service being entered into over the coming years.
2. *Bring the service in-house and deliver it as part of the Council's Housing Options Team service offer.* The costs of doing this would be well in excess of what the Council currently pays to deliver this service.

Equality Implications:

The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated.

Impact on Children and Young People:

The changes to the PPP policy introduced in January 2024 saw Care Leavers awarded the highest priority and backdated to their 16th birthday, which has had a positive impact on the numbers accommodated since this change. The Band A criteria for Care Leavers has been updated to reflect the original intention in the existing policy to award Band A including a backdate to the 16th birthday for those leaving the care of the local authority for the first time, at the point they are ready for independence. The existing policy does not make this clear. The proposed amendments provide further clarity and explicitly stipulates that if a Care Leaver up to age 25Page 91e rehoused again following their

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initial move to independence, then they can be awarded Band A, but only if there is a recognised housing need, and the applicant is actively engaging with the Local Authority Care Leaver Teams, and that team is supportive of a move. The proposed change also makes clear that if Band A is awarded in these circumstances, a 16th birthday backdate will not be applied. This change brings the policy in line with the original intention, whilst still recognising the local authorities corporate parenting responsibility for care leavers up to age 25.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral impact.

There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. Any climate emergency implications arising from matters referred to in the Cabinet Member Report will be contained in reports when they are presented to Members at the appropriate time.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services & Commercial (FD.7795/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5894/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the 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 to this report.

Cabinet/Council Report	Sefton Council 		
Report Title:	Southport Eastern Access Scheme – Receipt of Capital Funding		
Date of meeting:	07 November 2024 14 November 2024		
Report to:	Cabinet Council		
Report of:	Assistant Director - Highways and Public Protection		
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways		
Wards affected:	Dukes; Kew; Norwood		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

Schemes over £1m in value need Council approval and the necessary funding needs to be included within the Council’s Capital Programme. Southport Eastern Access scheme is expected to cost approximately £19.97m. Subject to approval from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, a Grant Funding Agreement will be received for this amount.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (1) Recommend to Council the approval of a supplementary capital estimate for £19.97m externally funded using the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) for the delivery of Southport Eastern Access scheme pending receipt and signing of a Grant Funding Agreement from the LCRCA.

Council is recommended to:

- (1) Approve a supplementary capital estimate for £19.97m externally funded using the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement from the LCRCA for the delivery of Southport Eastern Access scheme pending receipt and signing of a Grant Funding Agreement from the LCRCA.

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1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

- 1.1 In January 2024 Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to the Procurement process of Phase 1 of the Southport Eastern Access (SEA) scheme. This was a series of junction and link improvements on key routes on the eastern approach to Southport including the re-opening of Foul Lane. The proposals were intended to reduce congestion, particularly on days when large numbers of visitors are attracted to the town. The measures were also designed to improve safety and accessibility. In the development of the proposals further consideration was given to how people walking or cycling could better access the town centre and hence the scope of the scheme was developed further to include a significant active travel element.
- 1.2 This report provided an update of the funding and delivery of the scheme. It explained that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) has, following a baselining process, confirmed an allocation of £16.8m in the current City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) for the delivery of the Southport Eastern Access scheme. This needs to be expended by March 2027.
- 1.3 As the scheme is of a certain value, it is subject to the development of a Full Business Case (FBC). The Business Case has been externally scrutinised and approved.
- 1.4 A procurement route has been chosen, and subsequently approved by Cabinet, to give the best chance of meeting the spending target. Balfour Beatty, appointed through the Scape Framework, have entered into a Contract with the Council, to develop the scheme Target Cost and delivery programme based on the design information. In addition, a Social Value Plan is being developed with input from the Neighbourhoods Team. This Contract is for Early Contractor Involvement and is therefore limited in its scope. It does, however, enable the main works contract to be developed the scheme programmed and the cost identified.
- 1.5 Details of the likely phasing, land requirements, traffic management proposals and construction timescales are being developed to ensure, as far as possible, that schemes, up to the current funding allocation, can be delivered before March 2027.
- 1.6 The Early Contractor Involvement work has been progressed in parallel with the preparation of the FBC, which enabled the Council to build a more robust cost estimate for the scheme, which arrived at a total cost of £19.97m. This has been included in the FBC and the LCRCA have subsequently increased their funding allocation to match this amount.
- 1.7 To secure funding from the LCRCA the Council needs to go through a 'Gateway assessment'. This is a process set up by the LCRCA to ensure that the schemes are delivering the appropriate outputs, and that Local Authorities have the processes in place to deliver the projects.
- 1.8 A Gateway 3 application, aimed at securing funds to progress design work, early contractor involvement and other costs, has been successful. A Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) will shortly be received, it is expected that this will be for the full

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amount requested. This will be reviewed and approved in accordance with the delegated authority previously granted by Cabinet.

- 1.9 A Gateway 4 application, aimed at securing the cost of works delivery and associated costs, has been submitted to the relevant CA Panel for scrutiny.
- 1.10 If both the FBC and Gateway 4 application is approved, this should generate a GFA for approximately £19.97m. The draft agreement has been drawn up and will shortly be forwarded.
- 1.11 Cabinet, at its January meeting, gave delegated authority to the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer, following consultation with Cabinet Member, to sign the grant funding agreement for the necessary funding to enable the construction stage of the first phase of Southport Eastern Access to be undertaken. The same meeting also approved the delegation of the award of the construction contract to the Assistant Director of Place - Highways & Public Protection, again following consultation with Cabinet Member.
- 1.11 Assuming the GFA is approved, the Council will receive an additional £19.97m. Council approval is sought to include this additional funding within the Capital Programme.
- 1.12 The scheme was included in the Transport Capital Programme in 2023-24 and the scheme details, phasing and funding have been discussed with Cabinet Member.
- 1.13 Most of the design is complete, but there are some specific elements currently under development. This includes a series of safety and traffic mitigation measures planned for within the Norwood Ward where traffic patterns are likely to be influenced by the re-opening of Foul Lane to general traffic, which is one of the elements of the proposed scheme. Some further ground investigation works is also being undertaken on an area of the scheme where ground conditions are challenging.
- 1.14 The scope of the works likely to be delivered with the funding available is set down below.
 - localised widening at the junction of Bispham Road and Norwood Road
 - junction improvement including widening at the junction of Sussex Road and Norwood Road
 - the reopening of Foul Lane to traffic including cycleway proposals
 - a series of improvement and traffic mitigation measures in the Norwood area.
 - Improvements
- 1.15 A decision will be made shortly on the elements to form Phase 1 to enable works to commence as soon as possible following receipt of funding and the necessary approvals. Work will then progress on the securing of the land necessary to accommodate Phase 2.
- 1.16 The scheme details and associated consultation process will be set out in a report to the Council's Licensing and Regulatory Committee in November 2024 for the

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junction and active travel improvements and for the mitigation and safety measures in the Norwood Ward.

- 1.17 The wider scheme has been subject to two public consultation sessions, both completed following consideration from the Councils Public Consultation and Engagement Panel.
- 1.18 Initial consultation was completed in 2022. This was aimed at informing residents and business of the potential for the delivery of the project as well as providing the opportunity for concerns and comments to be raised to help influence the scheme development.
- 1.19 Following the development of the proposals it was considered sensible to complete some more detailed consultation. This second consultation process was more to inform key stakeholders, those with a land interest and the general public about the design of the scheme and its objectives. Engagement was undertaken to secure comments and feedback to help inform the final detailed design process and the full business case.
- 1.20 This further engagement in 2023 was separated into two stages;
 - Stage 1, which began in October 2023, focused on key stakeholders identified by the Council; and those who have an interest in the land on which the scheme will be delivered, either through a freehold, leasehold or statutory undertaking. This list was identified by the Land Referencing Company and confirmed by the Land Agent, commissioned to support the Council on this scheme. In total 65 letters were sent out to a private survey link on Your Sefton Your Say.
 - Stage 2 was the wider public engagement and - ran from 3rd November to the 23rd December. This stage consulted the wider public area including residents, schools, college and businesses. All addresses which were adjacent to the improvements were identified via the Council's internal Mapping system and 935 letters were distributed to these addresses inviting them to complete the consultation. In addition, a Social Media campaign was launched on the Council's platforms as well as Press Release being released onto the Council' website. All Protected Characteristics Groups / organisation and regional / national cycling and walking organisations and charities were also invited directly by email to take part in the survey.
- 1.21 Some feedback on the main issues raised during consultation have been set out in the report to L&R Committee (November 24) mentioned above. Details of feedback from the consultation process were also considered by Public Consultation and Engagement Panel (June 2024)
- 1.22 Ward Member briefings providing details of the consultation were provided and a number of meetings were held specifically with the members of Norwood Ward. Following these discussions a number of public consultation sessions have been held to help shape the mitigation measures which will form part of the final scheme. These measures will be subject to wider public consultation during the summer 2024.

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- 1.23 Recognising the importance of ensuring that all members are fully briefed on the development of the scheme, its phasing, duration, likely implications during construction and ultimate benefits, including social value, that the scheme will deliver. It is proposed to provide Ward Members with a summary note and invite to a briefing session (or sessions) prior to the main works contract being let. This should help confirm the elements design and approved and those areas where further development is planned and try and address any concerns raised.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 A decision is currently being made to determine the likely scope of Phase 1 and Phase 2. Phase 1 will be target on land within the Council's control and can be delivered whilst land is being secured for the delivery of Phase 2
- 2.2 The Contract value of the works likely to form Phase 2 is still being established through the Early Contractor Involvement stage of the procurement process previously agreed by Cabinet.
- 2.3 It is anticipated that the total scheme costs for both phases, which will include the Contract Target Cost, supervision and contract administration costs, statutory undertakers' diversion costs and any legal or approval costs, will be approximately £19.97m.

3. Legal Implications

- 3.1 As determined by the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, the contract for the works will need to be sealed.

4. Risk Implications

- 4.1 Should Cabinet not recommend the funding for inclusion in the Capital Programme, the contract won't be signed and works not delivered. This will have a negative impact on the Council's reputation and ability to secure further funds from the LCRCA for transport projects. There is a risk that the Works cost exceed the budget. However, further funding will be secured for Phase 2, so any additional costs over and above the cost plan will be funded from this budget. Furthermore, a robust costed Risk Register exists to mitigate this risk. This is reviewed on a regular basis.

5 Staffing HR Implications

- 5.1 The management of the contract will be overseen by staff in Transportation Planning and Highway Development team. The contract administration and supervision will be undertaken by a team from the existing Transport Technical Services Supply Framework. The intention being that this team will administer and supervise several large capital schemes which are expected for delivery at the same time. The staff costs incurred prior to the award of the Contract will be funded from the Development Funding secured by the Council from the LCRCA which is contained within the Transport Capital Programme. Staff Costs, once the contract for the works is awarded, will be funded from the capital funding secured for the construction

6 Conclusion

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- 6.1 By approving the recommendations the Council is able to include the funding in the Capital Programme and let the Contract for the delivery of the Southport Eastern Access Phase 1 Works.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

No alternative options have been considered

Equality Implications:

The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated.

Impact on Children and Young People:

The Impact of the scheme cared for children and care experienced young people was considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment. Options for positive impacts will be considered in the development of the Social Value commitments that the Contractor will be expected to provide

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral impact. The construction process will have negative impact in that new materials will be used and there will be a net carbon increase. There will also be a negative impact on traffic movements on the impacted streets whilst works are ongoing. However, the scheme when implemented, will improve accessibility and should encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport. This should reduce the carbon impact. The scheme is one of a number of schemes currently subject to a Whole Life Carbon Assessment which will be able to provide a definitive picture.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD. 7814/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD. 5914/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

The external consultation has been completed with details set out in the boy of the report.

In summary, two public engagement sessions have been held in 2022 and 2023. Ward members have recently been invited to a session to further explain the details of the scheme/

Implementation Date for the Decision:

Immediately following the Council meeting.

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Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet – Procurement Strategy for Southport Eastern Access Scheme –
Phase 1 – 4 January 2024

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Cabinet and Council Report			
Report Title:	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure - Receipt of Capital Funding		
Date of meeting:	07 November 2024 14 November 2024		
Report to:	Cabinet Council		
Report of:	Assistant Director - Highways and Public Protection		
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways		
Wards affected:	All Wards		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

Allocations of additional funding over £1m in value need Council approval. This report seeks a Cabinet recommendation to Council to add £1.067m of Local Electric Vehicle Charging (LEVI) funding to the Council’s Capital Programme. Subject to confirmation from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, a Grant Funding Agreement will be received for this amount.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is recommended to;

- (1) Recommend to Council the approval of a supplementary capital estimate for £1.067m, externally funded using LEVI funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) for the delivery of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure across the borough.
- (2) Note the progress of the development work in support of a submission to the LCRCA to identify the programme of roll out of new infrastructure.
- (3) Note the progress of the development of an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy for the borough.

Council is recommended to;

- (1) Approve the receipt of a supplementary capital estimate for £1.607m, externally funded using LEVI funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) for the delivery of Electric Vehicle Infrastructure across the borough.

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1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

- 1.1 Various strands of work in relation to promoting lower carbon emissions from transport across the Borough are being developed, with Electric Vehicles (EVs) being an integral element. Promoting the adoption of EVs supports the national policy stance, alongside Sefton's own Climate Emergency Declaration and Local Plan. Regionally it also aligns to the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) in updating the Local Transport Plan.
- 1.2 There is an expectation that the private sector will help deliver Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) as future demand increases at more commercially viable sites. It is recognised that Local Authorities play an important role in helping to provide a fair and open public charging network, which allows residents without driveways / private parking the opportunity to be able to own and charge an electric vehicle. Council implemented EVCI will therefore likely be at sites less commercially attractive and be designed to bridge the gaps in distances to chargers and costs for local communities.
- 1.3 There is an opportunity for Sefton Council to obtain funding from the Office for Low Emissions Vehicles (OLEV) for EV charging points infrastructure. This is via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's (LCRCA) submission for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding. The key principle of LEVI is to bridge inequalities gaps for EV users without access to private driveways / parking.
- 1.4 The regional bid was submitted in November 2023 with initial draw-down on 90% of the funds now taking place and the remaining 10% to follow once procurement tender documents are completed. The LCRCA has successfully secured an indicative award of £9,647,000 in total to fund EV infrastructure projects across the Liverpool City Region. Whilst a final decision has yet to be made, it is expected that the LCRCA will split the funding received equally across the Local Authorities. This would result in the receipt of £1.067m for Sefton.
- 1.5 All Local Authorities within the City Region were expected to set out a likely approach to the provision of EV infrastructure to meet the requirements of the LEVI funding and submit these to the LCRCA who will then consult with OLEV.
- 1.6 In the submission made it was proposed that the approach to the roll out in Sefton would be a prioritised approach to EVCI procurement and implementation. This would look at Council owned car parks and potential community hubs firstly; whilst gathering more information around the potential for on-street residential charging options. It was considered that more evidence was needed to be able to consider future on-street residential charging, including lessons learnt from neighbouring and other Local Authorities. It should be noted that some other Local Authorities are favouring an On-Street Charging approach. This will provide a blend of approaches across the LCRCA.
- 1.7 It is proposed that once developed further an agreed approach will be consolidated into a Sefton Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) Strategy, which will provide the Vision and Objectives and shape the future decision-making process around EVCI. The EVCI Strategy will be supported by policy context, analytical mapping evidence and future scenario predictions. It is

proposed to develop the EVCI Strategy with key stakeholders, including Cabinet and Ward Members, internal departments and specialist external partners initially.

- 1.8 The details of the roll out of infrastructure will be shared with Cabinet for approval along with the Strategy document. The proposals included in the initial bid for the LCRCA was based on evidence from previously commissioned study to look at the viability of EVCI within the Council-owned car parks. The study produced an extensive list of potential sites based on, location, numbers of spaces, opening times, proximity to existing charging points and the number of households within a 10-minute walking distance. This produced a long list of 22 car parks, which was then further buffered to an approx. 5-minute / 400m walking distance for 1,000 households, to produce a prioritised short list of 8 car parks.
- 1.9 Further mapping work is now being commissioned to look more in-depth at the long list of potential sites, types of chargers and overall viability against the LEVI criteria. In addition further community sites, such as leisure centres and land which may be developed into community hubs are being explored. This will enable the Council to move towards the LEVI procurement process with a full list of sites with good viability for LEVI funding potential. There is also an awareness that any future funding arrangements with Charge Point Operators (CPO) will likely include a mixture of public sites which are or are not commercially attractive and this may not be apparent until procurement conversations begin.
- 1.10 It should be noted that the LCRCA have informed the Local Authorities that they will lead on the process to secure a CPO to install and manage the infrastructure across the City Region. The exact model of operation, implications for the Local Authorities and likely receipt of income, will be determined in due course and be subject to approval. It is expected that each Authority will be responsible for managing the relationship with the CPO and the roll out of infrastructure in each district and all associated payments. As such it has been agreed in principle that each Local Authority will receive a share of the funding.
- 1.11 The programme for procurement, appointment and roll out is being agreed. The most recent information received suggests that tender documents will be discussed between the LCRCA and OZEV between November and December. The procurement process, which is likely to be 2 stage will be between Feb to August 2025 with Autumn 2025 being the earliest likely delivery.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The costs associated with the development work to map potential sites and submit information to the LCRCA have been met from the relevant budget line within the agreed Transport Capital Programme. Once a formal Grant Funding Agreement is signed, then this LEVI funding can be used to fund any further development costs in addition to the infrastructure costs.
- 2.2 It should also be noted that some specific, separate funding, secured by the LCRCA from OLEV, has been used to fund two fixed term Project Manager posts to provide some additional capacity to the LA's. Each post allows development work across 3 Local Authorities.

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2.3 The charging mechanism for each EV charging point and the distribution of income is unknown and this stage and will be considered further after Procurement and before implementation.

3. Legal Implications

3.1 The LCRCA will lead on the procurement process to secure a CPO. There is likely to be a contract or formal relationship between the CPO and The Council which should be based on documentation developed by the LCRCA. There will be a need for some Legal support from the Council in the formalising of this Contract.

4. Risk Implications

4.1 The details of the relationship between the Council and the prospective CPO will be determined in a further report to Cabinet to ensure all risks are understood.

4.2 No LEVI funding will be expended until the Grant Funding Agreement or similar is reviewed and signed. This process will only be undertaken when a risk review has been undertaken.

5 Staffing HR Implications

5.1 The development input into the bid and in the subsequent liaison with the LRCA has been from staff within the Highways and Public Protection Department supported by the Transport Technical Services Supplier as appropriate with funding provided from the Capital Programme.

5.2 The existing team will be supplemented by the LCRCA appointed part time Project Manager.

6 Conclusion

6.1 This report seeks approval to accept the allocated LEVI Funding into the Council's Capital Programme. This will facilitate the remaining steps of the process and help avoid delays in using the funding. Further report(s) will confirm the Council's EV Strategy, final details of the priority list for the roll out of EV infrastructure and the details of the Contractual relationship with a Charge Point Operator, when all those matters have been determined.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The Council could decide not to participate in the LEVI delivery scheme but this would limit the ability to provide EV infrastructure for those residents without off-street parking.

Equality Implications:
The use of LEVI funding will help people without off-street provision charge Electric Vehicles.
Impact on Children and Young People:
The report has no direct impact on Children and Young People.
Climate Emergency Implications:
The recommendations within this report will have a Positive impact.

The provision of infrastructure for EVs should help promote EV vehicles and hence reduce the Carbon output across the borough

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services & Commercial (FD.7811/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5911/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Consultations have been held with the LCRCA over scope of Sefton's proposed offer for the LEVI funding.

It is proposed that the EV Strategy, once further developed, is subject to Consultation.

Implementation Date for the Decisions:

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Cabinet decision; and Immediately following the Council meeting.

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Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None

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Report Title: Corporate Mobile Telephone Contract Retender

Date of meeting:	7 November 2024
Report to:	Cabinet
Report of:	Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial
Portfolio:	Corporate Services
Wards affected:	All Wards
Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Is this a key decision:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No

Summary:

This report seeks authority to go to market for the provision of mobile telephony SIM cards to support the mobile data and telephony provision across the authority.

The report sets out the background to the Council’s current contract with EE, which is due to expire on the 31 March 2026 and recommends a route to market in line with Public Procurement legislation.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) Authorise the use of Crown Commercial Services Framework (RM6261) Mobile Voice and Data Services to run a further competition for the provision of a new corporate mobile telephone contract with a proposed term of an initial 3-years with the option of 2 further 12-month extension periods.

- (2) That the Executive Director – Corporate Services and Commercial, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Corporate Services, be granted delegated authority to award a contract resulting from the above procurement (and to award any extension thereof).

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

- 1.1 The Council is currently in a contract for its mobile telephone provision with EE Ltd after running a previous competitive procurement process under a now expired Crown

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Commercial Services framework (RM1045). The contract has been in place since April 2019 and was for an initial term of 5 years, with the option of extending by two further periods of 12 months through delegated authority to the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial. The Council is using both optional extension periods giving a final contract end date of 31st March 2026.

- 1.2 The current contract predominantly covers SIM cards for data and mobile handsets used by Council Officers and Members. In addition, the current contract also includes SIM cards which are used within various traffic signal devices around the borough.
- 1.3 With the impending contract end date, the Council now needs to start the process of tendering for a new mobile phone contract. Whilst 2026 is indeed a while off, a procurement process is expected to take anywhere from 6 to 9 months and with the possibility of a different provider winning this new contract, additional time for migrating and implementing the mobile service also needs to be factored into the overall project timeline.
- 1.4 The proposed procurement route is to utilise Crown Commercial Services dedicated Mobile Voice and Data Services (RM6261) framework to run a mini competition. This framework is Public Contract Regulations compliant. A key requirement within the new specification will be the ability of operators to provide acceptable signal coverage across the borough to enable Council officers and Members to continue to be able to conduct their duties, noting that due to Sefton's coastal regions, not all providers have the same service availability.
- 1.5 Consultation has been carried out with colleagues from the Council's Highways department who are responsible for the provision of traffic signals mentioned above under 1.2. It was anticipated there could be large disruption to service and a large cost of change should the outcome of this tender result in the awarding to a new mobile supplier as SIM cards would potentially need to be physically replaced in a significant number of traffic signal equipment across the borough. However, it has been confirmed that the Highways department have already commenced the process of moving their services to a new solution. This procurement exercise will therefore not include traffic signal SIMs and the scope of this procurement only relates to the provision of mobile SIM cards for use for mobile phones, or mobile data as required by officers and members to discharge their duties.

2. Financial Implications

Costs will be contained within existing corporate revenue streams managed by the ICT Client team.

3. Legal Implications

The Council has a current statutory duty under Public Contract Regulations 2015. Whilst this will soon change to the Procurement Act 2023, as this procurement will be under a framework established prior the new act coming into force PCR2015 will apply.

4. Risk Implications

Without a mobile telephone/data contract, the Council and its staff would be without a core communication tool used for its business and duties. The provision of this service supports the core business as well as ensuring the provision of business continuity arrangements across a number of services by provide data which can be used should there be a network outage.

5 Staffing HR Implications

There are no staffing implications

6 Conclusion

If the recommendations within this report are approved, the next steps will be to complete the procurement process to ensure that Sefton has a new contract in place before the current contract ends thereby allowing for an implementation/transition period should the contract be awarded to a new provider.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The other option available to the Council would be consider a direct award to the incumbent provider (EE Ltd). This was rejected on the basis that the Council has been with the incumbent provider for a number of years and by going out competitively to market could realise savings for the Council but at minimum confirm value for money has been achieved. Unlike some other ICT services, the incumbent providers services are not embedded or intrinsically linked enough that would bring into consideration a large cost of change.

Resource within both ICT and Procurement has been identified and reserved to conduct this procurement exercise.

Equality Implications: There are no equality implications.
Impact on Children and Young People: None
Climate Emergency Implications: The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral. Impact as the existing services will continue under a new contract.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

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(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services & Commercial (FD.7791/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5891/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Consultation has also taken place with the Highways department as outlined within the 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 to this report.

Report Title: Treasury Management Position to September 2024

Date of meeting:	7 November 2024 14 November 2024		
Report to:	Cabinet Council		
Report of:	Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial		
Portfolio:	Corporate Services		
Wards affected:	All wards		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

This report provides Members with a review of the Treasury Management activities undertaken to 30th September 2024.

Recommendation(s):

Members are requested to note the Treasury Management update to 30th September 2024, to review the effects of decisions taken in pursuit of the Treasury Management Strategy and to consider the implications of changes resulting from regulatory, economic and market factors affecting the Council’s treasury management activities.

The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

To ensure that Members are fully appraised of the treasury activity undertaken to 30th September 2024 and to meet the reporting requirements set out in Sefton’s Treasury Management Practices and those recommended by the CIPFA code.

1. Introduction

1.1. As recommended under CIPFA’s revised 2021 Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Public Services, the Council’s Treasury Management Policy and Strategy document for 2024/25 (approved by Council on 29th February 2024) included a requirement for regular updates to be provided on the investment activity of the Authority. This report is the second of such reports for the year and presents relevant Treasury Management information for the period ending 30th September 2024.

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- 1.2. The report includes information on the investments held / entered into during the period and the interest rates obtained (with a comparison of performance against a standard benchmark figure). In addition, the report highlights whether there has been any variance from the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and the Council's approved Prudential Indicators (the operational boundaries within which the Council aims to work).

2. Investments Held

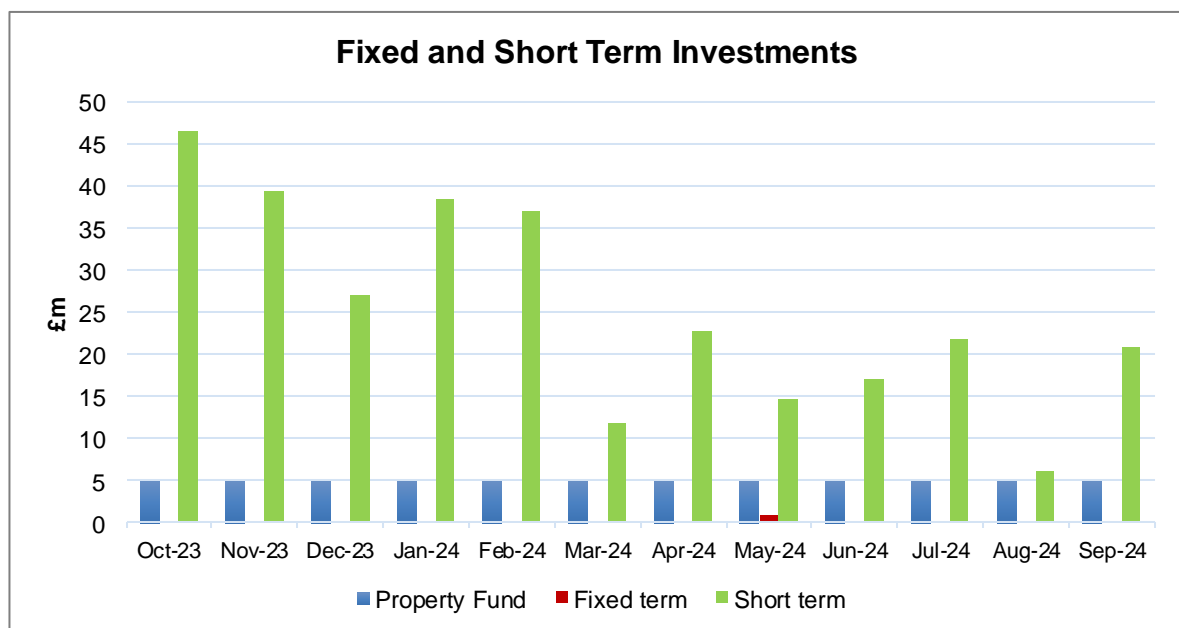
- 2.1. Investments held at the 30/09/2024 comprise the following:

Institution	Deposit £m	Rate %	Maturity	Rating
Money Market Funds:				
Aberdeen	2.58	4.96	01.10.24	AAA
Aviva	2.58	5.01	01.10.24	AAA
Blackrock	0.20	4.90	01.10.24	AAA
BNP Paribas	2.58	4.96	01.10.24	AAA
Goldman-Sachs	2.58	4.92	01.10.24	AAA
Invesco	2.58	5.00	01.10.24	AAA
Morgan Stanley	2.58	4.94	01.10.24	AAA
Federated	2.58	5.03	01.10.24	AAA
Insight	2.58	5.01	01.10.24	AAA
Total	20.84			
Property Fund:				
CCLA	5.00	5.21	n/a	n/a
Total	5.00			
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	25.84			

- 2.2. The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing grant income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. The cash is initially held in a number of highly liquid Money Market Funds to ensure security of the funds until they are required to be paid out. This approach is consistent with the Council's approved Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2024/25. The balance of investments is therefore expected to fall over the coming months as the income is fully expended.
- 2.3. All of the investments made since April 2024 have been with organisations on the current counterparty list. The maximum level of investment permitted in the Treasury Management Strategy in any one institution, or banking group, is currently £15m. Whilst the maximum should be retained, in light of current economic conditions, a day to day operational maximum of 10% of the total portfolio is currently being imposed for investments. This will spread the risk for the Council but will have a small detrimental impact on the returns the Council will receive in the future. The Council has remained within that boundary during the year. At present, it is not expected that there will be any need to review this limit.

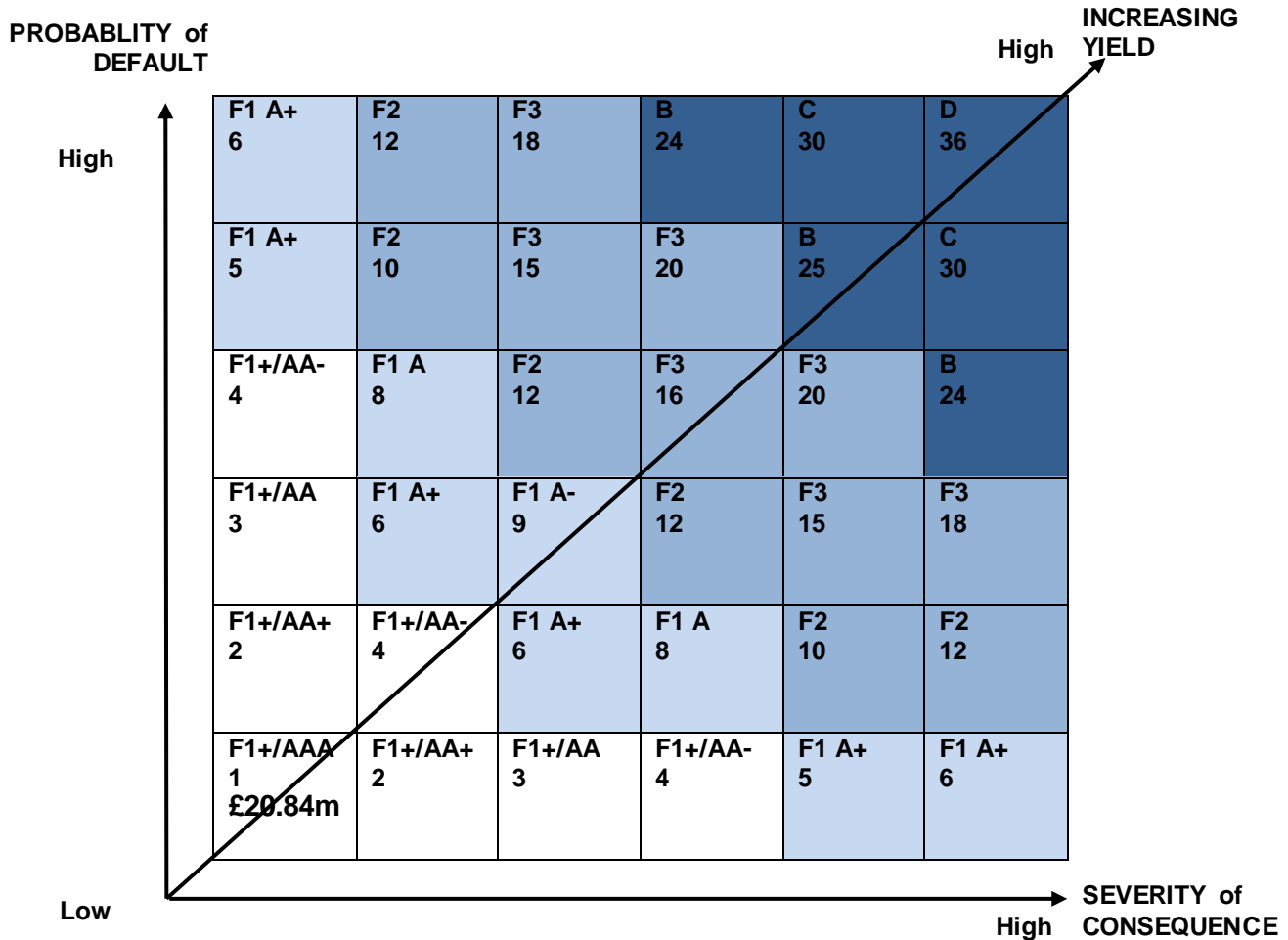
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- 2.4. The Council will only invest in institutions that hold a minimum Fitch rating of A- for banking institutions, or AAA for money market funds. The ratings applied to investment grade institutions, and the much riskier speculative grade institutions, as defined by Fitch, have been placed into a risk matrix (paragraph 2.8).
- 2.5. An investment has been made with the Church, Charities and Local Authority Investment Fund (CCLA) in June 2014. CCLA invest in commercial property which is rented out to enterprises such as retail units, warehousing, and offices. The majority of properties owned are in the south of the country where the market is often more buoyant than the north. The Council has in effect bought a share of the property portfolio and returns paid are in the region of 4%. This is seen as a long-term investment with the potential for the capital value of the investment to vary as property prices fluctuate.
- 2.6. The Net Asset Value (NAV) of the Property Fund has decreased over a 12-month period to September 2024 from 282.48p per unit to 276.04p per unit, a decrease of 2.3%. The fund is considered to be a long-term investment and fluctuations in value are to be expected with this type of asset. The situation will continue to be monitored closely however, and advice taken from the Council's treasury advisers should its position in the fund need to be reviewed. The income yield on the Property fund at the end of September 2024 was 5.21% which, is higher than returns received in the past and represents a reasonable return on the Council's investment.
- 2.7. The ratio of overnight deposits (short term) to fixed term investments and the property fund is shown below:



- 2.8. The matrix below shows how the Council has set its risk appetite by being risk averse and putting security and liquidity before yield when investing:

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SEFTON RISK TOLERANCE:

Risk Level	Score	Grade	Amount Invested
LOW	1 - 4	Investment Grade	£20.84m
LOW - MEDIUM	5 - 9	Investment Grade	-
MEDIUM	10 - 20	Investment Grade	-
HIGH	21 - 36	Speculative Grade	-

2.9. The Council will continue to maximise any investment opportunities as they arise although it is not envisaged that any substantial increase in returns can be achieved for the remainder of the current financial year as balances available for investment will be held in short term deposits to allow the council to respond to any exceptional demands for cash as they arise. The security and availability of cash will be prioritised over improved yields as per the agreed Treasury Management Strategy and advice received from Sefton’s treasury management advisors.

3. Interest Earned

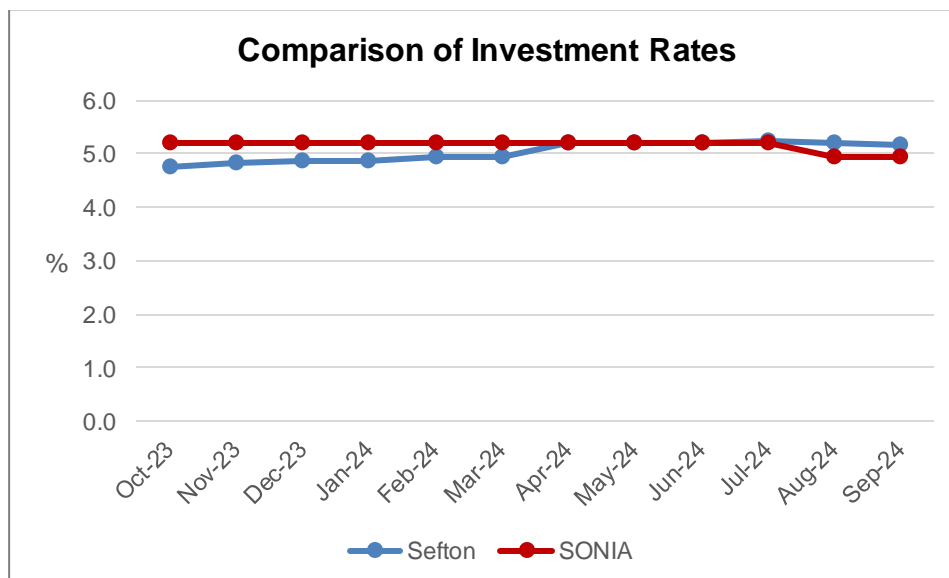
3.1. The actual performance of investments against the profiled budget to the end of September 2024 and the forecast performance of investments against total budget at year end is shown below:

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	Budget £m	Actual £m	Variance £m
Sep-24	0.605	0.680	0.075

	Budget £m	Forecast £m	Variance £m
Outturn 2024/25	1.343	1.537	0.194

- 3.2. The forecast outturn for investment income shows the level of income to be above target against the budget for 2024/25. Investment rates had remained at a higher level over the past twelve months (see 3.4. below) when compared to previous years largely in response to previous rises in interest rates. The budgeted income for 2024/25 was therefore set at a higher level when compared to prior financial years.
- 3.3. As mentioned in paragraph 2.9, it is not envisaged that improved rates will lead to a significant increase over and above the current forecast income from investments during 2024/25. Investment rates have begun decreasing as central banks have cut rates towards the second half of 2024. Sefton expects to be a net borrower in future years and therefore cash balances are diminishing and will be held in short term deposits which are low risk but return a lower level of investment income.
- 3.4. The Council has achieved an average rate of return on its investments of 5.2%. The chart below shows the average rate of return plotted against the SONIA benchmark.



- 3.5. As can be seen from the chart above, Sefton's investments have performed in line with the SONIA to the end of September 2024.

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4. Borrowing Strategy

- 4.1. As outlined in the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council in February, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing lower interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.
- 4.2. After substantial rises in interest rates since 2021 many central banks have now begun to reduce rates, albeit slowly. Gilt yields were volatile over the 6-month period and have reduced slightly between April and September 2024. Much of the downward pressure from lower inflation figures was counteracted by upward pressure from positive economic data.
- 4.3. The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 4.80% at the beginning of the half year period to September and 4.79% at the end. The lowest available 10-year maturity rate was 4.52% and the highest was 5.18%. Rates for 20-year maturity loans ranged from 5.01% to 5.57% during the half year, and 50-year maturity loans from 4.88% to 5.40%.
- 4.4. The Council has PWLB loan maturities of £8.846m scheduled during 2024/25 comprising several historic loans. The Council has pursued a strategy of internal borrowing in recent years as per the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council. Cash balances have therefore been reduced to replace maturing loans where possible and when interest rates on deposits remain lower than PWLB borrowing rates. This position is however, considered temporary and may be reversed at any time in response to the ongoing liquidity needs of the Authority or when exceptional demands for cash may arise.

Impact of the High Needs Deficit:

- 4.5. Cabinet receives regular reports on the Council's High Needs Budget and the current deficit position that has been increasing over a number of years due to rising demand for provision coupled with a shortfall in funding made available from central government. The deficit position reported to Cabinet on 25 July 2024 was £38m as at the end of 2023/24 financial year. Due to the increased pressure the High Needs Deficit has placed on the availability of cash balances the Council has taken additional short-term borrowing of £15m and one longer term loan of £5m during the period to September 2024. These loans were taken in the Local Authority to Local Authority market at below PWLB rates.
- 4.6. The High Needs Deficit is fundamentally impacting the Council's treasury management activity and budget activity. It is forecast that the Council could be servicing a deficit that will be around £59m at the end of the financial year that will arise from the cumulative effect of High Needs expenditure incurred in excess of Dedicated School Grant (DSG) funding from central government over several years. It is anticipated that further external borrowing will therefore be required in 2024/25 to further reverse the Council's internal borrowing position and maintain prudent levels of liquidity.

4.7. Officers have sought clarification from MHCLG on the application of DSG debt costs and have been advised that this must be charged to the General Fund. The estimated revenue account impact of the High Needs Deficit over the next three years could therefore be £1.5m in 2024/25, £3.2m in 2025/26, and £4.0m in 2026/27. Funding diverted to servicing these additional costs will reduce the amount of funding available for core services.

4.8. Officers will continue to take advice from the Council's external treasury advisers when undertaking new borrowing in order to ensure borrowing remains prudent and affordable and to minimise the financial impact to the Council.

5. Interest Rate Forecast

5.1. Arlingclose, the Council's treasury advisors, have provide the following interest rate view as at September 2024:

	Current	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Central Case	5.00	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50

Underlying assumptions:

- As expected, the MPC held Bank Rate at 5.0% in September. While the “no change” majority of eight to one was unexpectedly strong, the minutes suggested some policymakers believed a gradual approach to loosening policy was warranted given the persistence of services inflation, rather than no loosening at all.
- This is in line with our long-held view that Bank Rate will initially reduce gradually before a more rapid decline in 2025 as services inflation eases.
- CPI inflation remained just above the 2% target in August, the Bank expects this to rise to 2.5% by the end of the year as prior falls in energy prices drop out of the annual comparison and reveal the prevailing persistence of domestic inflationary pressures. Private sector wage growth has eased back but remains elevated and services inflation remains high at 5.6%. However, both will continue to decline over time.
- UK GDP growth has been relatively strong in the first half of 2024, although this partly reflects a rebound from the first half of 2023 technical recession. Underlying growth is weaker, but risks around domestic demand lies to the upside due to recovering consumer demand (although the announcement of higher taxes in the upcoming Budget could damage confidence). Stronger economic activity amid a continued tight, albeit easing, labour market could leave wage growth and inflation persistently higher.
- Official ONS Labour market data continues to be unreliable but wider indicators suggest the market is loosening as labour demand cools. Anecdotal evidence has suggested lower private sector pay growth for some time, and we expect a weaker labour market situation to hasten that outcome.
- We expect that the continuation of restrictive monetary policy and the appreciation in sterling will bear down on activity and will require more substantial loosening in 2025 to boost activity and inflation.
- Global bond yields have reduced in anticipation of US monetary loosening, duly delivered by the Federal Reserve. However, US interest rate expectations seem relatively aggressive compared to policymakers' own expectations, which raises the risk of continued US-policy induced volatility in gilt yields. Moreover, there remains a heightened risk of fiscal policy, credit events and/or geo-political events causing additional volatility in yields.

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Forecast:

- In line with our forecast, the MPC held Bank Rate at 5.0% in September.
- The MPC will continue to cut rates to stimulate the UK economy but will initially be cautious given lingering domestic inflationary pressure. We see another rate cut in 2024 (Q4), but more significant monetary easing in 2025, with Bank Rate falling to a low of around 3%.
- Upside risks to inflation remain which could limit the extent of monetary easing.
- Long-term gilt yields have fallen alongside US monetary policy expectations. Arlingclose's central case is for yields to be volatile around a relatively narrow range, reflecting the likelihood for monetary policy loosening in the Eurozone, UK and US.

6. Compliance with Treasury Management Limits

- 6.1. As at the end of September 2024, the Council has operated within the treasury limits for borrowing and investments set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and in compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Practices.
- 6.2. Liability Benchmark: the Council monitors its levels of external debt (excluding long term liabilities) against a prudential indicator for the liability benchmark. The benchmark for 2024/25 and the following two financial years is shown below compared to the Council's forecast level of borrowing:

Liability Benchmark	31.03.25 Estimate £m	31.03.26 Estimate £m	31.03.27 Estimate £m
Loans CFR *	236.4	229.8	242.1
Less: Balance sheet resources	-57.0	-31.7	-28.5
Net loans requirement	179.4	198.1	213.5
Plus: Liquidity allowance	10.0	10.0	10.0
Liability benchmark	189.4	208.1	223.5
Forecast Borrowing	173.8	194.5	213.0

* CFR excluding other long-term debt liabilities

- 6.3. The Council's forecast borrowing has remained broadly in line with the benchmark although this may be exceeded from time to time due to temporary liquidity requirements and where there is a need to reverse the Council's internal borrowing position. As mentioned in 4.5 above, additional borrowing has been required due to exceptional demands from the High Needs deficit and a prudent estimate of this demand has been included above. The level of forecast borrowing will not exceed the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for 2024/25 agreed by Council in February.
- 6.4. Maturity Structure of Borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

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Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing:	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %	Actual %
Under 12 months	20	0	14
12 months to 24 months	20	0	7
24 months to 5 years	20	0	10
5 years to 10 years	30	10	22
10 years to 15 years	50	10	14
15 years +	50	30	33

- 6.5. External Debt: This indicator shows the levels of actual debt compared to the authorised limit and operational boundary set for the current financial year:

External Debt:	2024/25 £m
Authorised limit for external debt	200
Operational boundary for external debt	175
Actual external debt 30.09.24	157

- 6.6. Long-term Treasury Management Investments: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term treasury management limits are:

Long-term Treasury Management Investments:	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	No fixed date £m
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	15	10	5	15
Actual principal invested beyond year end	0	0	0	5

- 6.7. Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds, real estate investment trusts and directly held equity but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term. As at the end of September 2024, Sefton holds £5m with the CCLA Property Fund as a strategic investment with no fixed maturity date.

- 6.8. Interest Rate Risk Indicator: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. A target is set for the one-year impact of a 1% rise and a 1% fall in interest rates on the revenue account. This is measured by examining the parallel shifts in yield curves on borrowing net of treasury investments. The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at new market rates.

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Interest Rate Risk Indicator	Limit £m	Forecast £m
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	1.0	0.4
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	1.0	0.4

Financial Implications

A surplus in investment income has been experienced for 2024/25.

Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government Act 2003 to review its Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Activities.

Corporate Risk Implications

Treasury management risks are assessed and managed under the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy and the Treasury Management Practices. Having operated with the limits and parameters set at the beginning of the year, the Council has remained within its agreed risk appetite and there are no additional risk implications to be considered.

Staffing HR Implications

None

Conclusion

The Council has acted in accordance with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and has reviewed its Prudential Indicators to comply with legislation and is acting prudently in that its capital expenditure proposals remain affordable.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

Equality Implications:

There are no equality implications.

Impact on Children and Young People:

None.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will have a neutral impact.

The Council has during 2024/25, invested its reserves and balances overnight with either banks or money market funds in order to maintain high security and liquidity of such balances. It has not had the opportunity to invest in longer term financial instruments or investment funds for which there may be a chance to consider the impact on the Council's Climate Emergency motion.

In the event that the Council has more surplus balances available in future that may lead to longer term investing, the Council will take account of the climate emergency when discussing the options available with the Treasury Management Advisors.

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What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial (FD 7806/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 7805/24) 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:

Immediately following the Council meeting.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

Background Papers:

There are no background papers to this report.

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