

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills – 08th March 2022)		
COUNCILLOR	PORTFOLIO	DATE
Patricia Hardy	Communities and Housing	June 2022

NEIGHBOURHOODS AND PARTNERSHIPS

A successful Day of Action took place on Sandbrook Way in Ainsdale on the 18th May. One Vision Housing, Environmental Health colleagues and the Neighbourhoods team, spoke with residents about issues around dog fouling, responsible ownership, and fly-tipping. This was then followed up with a letter delivered to all residents around bin collection. OVH are working with cleansing to address some issues with a possibility of Eurobins being used in the future.

An extension to the living wall on Washington Parade has been carried out. An official unveiling took place on Thursday 16th June which tied in with Clean Air Day.

Construction at Runnells Lane Park is complete, and a photo/press release is being organised with the Manor ward councillors to take place prior to a more formal launch.

Weeds and grass maintenance issues have started to become more prevalent. Many areas are not being fully serviced by our contractors due to parked vehicles and domestic waste bins being stored on the verges. We have asked the Comms team to send out messages regarding parked vehicles causing issues for the contractors on the verges.

Ward Councillors have expressed an interest in setting up a Road Safety team made up of local volunteers working in partnership with the Police. However, so far, no residents have come forward to volunteer to be part of a Safer Road Watch group.

Area Coordinators recently met with a colleague from Economic Growth and Housing regarding a local heritage project which is underway in several local authorities including Sefton. This project enables residents and groups to nominate buildings and structures for “Local Listing”. Local listing recognises local buildings and structures that do not meet the criteria for statutory designation, but which represent the character and identity of the area.

The Community Payback team continue to operate from the Blucher Street workshop four days per week to clear litter from the beach and surrounding areas. The national risk assessment is due to be approved imminently after which the team will be able to operate further afield.

Welfare Reform

Food bank

1st April 2022 – 1st June 2022	South Sefton	Southport
Total Vouchers received	1071	359
Adults Fed	1346	480
Children Fed	783	276
Total Fed	2129	756
Crisis Type	Low income – 737 vouchers presented 1480 people fed	Low income – 188 vouchers presented 338 people fed
Family Type	Single 626 vouchers presented 58.45%	Single 168 vouchers presented 46.8%
Age group	25-64: 1195	25 – 64: 421

Planning for the Holiday activity and food Fund Summer Activities is well under way and so far, there have been applications from providers to offer at least 1400 places for Children across the borough.

The recruitment process has finished, and the Coordinator and Administration Assistant posts have been filled.

Hate Crime

The Hate Crime JAG (formerly MARAC) meetings continue to take place via MS Teams. The group are looking to return to face-to-face meetings very soon.

Walkabouts and leaflet drops have taken place in the Bedford Road area of Bootle and the Central Square area of Maghull, involving staff from the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and local policing teams. These were delivered in response to issues raised at the Hate Crime JAG.

Equalities

Online training on Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) continues and dates have been set through to 2023. More departments are coming forward for advice on completing EIA's as part of their projects.

The CEG is looking to launch a disability staff group and LGBT staff group. The number of staff getting in touch so far in response to the promotion of these groups has been low.

NAVAJO award reassessment has been set for 28th July.

Anti-Social Behaviour

20 Community Protection Notice warnings and 5 Full Community Protection Notices have been issued during the past 12 months. The team are continuing to utilise this measure as it is proving successful in deterring perpetrators of Anti-Social Behaviour.

The ASB team and Merseyside Police will be delivering "Action Days" in hotspot areas that are frequented by Street Drinkers across the borough. The individuals being targeted on these days are known for causing Anti-Social Behaviour and Low-Level Crime.

The ASB team are trailing working one day a week from a Police station which will develop a closer working relationship with Merseyside Police Colleagues.

Partnership work continues to address ASB issues in Duke Street Park and surrounding areas. A meeting has taken place with schools, police, green Sefton and neighbourhoods to work on a plan for the summer period. Activities are taking place throughout the summer months on Friday and Saturday evenings. Plans are being developed to improve park entrance gates and ensure hedges are fully reinstated. A meeting is planned with Highways to discuss an island that young people hang round on sitting on planters.

Library & Information Services

Communications

Events promoted via the Council website, The Atkinson website, The Atkinson social media, through the press and Liverpool City Region

Different Voices – Shared Lives project launches

A new project developing and showcasing writing talent from Sefton's racial minority communities has just been launched. Funded by LCR, the project will provide platforms, pathways and creative opportunities for underrepresented communities to express themselves, raise awareness of their histories and explore contemporary experiences of living and working in Sefton. A series of creative writing workshops began being delivered by Writing on the Wall every Tuesday for 6 weeks from 5th April at Southport Library.

Major infrastructure work begins on the People's Network

A major upgrade of the People's Network infrastructure has begun and works should continue throughout the spring. This work is the most comprehensive change to the People's Network infrastructure in 20 years. The works include:

- Discontinuing the physical servers that manage the People's Network and moving to a cloud-based model.
- Replacing all 106 pc's from existing council stock of new pc's abandoned when teams moved to a home working model with laptops
- Moving from Windows 7 to Windows 10 operating platform
- Replacing Deepfreeze with an alternative model of controlling data protection
- Replacing BLOXX with new filtering software
- Works on the new infrastructure should be completed by the summer of 2022. Currently Agilisys are moving the in the process of moving the servers and bringing together all the spare new pc's that will form the new People's Network.

Improvement works to Meadows Library

Meadows Library has been particularly hard hit by Covid restrictions and recovery of user numbers is slower than expected. To address it is planned to refresh the look of the library to make it more appealing. Works include:

- Replacing worn furniture
- Reviewing the layout of the shelving to make the library more accessible
- Installing window manifestations in the Children's area
- Replacing shelving end panels with fresh images
- Restarting class visits
- Creating a space for small groups to meet in the library

Libraries are in discussions with the Hornby Society to inject a fresh identity into Meadows Library. The Hornby Society currently have a permanent exhibition space in Meadows, accessible through the library and the library service is exploring extending the Hornby theme into their spaces. The founder of Hornby, Frank Hornby lived in Maghull, so the connection to the local area's heritage is clear. Discussions are also currently taking place with the Hornby Society, with the possibility of working together on a Heritage Fund bid in the near future to install a working Hornby train above the shelving near to the Children's Library. This would be a unique attraction and would blend the spaces of the library and Hornby Society exhibitions together more seamlessly.

Human Libraries Project success at LCR Culture Awards

The Human Libraries Project was, once again shortlisted in a category at this year's LCR Cultural Awards. The project has been a runner up in previous awards, but this year Human Libraries won its category for the Covid Response Award. During lockdown, Human Libraries activities immediately switched online but were able to offer blended activities despite

restrictions. For example, an online cookery tutorial was produced where participants could pick up ingredients from Bootle Library, which was closed but operating click and collect at the time. The class was then run online, and staff supported residents in attending virtually, where they still all cooked together (just not in the same space) and got the benefit of social interaction with each other.

This success at the LCR Culture Awards recognises the dedication of library staff and artists who drove the project through the most difficult of circumstances. The innovative way the project changed its delivery was seen as a model of best practice in unprecedented times.

THE ATKINSON

Theatre Programme

The Atkinson's new Performing Arts Programmer Marie Kenny has secured some eye-catching bookings -

Paul Young has been a major star for four decades. He broke into the big time 40 years ago when 'No Parlez' went to number one and spawned iconic hits like 'Wherever I Lay My Hat (That's My Home)'. He will visit The Atkinson on 22 March 2023 as part of a major tour which coincides with the 40th anniversary of his career and the publication of his extraordinary memoir, entitled 'Behind The Lens'.

Paul Smith is compere of Liverpool's Hot Water Comedy Club. Now a celebrated figure on the national comedy circuit he embarks on a brand-new national tour in May 2023 entitled 'Joker!' The scouse funny man will mix his trade-mark audience interaction with more hilarious true stories from his everyday life. This is guaranteed to be one of the outstanding comedy tours of the year.

Roald Dahl & the Imagination Seekers. This month younger audiences will be thrilled with this immersive and interactive performance, involving games and imaginative play, whilst exploring Roald Dahl's extraordinary stories along the way. All around the world Roald Dahl's words are disappearing not only from books but children's minds too. Now only a Secret Organization known as The Ancient Guild of Taletenders can save the stories, but they need your help...!

Praise received

The theatre team received some lovely feedback from Henshaws' visually impaired group following a few visits to shows in recent weeks:

'We had the pleasure of bringing some of our young people to the Atkinson Theatre on three occasions, just recently we saw Shrek and on Friday evening we were there for the 24K Bruno concert. Each event has been greatly received by the kids and their families, Friday nights show was just brilliant, we were singing and dancing from the start, music is so uplifting for our kids ... It's not that often that you meet people who go that extra mile to ensure their customers get great service, please pass on our gratitude to all your team.'

Exhibitions Programme

Following conclusion of the Southport Open art exhibition the galleries changeover to welcome the following new displays :-

The Poetry of Trees

4 June 2022 – 11 March 2023

Trees have inspired artists and writers for millennia. A range of artistic perspectives help us reconnect with the natural world, through painting, sculpture, and digital artworks. Including

several pieces from the Atkinson's own fine art collection this exhibition explores the relationship between humans and the nature, revealing how trees may reflect our emotional sensibilities and influence perceptions of how we live our lives.

Zarah Hussain: Light Upon Light - 11 June – 24 September 2022

The Atkinson continues to celebrate the work of contemporary female artists. In this exhibition Zarah Hussain combines contemporary digital art with traditional hand-drawn Islamic geometry to create immersive drawings, sculptures, and light installations. This touring display from gallery Oldham includes a stunning geometric light installation which offers viewers a kaleidoscopic opportunity for reflective and meditative response.

Sefton's heritage is promoted through these three forthcoming exhibitions -

Built on Sand: 200 Years of Southport's Changing Street Scene -18 June- 17 September 2022

Southport Townscape Heritage Project show how Southport has developed from sandhills to seaside town.

Barnum in the Blood: Six Generations, One Passion -25 June – 17 December 2022

Discover the story of the 6th generation showman behind Southport's historic Pleasureland. From a young age Norman Wallis worked on his father's rides and his grandfather was known as The Seaforth Barnum.

Southport's Victorian Visitors - 2 July – 29 October 2022

What have P.T.Barnum, Arthur Conan Doyle and Sigmund Freud got in common? It might surprise you to discover that the answer is Southport!

Southport Library

The library has recently hosted class visits from Holy Trinity Primary, and co-ordinated a large group visit of 110 students from Linaker Primary. Mental health Awareness week was promoted with a book display.

Summer activities

Throughout the summer the Atkinson will provide free opportunities for families to take part in creative activities.

Family Fun Days The fun commences on Saturday 2 July, celebrating the summer exhibitions programme with a day of free family fun. Expect craft activities, drama workshops, tours, talks and tasty treats!

Interactive Storytelling

Interactive storytelling and imaginative play sessions for children aged 3-7 will be held every Wednesday from 27 July to 24 August. Ignite your child's imagination, develop their confidence, and encourage their communication skills with these family sessions.

Make it! Craft Workshops

Children of all ages will be getting creative during the summer holidays in The Atkinson's free craft workshops. Inspiration will be taken from our museum, galleries, and theatre spaces and all equipment is provided. Suitable for all ages.

Held as drop-in events every Thursday from 28 July to 25 August.

Young Curators Summer Sessions

These sessions are aimed at young people aged 14-18 who are interested in the arts and may wish to pursue a career in the museums' sector. Participants will work with industry professionals to develop their creative skills and understanding of museum collections.

Communications

Events promoted via the Council website, The Atkinson website, The Atkinson social media, through the press and Liverpool City Region

HOUSING

Housing Strategy (2022 – 2027) Public Consultation - Open

A consultation version of Sefton's refreshed Housing Strategy (2022-27) has been developed in partnership with a range of external and internal stakeholders. The development of a robust housing strategy has followed good practice guidance, which indicates the importance of developing a shared strategy, in collaboration with key partners, and also through consultation with a wider group of stakeholders and the community. Therefore, to ensure that the draft Housing Strategy is robust, fit for purpose and inclusive, the next strategy development stage, involves consultation with a wider group of stakeholders and the community of Sefton.

The public consultation process has been developed in accordance with Sefton's Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, to ensure it is appropriate and reaches those individuals or populations who potentially have protected characteristics or are harder to reach. The public consultation is currently open (**closing on 29th July 2022**) and can be accessed via the following webpage: www.sefton.gov.uk/housingstrategyconsultation. Additionally, there are numerous alternative methods for accessing the consultation document and providing comments including making large print and easy read versions available alongside housing officer support to ensure inclusivity.

The final version of the Housing Strategy will be presented to Cabinet for consideration in September 2022.

Extra Care Housing

As previously reported several Extra Care Schemes are being worked up to enable us to meet our target of 1306 units across the borough by 2036. I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made on this and that market engagement over the past 6 months is positive. The RAG rated table below provides detail of schemes that are at various stages of their predevelopment journey.

SCHEME	DEVELOPER/ RP	STATUS	START ON SITE	COMPLETION	NOTES
Sandbrook Road, Ainsdale (90-unit Extra Care, 40 Affordable Rent and an 8-unit Short-term assessment scheme)	Riverside Housing Association	Planning app in anticipated committee/delegated report Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q3 24/25	Likely timeframe will now see final survey's completed June 22, demolition of buildings August, planning approval September and land sale October subject to cabinet approval, with a start on site thereafter.
Damfield Lane, Maghull, L31 3FA (107-unit Extra care mixed tenure 51 Affordable Rent and 56 Shared Ownership)	Torus Housing and Priory Asset Management	Section 73 submitted June 22	Q3 22/23	Q4 24/25	Land acquisition completed start on site anticipated Sep 22.
Town Lane Kew, Southport, PR8 4HQ (116 Extra Care, 18 apartments and 5 New style properties)	Torus Housing and Priory Asset Management	Section 73 submitted May 22	Q3 22/23	Q4 24/25	Land acquisition completed start on site anticipated Aug 22.
Hawthorne Road, Bootle, L20 6BY (91-unit Extra Care and 67 AR)	Housing 21 and Onward Homes	Planning approved	Q4 22/23	Q1 25/26	Final negotiations ongoing between Housing21, Onward, Combined Authority and Homes England with our support to finalise and agree grant rates. If agreed Start on site anticipated Q4 22
Park House, Haigh House, Waterloo, L22 3XL (106-unit Extra Care)	Anwyl Developers	New planning application expected	TBC	TBC	Anwyl currently in discussions with various Housing providers in anticipation of new application being submitted.

Coffee House Bridge, Bootle, L20 4AH (80-unit Extra Care and 107 AR)	SAFE Regeneration	Planning appeal lodged	TBC	TBC	Planning appeal hearing anticipated July 2022.
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If the above 6 sites were all to progress this would deliver a total of 590 of the required 1306 extra care units (45%).

In addition to the above sites several relatively early-stage proposals and discussions with housing providers, landowners and or developers are ongoing. This gives us real confidence that the market is responding to us, and future sites will be brought forward to meet future extra care housing need in the borough.

Private Sector Housing

Our 3 private landlord licensing schemes went live on the 1st of March 2018- focusing on the licensing of all private landlords in Bootle but developing stronger 'Additional HMO' licensing schemes to cover all types of HMO properties for Southport and Waterloo/Seaforth.

On the 2nd December Cabinet approved the Business Case for the re-designation of the 3 schemes from March 2023 and a full public consultation on the proposals is currently underway.

Since the April update, a further 71 properties have been identified as potentially requiring a licence, but no application has been received. Officers have sent final warning letters to these owners and will follow up with enforcement action if required. 4 x Final Civil Penalty fine notices have been served on 4 landlords for failure to licence 4 properties in the Selective Licensing area. 10 x Intention to Serve Civil Penalty Notices were also served on 10 Landlords for failure to licence properties within the Selective licensing area. A further 135 properties have been licensed. Since lockdown began 2212 new licenses have been issued. Compliance inspections have re-commenced, and 25 inspections have been carried out since the previous update.

Since the April update the team have responded to 56 requests for service relating to poor housing standards issues. Inspections have been carried out on the majority of these properties and informal action taken to remove hazards. Formal action was required in 2 of these cases where Emergency Prohibition Orders were served to prohibit the use of these 2 properties as residential accommodation due to the imminent risk to the health & safety of the occupiers due to severe poor housing conditions. Statutory enforcement action has also commenced on 2 long term vacant properties to enforce their sale and bring them back into use for residential accommodation. Management of the Council's Gypsy & Traveller site continues, and officers have attended 6 Unauthorised Gypsy & Traveller encampments.

Rough Sleepers & Homeless services

Housing First

The future funding settlement for the Housing First programme has been announced by the Government in May 2022. The LCR Combined Authority has secured funding to continue Housing First until March 2024 this will help to provide much needed stability for the service users, who require long-term assistance and the intensive support that this programme offers. Additionally, the Housing First partnership won a "highly commended" award for Best Initiative for Tackling Homelessness at the recent Northern Housing Awards.

Rough Sleeper Initiative

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced the next phase of the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI 2022-25) on 17th November. As part of this process, they asked all local authorities to think about their longer-term plans to end rough sleeping locally, and how RSI funding can be used to support these ambitions.

At the end of February, a bid for c£1.4m was made and at the end of May the council was informed that £1.16m of funding had been awarded. Although disappointing that the full amount wasn't awarded this was anticipated based on advice received from DLUHC during the bidding process that local authorities were very unlikely to get the full amount of their bids.

The breakdown of funding secured through the RSI bid is as follows:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council TOTALS	£376,811	£406,315	£374,407	£1,157,533
Crash Bed Workers	£64,000	£65,280	£66,584	£195,864
Flexible Personalised Budget	£15,000	£10,000	£7,500	£32,500
Hospital In-Reach Worker	£24,000	£32,640	£33,292	£89,932
Housing Options Team Officer	£37,249	£37,992	£0	£75,241
Q1 assurance	£29,951	£0	£0	£29,951
Resettlement Workers	£69,000	£70,280	£71,584	£210,864
Sefton Homeless Psychologist Service	£137,611	£190,123	£195,447	£523,181

Because DLUHC only provided funding for 0.4FTE (full time equivalent) of the Consultant Psychologist post the lower sum awarded shouldn't impact on the delivery of this service significantly in Sefton as all of the other posts within this service were fully funded and we remain confident that we can still achieve positive outcomes from the service. From 2025 when RSI funding ends we have agreed with MerseyCare that 'in principle' they will mainstream the service. The funding will also provide funding for a post for the Housing Options Team for the next 2 years.