

# Agenda Item 5

## Sefton Public Engagement and Consultation Panel

**Date:** May 2022

**Title:** Feedback and Evaluation report – Crosby

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### 1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide feedback on the findings from the engagement and consultation carried out in connection with proposals - Highways, Parking and accommodation works linked to Green Car Park Redevelopment, Crosby.
- 1.2 A public consultation was undertaken in Autumn 2021, in accordance with the report presented to PECP in September 2021. The consultation was launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and ran until 7<sup>th</sup> November.
- 1.3 The Panel requested feedback and evaluation and this paper will therefore consider: -
  - How the activity was carried out;
  - the opinions of the people taking part on how they found the process;
  - The number of people who took part and the costs of the different methods of getting them involved;
  - How successful different methods were at getting the views of people who are not normally heard, for example, children, young people and people with disabilities;
  - How the results will be fed back to the public; and
  - How will the results influence the proposals.

### 2. **Name of Issue you were Consulting On**

- 2.1 The proposals within the consultation are linked to the Council's wider ambitions and objectives set out within the approved Crosby Investment Strategy, the Sefton Local Plan and associated Crosby Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The proposals comprise a series of measures linked to highways and public realm improvements having the aim of improving access and accessibility for Crosby Village Centre, also providing improved and additional parking linked to the future redevelopment of the Green Car Park and addressing the principle of use of the Car Park as a development site.

### **3. The Consultation Process**

- 3.1 A paper proposing the consultation activities was approved by the Public Consultation and Engagement Panel in September 2021.
- 3.2 The plans for the scheme were consulted upon for a period running from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2021 . Due to Covid-19 situation, much of the consultation was online utilising the Your Sefton Your Say (YSYS) survey platform. In addition to the online survey a virtual workshop event with internal and external stakeholders was organised and delivered with the support of Sefton CVS. Due to the lifting of restrictions at this time a community drop in event was also arranged and provided the opportunity for local residents and businesses to view the proposals and speak face to face with members of the team involved in developing the project.
- 3.3 In addition, hard copy leaflets were produced and distributed around the surrounding area to residents and businesses likely to be affected by the improvements. A social media campaign was also launched on the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts managed by the Council's internal Corporate Communications Team. This resulted in 100,678 'impressions', this being the number of times the advertisement was seen on facebook or Instagram and from that over 3,000 clicks on the link to the Crosby Town Centre Regeneration consultation page.
- 3.4 The Contact Centre telephone number and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) script were provided to respond to queries and the Regeneration email were utilised for those unable to access the online survey; or whom had specific comments or requests for further information.
- 3.5 It is noted that a further consultation will take place as part of any future planning process and due consideration will be made as to any findings from this moving forwards.

### **4. Summary of the Consultation Results**

- 4.1 There were 572 responses to the Your Sefton Your Say online survey and 14 responses directly from the Regeneration email account, which

included 6 requests for copies of technical drawings and hard copies of the survey, 4 comments on the survey and 3 replies to consultation invitations. Elements of the scheme had separate sections on the online survey giving respondents the opportunity to comment to open questions on specific aspects.

- 4.2 Key findings from the Your Sefton Yor Say on line consultation:
- 50 % of respondents visited Crosby Centre more than once a week
  - Over 50% of respondents do not use cars to access the town centre
  - 70% of respondents live less than 1 mile away from Crosby Centre ( 20 minute neighbourhood)
  - Nearly 70% thought that improving public realm in the town centre would encourage more visitors and longer stays
  - Almost 50% thought that the scheme would help regenerate Crosby centre with 24% stating that they were unsure what the effect would be

More open qualitative questions were also asked about the proposed development mix on the Green Car Park site, the car parking and junctions works and the potential to improve public realm.

A mixed response of positive and negative comments were made on all elements. Overall there was a positive response towards the health care element of the potential development but some concerns over the residential and library elements. There was general support for public realm improvements and the need to attract investment into the town centre and improve the experience for pedestrians.

The main development related concerns were over the provision of a new library as opposed to refurbishing the Waterloo Library. The appearance of the development and the need to attract increased footfall to Crosby were also points raised.

Transport related concerns were raised over the removal of the Green Car Park and how this may affect the parking across the town centre. Other concerns were linked to the need to improve car parking management and parking operations to move away from the traditional Pay and Display system. Electric Vehicle charging points in the car parks were met with positive response. There was some support for the need for the junction improvements however, concern that the signalisation of the junction may just lead to more congestion.

### **Focus Group and Face to Face findings**

The findings from the focus groups and face to face consultation tended to mirror the positives and concerns raised on the online survey, parking was a major element of discussions, as was the development mix and how the development would impact the regeneration of the town centre overall.

## **5. Feedback**

- 5.1 Immediately prior to the conclusion of the consultation and engagement exercise the government announced the outcome of the Round 1 Levelling Up Programme which had been a main driver for the timing of the consultation work linked to a potential early planning application. The funding bid for Crosby through round one of this programme was not successful and the consequence was a slowing of the pace of work associated with planning application preparation.

As a result of this outcome in relation to funding and the need to re-evaluate the approach to the various elements of the proposed project, formal feedback on the consultation was delayed. Government only provided formal feedback on the Levelling Up submission in December 2021 and a process was set in motion to review available options to deliver the key elements of the proposed project. On this basis being in a position to clearly identify a way forward was considered an essential part of any feedback on the consultation undertaken to date.

The overall feedback to the Crosby Levelling Up submission was positive and a Levelling Up Round 2 programme was to be announced in the spring, on that basis the opportunity is to now report on the consultation and also set in motion a conversation and engagement process linked to a second round Levelling Up bid for Crosby.

A summary of the 2021 Survey findings will be published on the Consultation Hub.

All findings from the survey are being considered in the next stages of the development proposals for the project the access, parking and Green Car Park elements.

## **6. Future engagement**

- 6.1 As part of any planning process linked to ongoing development and delivery of the project elements there will be a further consultation, which will offer the chance for comments and further engagement.
- 6.2 As the Levelling Up Round 2 bid progresses stakeholder engagement and consultation will form a part of the bid preparation process.

## **7. Recommendations**

The Public Engagement and Consultation Panel are recommended to:

- a) Note the report and that the results of consultation that will be used to refine proposals, future design and delivery of the project content.
- b) Request that lead officers provide the Public Engagement and Consultation Team with the results and reports so that they can be uploaded onto the Consultation Hub.