

Sefton Public Engagement and Consultation Panel

**Meeting held on Friday 12th November 2021
Remote Meeting**

Present:

Councillor Paulette Lappin (Chair)
Councillor Leslie Byrom (CBE) (Victoria Ward)
Councillor Janet Grace Labour (Victoria Ward)
Councillor Tony Brough
Nigel Bellamy – VCF Sector Representative
Dr Mike Homfray – VCF Sector & Equalities Representative
Lyn Cooke – Communications & Engagement Manager, both CCGs
Jackie Sutton, IRMP Officer Merseyside Fire Service
Wendy Anderson – Healthwatch Sefton
Joel Thornton – Sefton Young Advisor – Sefton CVS
Georgia Ribbens – Young Advisor Project Officer for Sefton CVS
Jayne Vincent - Consultation & Engagement Lead, Sefton MBC
Stephen Birch – Transport Planning Manager - Highways
Joanne Christensen – Integrated Commissioning Manager for Adult Social Care
Mark Quillan – Customer Services Manager
Tara Scott - Programme Manager for Strategic Support
Sharon Eaton – Admin Support, Strategic Support

Apologies:

Councillors Greg Myers and Denise Dutton

The reports presented to the Public Consultation and Engagement Panel can be found here: [Sefton Council](#) – Link to Consultation & Engagement Panel Papers – 12th November 2021

	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies Apologies: Councillors Greg Myers and Denise Dutton	
2. Declarations of Interest No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.	
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 th September 2021 are a true and proper record.	

Matters Arising

None were recorded

Item 5 - Proposal to undertake Public Engagement and Consultation Activity – Town Deal Movement, Access & Connectivity Programme (Presentation at Meeting)

Stephen Birch presented the proposal for consultation and engagement with regards to Movement, Access & Public Realm Improvements in Southport. This was delivered via a presentation and is a continuation of the Public Engagement activity that took place last year on Future Southport and is an update on their approach.

The previous consultation 'Big Ideas' had 4 themes:

- World Class Waterfront
- Thriving Town Centre
- Green and Clean
- Better Connected

The consultation feedback highlighted a lot of support for investment in the public realm, and provision for improved public spaces through the waterfront, town centre, and Green and Clean themes and then specifically on the better connected theme which is about connectivity, there were a range of comments around rail services, improving the streets and parking. The public want better rail services and improvements to the railway station entrance. They also requested a redesign of the Promenade, Lord Street and Neville Street to make these streets more user friendly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The feedback also highlighted the need for better signage and lighting and improvements to footpaths and street furniture to make Southport more attractive to visitors, businesses, and residents.

The element that Stephen is leading on is Movement Access and Public Realm. The project aims to create accessible and high-quality well-connected public spaces, providing priority for walking and cycling.

In terms of consultation and engagement they are wanting to build on the previous consultation under the better-connected theme and they are going to target the consultation to those organisations that are going to be benefitting from the proposals, including

The aim is to get some feedback on the ideas and principles how can we make best use of the street space, how much planting

should there be what lighting so that the feedback can then inform the process for the future phases as schemes are developed.

- The intention is to begin the consultation by the end of November, and it will run into the New Year.
- Feedback will inform the business case
- Business case to be considered by Cabinet early 2022 and then submitted to Government to secure release of funding for delivery of phase one of the project.

Cllr Brough asked if Stephen has engaged with the owners of the train station, because the look of the station lets the whole town down and it is a pivotal part of our public realm?

Stephen replied that himself and a colleague did meet with the agent of the owner of the station yesterday and they discussed some of the ideas that the consultants have come up with about how to improve the look of the entrance to the station from both directions both leaving the train and returning to it. The agent has made some initial positive responses and will discuss them with his client when he gets more details and feedback has been given to the consultants about their ideas being received positively. The owners have had an issue with water that has leaked down into the concourse and their focus has been on trying to tackle that before they start doing any improvements.

Nigel Bellamy suggested having a static exhibition either in the Atkinson or an empty shop where people could go in and if there was someone there that could talk them through some things, because there are people who won't be part of any group but use the town centre a lot

Stephen replied that they have looked at different ways of doing this and they have done that sort of thing in the past but the issue is resourcing it and having available for people to go in but he will look and see if they can do that as an option but he is also aware that the proposals for the Enterprise Arcade are being developed so whether there is scope to do something jointly with them he will speak to the person leading on that. If they did do something like that it may be possible to put something there for a period of time but they wouldn't be able to have somebody there all the time, maybe on a couple of occasions but resourcing is a big challenge with that.

Jayne Vincent commented that it has been done before when they did the Sefton 2030 in Bootle Strand and they just did the odd day. That was all that they could resource at the time but it did make a big difference in terms of being available to talk to people as they are going out in their day to day shopping or eating or whatever but it did work for them but she takes his point in terms of not having someone there permanently.

Jayne asked Stephen how he is engaging with ward members?

Stephen replied that before anything goes into the public domain, he will be ensuring that everything is circulated to all the ward members and the local MP and they will be working with the Comms Team on that process also.

Jayne asked if there would be any briefings or anything done separately for ward members through Peter Moore with the political parties.

Stephen responded that he was going to send it out to them and offer a briefing and if they wanted one they are happy to organise that or he could do it the other way around so he will speak to Peter and see what he thinks and whether he has something coming up with the members and he could add it to the agenda.

Cllr Lappin thanked Stephen and said that she will look forward to his feedback.

Stephen Birch

Item 6 - Update Report - Day Opportunities Consultation & Engagement Activity

Joanne Christensen presented the update report for engagement and consultation activity with regards to Day opportunities. She initially brought a report to the Consultation and Engagement Panel in July to outline the proposed consultation approach which was originally to run from the 19th July until 17th October but was rescheduled. The consultation began on 11th October and will run until 9th January 2022 and this was to allow them to plan their approach with the schools and colleges who were not available in July because of their summer holidays and also because some of their original approach had included lots of face to face events in some of the day centres and obviously there are still restrictions in place due to Covid so they had to reschedule.

The consultation began on 11th October they had established the stakeholder group prior to the consultation beginning and that included Sefton CVS, Sefton Carers Centre, Age Concern, Healthwatch Sefton, Sefton Older People's Forum, and People First Merseyside and all of that engagement did co-produce the approach to the consultation and also the documentation and the toolkit which we used

The toolkit that was co-produced included easy read questionnaires and presentations, and they were also able to consider access in relation to some of the venues and some of the sensory equipment that they may need for some of the consultation events and they were able to offer face to face meetings with service users and carers, and people also had the opportunity to access web based

easy read questionnaires. They are inviting everyone to join a service user and carer reference group, which will grow in representation as they proceed with the consultation.

In recognising how we engage with people living with dementia and understanding those communication needs they have been working closely with the Alzheimer's Society to tailor their approach to include support staff and family members which has worked out really well.

In understanding the needs of people living with Autism they have had communication/involvement with the National Autistic Society Parent Carer Group and that group has been facilitated by the Carer's Centre and they have been undertaking sessions with them.

They have also developed a specific section for carer's and that has been co-produced with the Carer's Centre and is included in the questionnaire and there are a number of events that are going to link in with National Carer's Week and with Carer's Rights days. They are developing specific engagements with young people and are working closely with schools and colleges which will help inform the understanding of the change in requirements of younger adults who come through who may require support during the day going forward and to better understand their aspirations.

They have developed a range of engagement techniques including specific activity cards and activity sheets to stimulate conversations.

Accessibility which was one of the things they were questioned on in July, that has been considered and all information has been provided on a plain background to avoid confusion, they have used specific colours to help with the visual documents, they have a range of appropriate imagery being used in the background along with the presentations and they are also using clients specific facilitators and minute takers at all of the sessions.

They have been out to some of the Luncheon Clubs and some small groups and friendship To date they have undertaken four virtual events, nine face to face events in the day centres and have held drop-in sessions at the leisure centres and the libraries.

There are a couple of volunteers for the reference group and they plan to build that up and then start to engage with them next week and support them to take part in the reference group so that they can be engaged at every step of the way and will continue to work with us when we are developing specifications for day opportunities going forward.

Cllr Lappin thanked Joanne for her excellent report.

Lyn Cooke commented that she was really impressed with the report and that the consultation approach has a very thorough and well considered approach, using different and tailored methods.

Mike Homfray agreed and said that it was a really impressive presentation and he would like to say well done and good to see it is inclusive and flexible. He feels that this approach would be good to use as a template for large-scale consultations in the future.

Item 7 - Proposal to undertake Public Engagement and Consultation Activity - Customer Service Survey

Mark Quillan presented the proposal for consultation and engagement with regards to Customer Service Survey.

Mark is proposing to do a revised customer satisfaction survey – they have a long-standing customer satisfaction survey which were previously at both One Stop Shops but currently the Southport One Stop Shop is closed so this proposal is for a revised survey to take into consideration the adjustments that they have had to put into place due to Covid

The consultation will provide feedback and a snapshot of customers feelings around making appointments

The survey at both One Stop Shops was produced in April 2012 so it is a long established survey however they have changed a number of the questions and amended it to take into consideration that we are now offering appointments only facility and questions are quite pertinent to whether they have accessed the council's web site first and whether they have been able to answer their enquire via the council's website.

The results of the survey will form part of the central evidence that is required for a customer service excellence award we have an accreditation every year and having these surveys gives us a good score on that. Unfortunately, Southport One Stop Shop closed in March 2020 and there are no current plans to re-open it however, we are delivering a similar face to face service in the Atkinson. They are unable to carry out a survey at Southport because they don't have their own reception area however they are intending to do that in May which is their next survey date and are hoping to start the first survey in Bootle from Monday next week.

Following the consultation, the intention is to do a comprehensive report and analysis which he will produce every 6 months shared with service areas, this panel, key partners and will be made available on the council's website.

Mike Homfray agrees that the survey itself is ok but feels that the difficulty is that to an extent it is going to get answers from people

who are accessing the service. The difficulty with moving from a drop in to an appointment service is that you always get some people who for some reason will not access that service and sometimes they are the people who have considerable needs because of their lifestyle and the issues that they face and they are less likely to engage with an appointment based service.

Mark thanked Mike for making such a good point

Nigel Bellamy made a similar point, that because people don't have to go to an appointment because they got the information that they needed either from the call centre or through the website he may only get a certain slice of the population and what he won't discover is the people who actually found it more convenient to get their advice from the call centre or the website. If he is able to get the details of those people who were diverted and didn't need to make an appointment it may be worth sending a questionnaire to them.

Mark agreed that this was a good point and made a note of it

Jayne Vincent informed the panel that the survey that Mark has drafted is being developed with Michelle Anglesea so that the language is accessible language, but Jayne suggested that the letters that go out for appointments may need to be accessible also.

Jayne asked if customers will have the opportunity to take the survey away with them to complete and then return it or are they expected to complete it after their appointment while they are sitting in front of the person who they have had their appointment with?

Mark said that the initial intention is to ask them to complete it with the person that they are with however, from the comments made here today they will now give customers the opportunity to take it away and to return it to them and as they are doing it over a week so if they say can you bring it back within the next 7 to 10 days that will give them a chance to receive it and as part of the overall report that they do they can include their comments.

Jayne said that she understands that there is always the risk that if people take it away they won't complete it but it is about how comfortable they feel filling it in with the customer adviser if they have not had a good experience.

Mark agreed with Jayne's point and agreed to offer that opportunity with every appointment

Jayne asked if taxi drivers will be able to give their views also

Mark confirmed that they would as they make up half of the appointments that they offer, so he will receive their feedback.

Cllr Brough asked what the experience is for people living in Southport now that the One Stop Shop has closed and there is no immediate plan to re-open it, how do they access the service?

Mark responded that they promote it on the website that they offer an appointment only facility at the Atkinson in Southport and they have a number of customers who visit the Atkinson and there are four staff currently based there and they make appointments for people who come in to use other services but then ask for appointments and they are able to provide them with an appointment within 48 hours so there is scope for any customers who visit the website, those that ring up for council tax or any general council enquiry the contact centre will offer them the opportunity if they think that it is necessary to have an appointment at Southport and any customers who just happen to be visiting the Atkinson or the surrounding areas are able to make an appointment if it is deemed necessary.

Cllr Lappin thanked Mark for the report and looks forward to getting the feedback

Mark Quillan

Item 8 - Proposal to undertake Public Engagement and Consultation Activity – Early Years Sufficiency Statement

Tara Scott presented the proposal for consultation and engagement with regards to Early Years Sufficiency Statement. This was delivered via a presentation regarding the early years sufficiency statement which is a statutory duty for the LA to secure sufficient early years and childcare places and there is statutory guidance that the LA should report annually to elected members on how we are meeting our duty to secure sufficient childcare so this consultation is to assess the ongoing needs of families and gather views on childcare provision in the borough to ensure that it is stable and meeting demands and expectations

Sufficiency is met through a variety of providers including schools, day nurseries, pre-schools childminders, holiday clubs and breakfast/after-school clubs and covers the private, independent, voluntary, and maintained sectors.

In terms of early years places they are looking at places for under 5-year olds and also childcare places that cover 0-14 year olds and up to 18 years for disabled children and this provision is paid for by parents and the LA are taking into account what is reasonably practicable when setting what sufficient childcare means.

The consultation is to assess the ongoing needs of families and to capture views on childcare provision throughout the borough to ensure that it is stable and meeting demand. There was a consultation last spring which was aimed at providers and was a

snapshot of the impact of the pandemic on this sector, and that report will be published soon. At that time, it was difficult in gathering parent/carer views due to Covid but this time we are including parent/carer views.

The consultation will involve as many internal/external stakeholders across the borough and in as many settings as possible and to engage with a wide range of people and provider views using a variety of approaches, communication, and consultation techniques.

There are two strands to the consultation which is gathering provider views and then also the views of parent/carers and the aim will be to have socially distanced face to face drop in or small group discussions dependent on Covid restrictions and small group video discussions as well. There is a list of the stakeholders as part of the report. There is a communication plan for how we will communicate all of the consultation details using Sefton's website and social media platform and through mailing lists and newsletters and through partner organisations.

The aim would be that we would have the consultation which will be open for 10 weeks with a planned launch of 22nd November and that would take us up to 3rd January with a view to the promotion being front loaded because we have the festive period in there and to allow early analysis of the key themes so that we can then dip in and have that focussed view of what is coming up early on and see if we can find out more information around that

In terms of the report findings the Early Years Sufficiency Statement is required by the council as part of its statutory duty and that will be presented to cabinet members in March 2022 and subject to governance sign off for April 2022 and will be made available on Sefton website and shared on our social media platforms and with stakeholders and with Liverpool & Sefton Chamber of Commerce and also to parent/carer forums.

Cllr Lappin stated that it was an excellent presentation and it will help us to understand child poverty in Sefton too and we hope that this will feed into the wider study that Public Health are doing.

Cllr Lappin asked Tara to come back to panel following the consultation.

Lynn Cooke commented that it was a really good plan and very thorough and will pick up on some of those issues which is great.

Tara Scott

<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Jayne Vincent said that the next meeting in January part of it will be our annual report and that we already have a full agenda so we are asking people to prepare their papers for that before the Christmas shutdown and then we can get them out to panel members in the new year.</p>	
<p>6. Date of next meeting -</p> <p>Friday 14th January 2022, 10.00 a.m. Venue – Remote via Microsoft Teams.</p>	