

**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) **Date of Meeting:** 1 November 2022

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) 8 November 2022

**Subject:** Digital Inclusion Working Group – Update on Recommendations **Wards Affected:** (All Wards);

**Cabinet Portfolio:** Cabinet Member – Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services  
Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Skills

**Report of:** Chief Legal and Democratic Officer

**Is this a Key Decision?** No **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** No  
**Exempt/Confidential** No

### **Purpose/Summary**

To provide a monitoring report setting out progress made against each of the recommendations formulated by the Digital Inclusion Working Group and approved by Cabinet.

### **Recommendation:**

That the report setting out progress made against each of the recommendations formulated by the Digital Inclusion Working Group and approved by Cabinet be noted.

### **Reasons for the Recommendation:**

To comply with a decision of Cabinet to submit monitoring reports on a six-monthly basis setting out progress made against each of the recommendations.

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

No alternative options were considered. Cabinet has requested the submission of monitoring reports.

### **What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

#### **(A) Revenue Costs**

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report. The implementation of recommendations that result in efficiency savings and any necessary financial investment will be the subject of separate reports.

**(B) Capital Costs**

There are no financial implications arising for the Council as a direct result of this report. The implementation of recommendations that result in efficiency savings and any necessary financial investment will be the subject of separate reports.

**Implications:**

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

<b>Financial</b>	
<b>Legal</b>	
<b>Human Resources</b>	
<b>Equality</b>	
1.	No Equality Implication <span style="float: right;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></span>
2.	Equality Implications identified and mitigated <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></span>
3.	Equality Implication identified and risk remains <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></span>
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>	
The recommendations within this report will	
Have a positive impact	No
Have a neutral impact	Yes
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
There are no direct climate emergency implications arising from this report.	

**Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose**

Protect the most vulnerable:  
 Digital inclusion is a principal and approach that aims to ensure that people have the capability to use the internet to do things that benefit them on a day to day basis - whether they be individuals, businesses or other entities e.g. the voluntary sector. Likewise digital inclusion aims to reduce digital exclusion and the digital divide that can exist within society for a variety of reasons  
 The government's Information Economy Strategy called for greater focus on digital inclusion in order to:

- help businesses make smart use of information technology and data;
- ensure citizens benefit from the digital age; and
- underpin economic growth

Digital inclusion will be one of the areas that the Council will seek to contribute to and

enable within the Borough of Sefton and as such help residents to improve their chances to gain employment.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: As above
Commission, broker and provide core services: As above
Place – leadership and influencer: As above
Drivers of change and reform: As above
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: As above
Greater income for social investment: As above
Cleaner Greener: None directly associated with this report

## **Impact of the Proposals on Service Delivery:**

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

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD6985 /22) has no comments on the report

The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 5185/22) is the author of this report

Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing)

Sefton CVS

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

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

Following the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

**Contact Officer:** Paul Fraser

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**Email:** paul.fraser@sefton.gov.uk

### **Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection

## **1. Introduction/Background**

1.1 At its meeting held on 13 June 2017 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) approved the establishment of a Joint Working Group. The commencement of the Working Group was deferred to enable the objectives of the ICT Development Programme to be progressed and thereafter aspects of the Programme to be included in the Working Group's Scoping Document to review the topic of Digital Inclusion. The objectives of the Working Group were as follows:

- Identify the opportunity for the Council in supporting and enabling Digital Inclusion within the Borough of Sefton and the wider City Region;
- Identify how this can feed into the Councils future ICT and Digital Strategies;
- Confirm the strategic themes that should be addressed as part of this work e.g. connectivity and skills;
- Identify potential council activities that could be provided on a more digital basis and the enabling activity that will be required to support this; and

- proactively engaging with the Combined Authority and their advisors/consultants to ensure that opportunities identified for Sefton are incorporated in to the Liverpool City Region Digital Infrastructure Action Plan to ensure positive outcomes for the borough and its constituent communities

it was noted that all proposals would need to take account of resource requirements and be within the parameters of the current Medium Term Financial Plan.

1.2 Accordingly, the Working Group met on numerous occasions to gather evidence and produce its [Final Report](#) Because of the cross-cutting nature of the Working Group the Final Report was also considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills). Approval of the Final Report and associated recommendations was given by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services), Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) and Cabinet at their meetings held on 11 September 2018, 6 November 2018 and 6 December 2018 respectively. The approved recommendations are set out below:

1. The Working Group was impressed with the Visitor Economy (VE) 'Passport to Success' scheme aimed at college students across the Liverpool City Region coming into the tourism industry; whereby students are able to achieve a bronze, silver or gold passport standard to provide them with a range of opportunities to either gain quality work experience, an interview, apprenticeship or a full-time job.

The Working Group, at its meeting held on 23 May 2018 acknowledged that literary and numeracy skills should be embedded as a priority along with digital skills.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

- (A) The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Employment and Skills Board be requested to consider the development of a Digital Skills Passport Scheme (incorporating numeracy, literacy and communication skills) to help Sefton residents to gain future employment, via the Learning and Skills budget to be devolved from 2019; and
  - (B) Sefton Council, via Sefton@Work, in conjunction with local organisations such as Sefton Community Learning Service, work with the Liverpool City Region with the aim of exploring the application of such a Skills Passport for the benefit of Sefton employers and residents;
2. Using the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion "Mosaic" data, areas of high unemployment be targeted to enable those Sefton residents excluded from the labour market to develop their ICT skills to improve their opportunities for gaining future employment;
  3. To facilitate the above the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be

requested to devolve sufficient funding to Sefton Council to appoint a project worker with the clear objectives of:

- (A) Working with local employers to map ICT/digital skills;
- (B) Working with local partners such as Sefton Community Learning Service to develop and deliver bespoke training programmes to target residents in the areas identified in the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic” data;
- (C) Identifying, using the data from the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic”, a number of residents who would benefit from and be able to undertake training as referred to in 3. (B) above; and
- (D) Working with local employers to develop a compact agreement to enable those residents who successfully complete the bespoke training programme(s) to gain relevant employment;

4. If further opportunities arise for a roll out of the Include-IT project and to support the objectives of recommendation 2 then Sefton CVS be requested to consider such roll out to the priority areas identified within the Poverty Modelling and Digital Exclusion document; and

5. the Head of Regulation and Compliance be requested to submit a monitoring report to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Resources to be held on 5 March 2019, setting out progress made against each of the recommendations set out in the report and that thereafter, monitoring reports be submitted to the Committee on a six-monthly basis.

1.3 In accordance with recommendation (5) above the table attached to the report sets out progress made against each of the recommendations.

## **2. Update**

2.1 Three update reports have previously been submitted to both Overview and Scrutiny Committees (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) and (Regeneration and Skills) at meetings held in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

2.2 The table below details responses to the recommendations reported to the meetings in 2019, 2020 and 2021 together with updates received following recent consultations with Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Sefton CVS and the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing).

**PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE DIGITAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP**

**Recommendation**

**Progress Made**

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Employment and Skills Board be requested to consider the development of a Digital Skills Passport Scheme (incorporating numeracy, literacy and communication skills) to help Sefton residents to gain future employment, via the Learning and Skills budget to be devolved from 2019

**Progress made at September 2019**

Correspondence has been received from Frank Rogers, Chief Executive of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The following comments have been made:

“I am pleased to report that the we have now published an updated Liverpool City Region Digital & Creative Skills for Growth Action Plan, a key element of which is a commitment for the Combined Authority to establish a Digital Skills Partnership to enhance collaboration and agree a Digital Skills Passport for the whole City Region.

We look forward to Sefton Council’s engagement with this Liverpool City Region Digital Skills Partnership, which will also focus on:

- Map provision using LCR Learn as basis.
- Promoting diverse role models in the tech. sector
- Better promoting engagement within digital inclusion provision
- Evaluating existing engagement delivery, and identifying both targeting and progression gaps
- Considering how to ensure tutors and teachers are kept up to date with tech development
- Working with the National Digital Skills Partnership to ensure that curricula and apprenticeship standards required by employers are in place.
- Developing future digital trends labour market information for all sectors
- Developing Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance to include digital fusion job roles.

Linked to the above, we are looking at collective and collaborative City Region wide skills development solutions, rather than by devolving funding to individual Local Authorities. In this regard, I would also draw your attention to the positive recent extension of the Big Lottery and ESF-funded Include-IT Mersey project delivered by a consortium led by Sefton CVS. This will be able to use the information generated by the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic” data in order to identify need across Liverpool City Region, and target digital inclusion activities accordingly.

Please also note that Sefton Council has been represented from its outset on the CA-convened “Core Group” that brings together representatives from all the LCR Local Authorities. This has hitherto focused on development of the pan-LCR core fibre network project, however its remit may be extended in the future to look at the wider digital agenda”.

**Progress made at October 2020**

The Policy Lead: Employment and Skills at the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has advised that LCR has nothing further to update

**Progress made at September 2021**

The following information has been received from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority:

“Improving digital skills at all ages and levels remains a priority as highlighted within the recently approved Liverpool City Region Digital Strategy and Action Plan 2021 -2023 and we are grateful to Sefton Council for their contribution to its development.

The action plan builds on the LCR Digital & Creative Skills for Growth Action Plan and retains the commitment to establish a Digital Skills Partnership to enhance collaborative approaches and progress the concept of a Digital Skills Passport.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has impacted on the establishment of the Digital Skills Partnership. However, recent events have highlighted the need for enhanced digital skills and this is set out in more detail in the Local Skills Action Plan 2021/22.

Partners across LCR also remain actively engaged in innovative pilot approaches to the delivery of digital skills. The digital Test & Learn pilots such as those delivered by Sefton’s Adult Community Learning Service and Sefton@work have been evaluated across the City Region, the outcomes of which are feeding through to future skills planning.

The LCR Digital Skills Bootcamps have also commenced, which are expected to deliver £1.5m of employer led digital skills training for 1,000 people across the City Region, linked to specific job roles such as coding and cyber security”.

**Progress made at October 2022**

A generic response has been received from LCR as follows:

Our Update:

- We will seek to develop and implement a revised action plan for Digital Inclusion across the

	<p>Liverpool City Region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the objective to understand and map provision to support Digital Inclusion two activities have now been completed. This has resulted in the University of Liverpool gathering findings from stakeholder listening events and Vola presenting a map of the digital provision across LCR, further analysis will be conducted to inform next steps.</li> </ul> <p><u>Activity to Date:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £4.5m committed to Include IT Mersey Digital Inclusion Project (£3.8m spent between 2017 – Present).</li> <li>• £1.1m Adult Education Budget on Digital Skills Related Courses for the YTD 2021/22</li> <li>• 470 Digital Skill Interventions by the Be-More Brokerage Team</li> <li>• 212KM of ultrafast, gigabit capable network created as part of LCR Connect</li> <li>• 1.3 million laptops and tablets were provided nationally by the Department for Education to pupils during the pandemic.</li> <li>• Free Wi-Fi is available across Merseytravel Bus Services and at select train stations on the Merseyrail network.</li> <li>• 6 Months Free Broadband provided to eligible unemployed residents by Jobcentre Plus.</li> <li>• Over 1000 participants undertook LCR Digital Skills for the Workplace Training Programmes</li> <li>• £65,000 LCR Cares Funding to VOLA who delivered a project to provide 300 tablets with 3 months of data.</li> </ul>
<p>Sefton Council, via Sefton@Work, in conjunction with local organisations such as Sefton Community Learning Service, work with the Liverpool City Region with the aim of exploring the application of such a Skills Passport for the benefit of Sefton employers and residents</p>	<p><b>Progress made at September 2019</b></p> <p>The Head of Economic Growth and Housing has advised that “Sefton Council is a recipient of Adult Education Budget which is used to support the Sefton Adult Community Learning Service. With effect from August 2019, this funding has been incorporated into the LCR Devolution deal on employment and skills, and therefore the accountability lead for this function will sit with the LCR Combined Authority from this year.</p> <p>In this context, Sefton has been successful in securing pilot funding from the LCR Combined Authority to develop a new project which will focus on the development of English, maths and digital skills featuring a partnership approach between the Adult Community Learning Service and Sefton@work. The aim of this pilot is to flag up alternative delivery mechanisms to promote the digital inclusion of learners and enhance their employability, working with employers across a</p>



number of different occupational sectors to progress the concept of the “digital passport” identified by the working Group.

The outcomes of the pilot will be learning points which will be evaluated by the Combined Authority as part of the wider development on digital inclusion and will be fed into the architecture of future skills programming.

Furthermore, InvestSefton, as part of its ongoing business support activities, have delivered workshops to businesses to help them maximise the benefits of digital technology including:

- Facebook advertising
- Google advertising platforms
- Video production
- Social media branding and marketing”.

#### **Progress made at October 2020**

The Head of Economic Growth and Housing has advised that following a recent IT specific workshop organised by Corporate Services and Agilisys, there may be some new opportunities for supporting businesses which can be explored.

The Test and Learn funding for digital skills pilots has been deployed but unfortunately the scheme was interrupted as a result of COVID. However, after negotiation with the LCR CA, the funding has extended to allow the Community Learning Service to undertake the pilot fully in 2020/21. Plans are in place to re-start delivery and build upon the early actions. One of the first activities was a specific employability-related intervention which was successfully co-designed and delivered for clients of Sefton@work prior to lockdown. Furthermore, additional test and learn pilot resource has also now been secured from the LCR CA. This will fund the design, delivery and implementation of interactive technology programmes which will be installed at the Cambridge Road Community Learning Hub as part of the renovations of this centre during 2020/21.

The Community Learning Service has embraced a variety of new technologies in order to continue its delivery during the lockdown period. Many of these have enabled learners to have greater choice over their means of engagement with learning and have been transformative for many in their approach to understanding the benefits of digital skills. The delivery of blended learning using a bespoke learning platform where learners can attend in person and /or attend online wherever they are at home or work has been very well received by learners who have given feedback that this change has boosted digital confidence and access to a wider range of applications. The rapid rise

	<p>in job losses in Sefton is expected to boost demand for learning new digital skills and the Service is currently devising new content to respond to his demand.  Furthermore, Invest Sefton, as part of its ongoing Covid-19 business support activities, are delivering webinars to businesses to help them maximise the benefits of digital technology including:</p> <p>How to Facilitate Business Gains, through Stress Management; Covid-19: Starting Your Business Up Again Safely; Digital Marketing Tools for Small Businesses; HR for Small Business Managers; Mental Health and Wellbeing for Business Managers and Teams; Maintaining an Effective Virtual Office;  Managing Business Finance and Cashflow for SMEs; and Promoting Your Business Online</p>
	<p><b>Progress made at September 2021</b>  No update was provided</p> <p><b>Progress made at October 2022</b>  InvestSefton organised and hosted the first Sefton Digital Business Forum on 14th July in Formby Hall, attended by 20 local businesses from the digital and creative sector. There was unanimous agreement to continue this work and the team is planning four events p.a.</p> <p>Sefton also continues to promote ‘generic digital help and support to businesses’ via InvestSefton mechanisms such as, bootcamps, online resources, google garage and is developing a digital skills survey which will be sent to businesses in the sector</p>
<p>Using the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic” data, areas of high unemployment be targeted to enable those Sefton residents excluded from the labour market to develop their ICT skills to improve their opportunities for gaining future employment</p>	<p><b>Progress made at September 2019</b>  Correspondence has been received from the Chief Executive of Sefton CVS which states that:</p> <p>“Sefton CVS have just recently received notification that the Building Better Opportunities Digital Inclusion programme for the LCR Region has been extended until June 2021. We have been awaiting confirmation of this news for a number of weeks.</p> <p>Further to your correspondence, I can confirm that Sefton CVs has included Ravenmeols, Ford and Derby Wards in the proposed delivery going forward focused on the eligible targeted recipients in the overall programme and in line with the Poverty Modelling and Digital Exclusion document referred to in your letter”</p> <p><b>Progress made at October 2020</b>  The Chief Executive of Sefton CVS has advised that Include-IT Mersey, the LCR Building Better</p>

Opportunities Digital Inclusion programme, has further been extended, with active delivery to participants now planned to continue until September 2022. Sefton participants have mostly been from the high unemployment Wards of Bootle, Litherland and Netherton, with a smaller proportion from other South Sefton Wards and Southport. To date, 144 unemployed Sefton residents have attended courses run through the project and improved their basic IT skills. Over 100 have received a free tablet and some also provided with mobile data bundles to enable them to get online at home.

Hundreds of Sefton residents have also benefited from the support of the project's volunteer Digital Champions who, prior to the Coronavirus lockdown operated a network of digital drop-ins in Bootle (Library, Liferooms and Akenside Supported Accommodation), Netherton (Feelgood Factory) and Southport (The Atkinson & Southport Community Centre).

The drop-ins unfortunately had to be suspended in March and are unlikely to reopen this year due to the prolonged social distancing restrictions that remain in place. However, the project quickly developed an alternative approach to supporting people's requests for digital advice and support during the lockdown. The remote telephone support service was rolled out in April, with four Digital Champions still active in assisting people remotely.

Although a city region wide service, uptake in Sefton has been much higher than in the other five boroughs, with 71 Sefton residents supported to date. Initially, the majority of enquiries were for help with online shopping but since then, there has been a mixture of enquiries relating to shopping, video calls (e.g. Zoom), connection issues and getting online in general, including using emails and internet search engines.

In partnership with VOLA, Sefton CVS also secured LCR Cares funding to help get socially and digitally excluded Sefton residents online, providing 32 tablets and a short-term mobile data allowance to Sefton Households. A further 3 households received kit that we secured through another digital initiative. All 35 devices were set up prior to distribution and all recipients provided with remote support to help them learn the basics of how to use them. Information packs were also provided including a dos & don'ts guide, staying safe online, and financial awareness.

**Progress made at September 2021**

The Chief Executive of Sefton CVS has advised as follows:

## **Support to get online**

### **Include-IT Mersey project**

Following the National Lottery Community Fund's recent confirmation of the extension of the Building Better Opportunities programme, due the consistent good performance of the Include-IT Mersey project, the Lottery has increased investment to enable its extension until March 2023, which is very positive news.

Face to face delivery of basic digital and employability skills courses has now restarted having temporarily been paused or moved to remote delivery due to the various Covid lockdowns and social distancing restrictions over the last 16 months. The WEA is now delivering in Sefton following 3tc's closure in 2020, currently delivering out of the Feelgood Factory in Netherton, with other courses to be planned in other parts of the borough over the coming months.

During the pandemic, all participants have been provided with a free tablet and mobile data bundles to enable them to get online at home in order to support their continued engagement and learning during the periods of lockdown and social distancing. New participants will continue to receive a free tablet when they enrol on a course.

In total, 173 Sefton residents have been supported through the project to date, with 26 having progressed to work, 41 to further training and 12 in to active job search. The majority of Sefton participants have been from the high unemployment Wards of Bootle, Litherland and Netherton, with a smaller proportion from other South Sefton Wards and Southport.

Volunteer-led face-to-face digital drop-ins have been suspended since the April 2020 and are yet to reopen. Our aim is to gradually start to reopen them from September, adhering to Public Health Covid-safe guidance. While the face-to-face drop-ins have been on hold, we have rolled out a telephone support service, run by Digital Champion volunteers, who have supported 174 people since it was first launched in during the first national lockdown in April 2020, with a range of advice and support provided around the use of IT and getting online. 95 of these were Sefton residents, where take up has been stronger than other boroughs.

### **Get Yourself Online project**

Alongside the Include-IT Mersey project, Sefton CVS also took part in another Digital Inclusion

	<p>project in the summer of 2020, funded by the Community Foundation for Merseyside through the LCR Cares Fund, which was established by the Combined Authority in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>The project was developed to benefit the most excluded and vulnerable in society, with no internet access at home and who cannot afford to buy a device and/or connectivity.</p> <p>Sefton CVS distributed 32 free tablets with four-month internet access and technical support to Sefton households, as part of the wider project which, in total, supported 320 households (600 people) to get online across the Liverpool City Region.</p> <p><b>Progress made at October 2022</b> No update was provided</p>
<p>To facilitate the above the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be requested to devolve sufficient funding to Sefton Council to appoint a project worker with the clear objectives of:</p> <p>(A) Working with local employers to map ICT/digital skills;</p> <p>(B) Working with local partners such as Sefton Community Learning Service to develop and deliver bespoke training programmes to target residents in the areas identified</p>	<p><b>Progress made at September 2019</b> As referred to above in the response of Frank Rogers, Chief Executive of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the following comments were made:</p> <p>“Linked to the above, we are looking at collective and collaborative City Region wide skills development solutions, rather than by devolving funding to individual Local Authorities. In this regard, I would also draw your attention to the positive recent extension of the Big Lottery and ESF-funded Include-IT Mersey project delivered by a consortium led by Sefton CVS. This will be able to use the information generated by the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic” data in order to identify need across Liverpool City Region, and target digital inclusion activities accordingly.</p> <p>Please also note that Sefton Council has been represented from its outset on the CA-convened “Core Group” that brings together representatives from all the LCR Local Authorities. This has hitherto focused on development of the pan-LCR core fibre network project, however its remit may be extended in the future to look at the wider digital agenda”.</p> <p><b>Progress made at October 2020</b> The Policy Lead: Employment and Skills at the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has advised that LCR has nothing further to update</p> <p><b>Progress made at September 2021</b> The following information has been received from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority:</p> <p>“LCRCA commissioned bespoke Digital Inclusion research to establish a baseline of current digital</p>

<p>in the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic” data;</p> <p>(C) Identifying, using the data from the Poverty Modelling and Digital Inclusion “Mosaic”, a number of residents who would benefit from and be able to undertake training as referred to in 3. (B) above; and</p> <p>(D) Working with local employers to develop a compact agreement to enable those residents who successfully complete the bespoke training programme(s) to gain relevant employment;</p>	<p>skills and use across the City Region, enhancing the local evidence base to inform the development of digital inclusion and digital poverty initiatives. Between November 2020 and January 2021, fieldwork was undertaken than resulted in over 800 detailed responses (including 148 from Sefton) across a representative sample of respondents based on age and location.</p> <p>Whilst the Mosaic profiles have been useful, the research approach aims to deepen our understanding by asking a set of themed questions drawing on what we already know about digital exclusion. The conclusions set out a range of demographic factors that should be considered in targeting digital initiatives, including age, working status, housing type, education, disability and ethnicity.</p> <p>We are now looking to test our analysis with key partners, including Sefton MBC before sharing more widely.</p> <p><b>Progress made at October 2022</b></p> <p>A generic response has been received from LCR as follows:  <u>Our Update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will seek to develop and implement a revised action plan for Digital Inclusion across the Liverpool City Region.</li> <li>• Following the objective to understand and map provision to support Digital Inclusion two activities have now been completed. This has resulted in the University of Liverpool gathering findings from stakeholder listening events and Vola presenting a map of the digital provision across LCR, further analysis will be conducted to inform next steps.</li> </ul> <p><u>Activity to Date:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £4.5m committed to Include IT Mersey Digital Inclusion Project (£3.8m spent between 2017 – Present).</li> <li>• £1.1m Adult Education Budget on Digital Skills Related Courses for the YTD 2021/22</li> <li>• 470 Digital Skill Interventions by the Be-More Brokerage Team</li> <li>• 212KM of ultrafast, gigabit capable network created as part of LCR Connect</li> <li>• 1.3 million laptops and tablets were provided nationally by the Department for Education to pupils during the pandemic.</li> <li>• Free Wi-Fi is available across Merseytravel Bus Services and at select train stations on the Merseyrail network.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 Months Free Broadband provided to eligible unemployed residents by Jobcentre Plus.</li> <li>• Over 1000 participants undertook LCR Digital Skills for the Workplace Training Programmes</li> <li>• £65,000 LCR Cares Funding to VOLA who delivered a project to provide 300 tablets with 3 months of data.</li> </ul>
<p>If further opportunities arise for a roll out of the Include-IT project and to support the objectives of recommendation 2 then Sefton CVS be requested to consider such roll out to the priority areas identified within the Poverty Modelling and Digital Exclusion document</p>	<p><b>Progress made at September 2019</b></p> <p>Correspondence has been received from the Chief Executive of Sefton CVS which states that:</p> <p>“Sefton CVS have just recently received notification that the Building Better Opportunities Digital Inclusion programme for the LCR Region has been extended until June 2021. We have been awaiting confirmation of this news for a number of weeks.</p> <p>Further to your correspondence, I can confirm that Sefton CVs has included Ravenmeols, Ford and Derby Wards in the proposed delivery going forward focused on the eligible targeted recipients in the overall programme and in line with the Poverty Modelling and Digital Exclusion document referred to in your letter”</p>
	<p><b>Progress made at October 2020</b></p> <p>The Chief Executive of Sefton CVS has advised that most courses/ participants and digital drop-ins to date have taken place in Bootle. Delivery has taken place from Community By Nature and the Swan Women’s Centre, based in Linacre and Litherland, which border the Derby Ward and are both easily accessible to its residents. As soon as we are able to resume face-to-face delivery, we intend to return to these venues as they have worked well to date.</p> <p>Prior to the Coronavirus lockdown the project had been planning towards delivering courses in the Feelgood Factory to capture Ford and Netherton residents. Long-term closure of community settings and subsequent prolonged social distancing measures post lockdown, coupled with the subsequent closure of our Sefton project delivery partner, 3tc, who unfortunately ceased trading earlier this year have all contributed to delays in implementing these plans. Contingency plans are currently being progressed to revive Sefton delivery in the coming months, if considered feasible and safe to do so in the context of recently increased local social distancing restrictions.</p> <p>Following initial investigation, the project has been unable to target the central Ward of Ravenmeols due to its population demographics not having a fit with the target groups of the Building Better Opportunities programme, on which the project is closely monitored and funded.</p>

	Digital skill provision in this Ward might be better catered for through other training providers with more flexible funding regimes, such as Adult and Community Learning and/or the Adult Education Budget.
	<b>Progress made at September 2021</b> See information provided by the Chief Executive of Sefton CVS in the column above
	<b>Progress made at October 2022</b> No update was provided