

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)

Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Marion Atkinson	Cabinet Member Regeneration and Skills	January 2023

INVESTSEFTON UPDATE

Growth Hub

- InvestSefton is one of the Liverpool City Region Growth Hubs working alongside the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (CA), Growth Platform, other local authorities, Chambers of Commerce and The Women's Organisation.
- The total value for delivery in each of the LA areas is £20,000 compared to the £50,000 of previous years. Output requirements have also been scaled down accordingly. Latest targets and results below:

16th May 2022 to 31st March 2023	Overall Target	Sefton Total Figures
Number of unique businesses receiving light touch intervention	250	283
Number of unique businesses receiving medium intensity intervention	90	75
Number of unique businesses brokered and introduced to Growth Platform Programmes	20	17

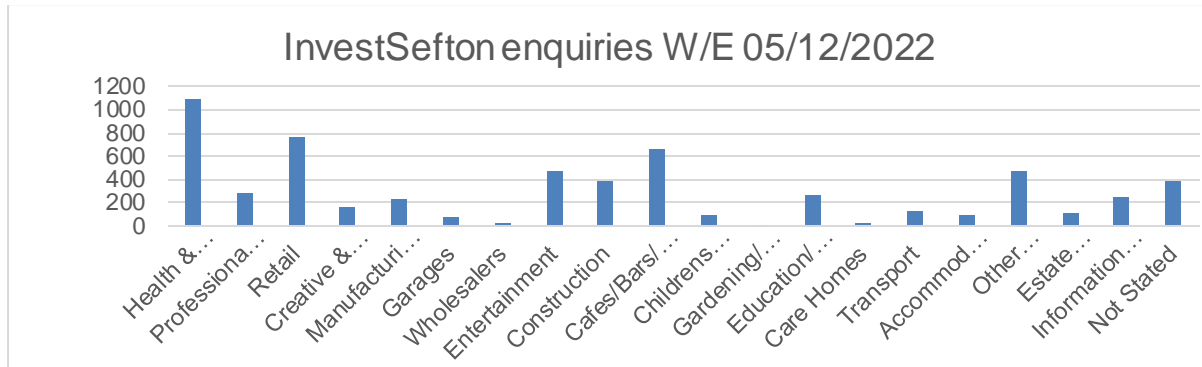
- The team is very much on track to meet or surpass these targets having already exceeded the light touch interventions with a **further 23 assists**.

Business engagement

- www.investsefton.com is updated regularly with the latest guidance and news from Government, Growth Platform, Sefton Council, and other sources of help for businesses.
- Since 30th March 2020 until Thursday 1st December 2022, the site has had **63,766** unique sessions. From Friday 25th November to Thursday 1st December 2022 the website has had 156 sessions.
- Average time spent on the website in the past week was 57secs. The devices used were as follows: Desktop 61.5%, Mobile 35.9% and Tablet 2.6%. The Top two pages visited were home and starting a business. The top five countries of origin accessing the website are as follows: UK (65.3%), USA (14.1%), China (13.5%) Mexico (1.9%), and Canada (0.6%)

Business enquiries

- Since March 2020 InvestSefton has handled **6,001** enquiries from a wide range of businesses. Breakdown by type of business is provided as of 5th December 2022.



Total enquiry numbers from 13th March to 2nd December 2022:

Year	Total Enquiries
13 th March 2020- 31 st March 21	3740
1 st April 21- 31 st March 22	1325
1 st April 22- to date	971
Total	6,036

Cost of Living-support to businesses

- The team has contributed to a Cost-of-Living factsheet for businesses which will be published on various channels and issued to businesses. A copy is embedded below



Cost of Living Support fact Sheet f

Case studies

- The team continues to engage with businesses as part of its 1:1 delivery support. Recent case studies below:

Formby based Commercial and Residential Designer. The business was originally located in London and wanted to relocate to Merseyside. InvestSefton undertook property searches on behalf of the business to facilitate the move to Formby, as well as providing opportunities to upskill and Network at InvestSefton events.

Brighton-Le Sands company that specialises in trenching work for laying utility services. The Business undertakes a variety of projects from new Commercial units to domestic extensions. The business recognises that the office could work smarter as well as the need to develop contacts. InvestSefton supported the business by exploring options for

Personal Staff development as well as researching local business contacts and networking opportunities.

A new owner managed leisure centre based in Birkdale Town centre in an old warehouse building. The centre offers a climbing and assault course facility for children and adults, along with gym and café/bar which is open for hire in the daytime and evenings for corporate events, parties etc. The business is looking at ways to reduce energy costs. InvestSefton programme supported the business by assisting with the development of a Net Zero plan as well as reviewing business planning and financial management systems to reduce operating costs.

A restaurant and bar located in Crosby. The business is in the process of expanding, taking a lease on nearby premises with the intention of opening a cocktail bar and grill. The concept of the Workshop is a New Orleans inspired restaurant with elements of classic French cuisine. The expansion is currently being funded through profits but progress is slow and this method of financing is putting a strain on the business finances. InvestSefton supported the business by assisting them with an application for Finance and liaising with Business Rates to resolve an outstanding issue.

Webinars/Events

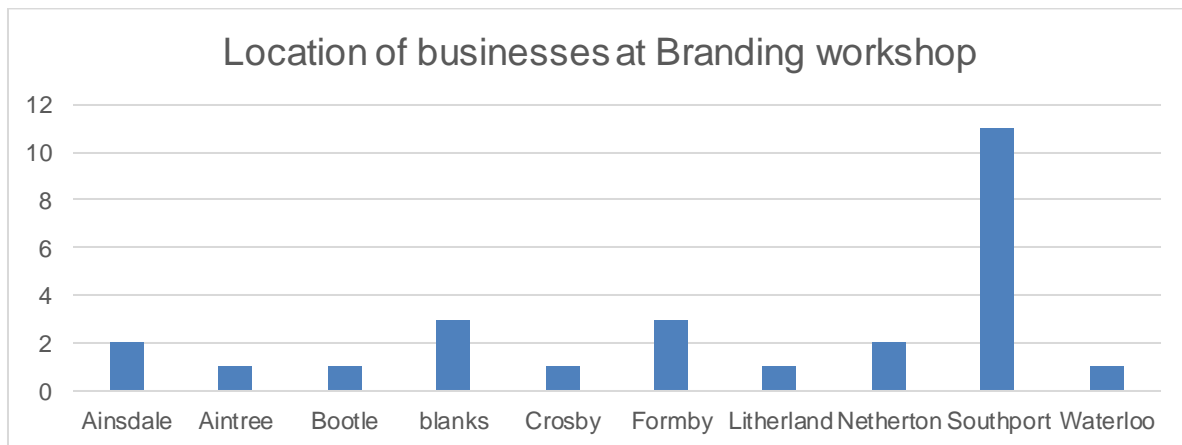
- InvestSefton's webinars and events have become a useful vehicle for engaging with businesses on a one-to-many basis. The team has started the planning and development of events and workshops covering a wide range of demand-led themes.

Better Branding Through Storytelling event 17th November 2022 **Southport Eco Centre**



- Some 31 delegates from 26 Sefton businesses attended InvestSefton's 'Better Branding through Storytelling' event at Southport Eco Centre. Sarah Jackson from Hatter's Digital Agency Ltd led the presentations and talked about branding, personal branding and what platforms to use
- Julie Swarbrick from InvestSefton talked about the support the team can provide while Gareth Wilson provided an overview on Sefton@Work and how they can help businesses with recruitment.

- Feedback from the businesses:
 - *Informative and connecting*
 - *Opens up new ideas*
 - *The content was interesting and engaging*
 - *Educational and insightful*
 - *Did you find the event useful? 100% Yes*
 - *Helped me to understand what is needed to improve*
 - *Great insights, you wouldn't get from a book*
 - *Thanks for the business support, very helpful and interesting*
- 31 delegates, 9 Female delegates, 26 individual Sefton businesses attended
- 28 evaluations were completed



Sefton Economic Forum 8th December 2022
The Lake House, Crosby

- It was standing room only at the Lake House, Crosby on 8th December when it hosted InvestSefton's Sefton Economic Forum which attracted some 123 people.
- The event was once again well received and has become the premier business networking event in the borough.
- There were five excellent speakers from the Bank of England, Department of International Trade, British Intellectual Property service, Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the Capital Grant Fund updating on business opportunities, grant funding, the local economy and the growth of the Airport.
- Councillors Atkinson and Lappin also accepted the Federation of Small Businesses award which Sefton won for best NW Council response to Covid support for businesses. The event was chaired by James Brayshaw from Adaptive Communications in Southport.
- Some 69 business delegates attended including 26 women business owners who were able to enjoy talking to the Sefton Marketplace of some 20 business support providers including InvestSefton, Liverpool John Moores University, Sefton@work, Elevate EBP, Sefton CVS, Manufacturing Technology Centre, BIPC, LCR Growth Platform, LCR Capital Grant Fund, Scale up support from Edge Hill P&I Centre and Skills for Growth



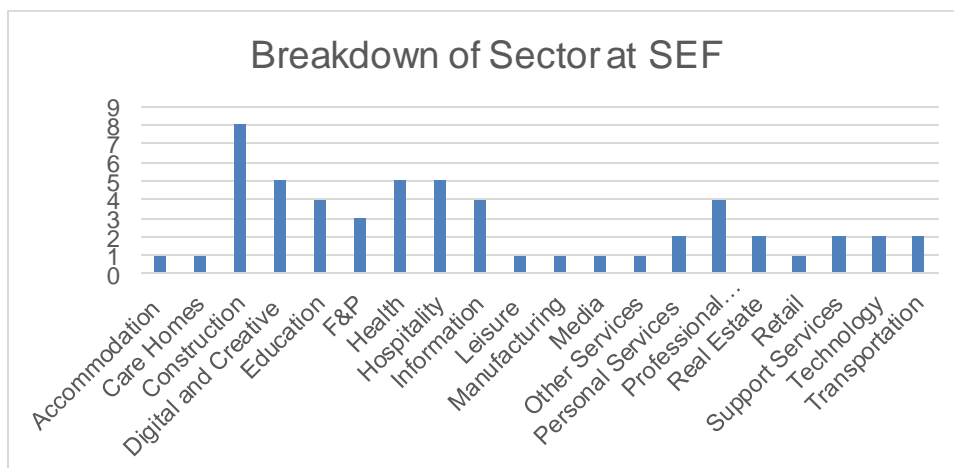
Picture Courtesy of Ray Farley Photography

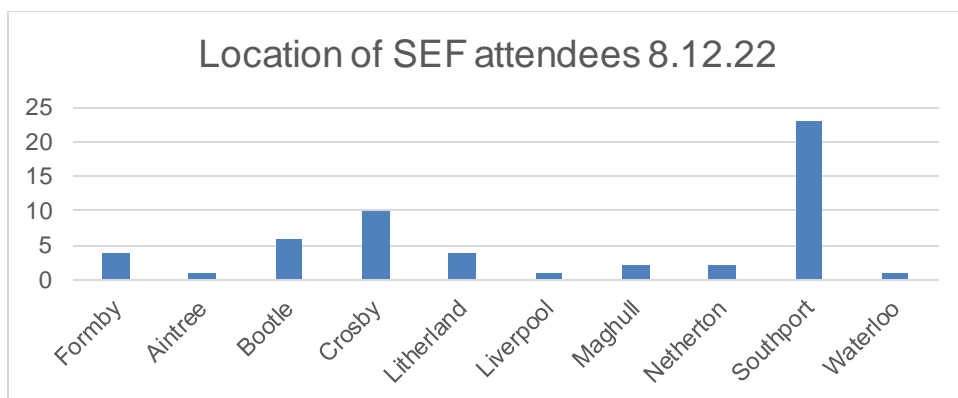
Feedback -From the businesses

- *“Opens up the mind to opportunities”*
- *“All really, really good information”*
- *“Fantastic range of speakers, extremely insightful”*

The Marketplace

- LCR Finance Hub – *great speakers and great attendance*
- Department of International Trade– *Thank you for inviting me to the event, very informative and have learnt a lot I can pass back to my team.*
- 69 delegates attended: 26 Female delegates,56 individual Sefton businesses attended. 20 evaluations were completed





LCR Fair Employment Charter

- The team is promoting the LCR Fair Employment Charter which is delivered by the Combined Authority. The aim is to establish a Fair Employment Charter for Liverpool City Region, which would celebrate fair employment practices where they were in place and drive-up standards elsewhere. The intention was to recognise good quality and effective practice in fair employment and build the broader case amongst other employers for them to consider changing their practices.
- The application process is robust and is overseen by a panel including trade unions, employers and a range of HR specialists. Applications are also vetted by Local Authorities as part of the process. To date the following Sefton businesses have achieved aspiring business accreditation:
 - Elevate EBP
 - Parkhaven Trust
 - Sovini
 - Access Point

EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING UPDATE

Funding Updates

- A paper to agree Continuation funding for Ways to Work will be presented to the LCR CA Investment Board in March 2023. This will endorse the drawing down of SIF funding, a portion of which will flow into Sefton to cover Sefton@work salary costs for the interim period between the end of European Social Fund and the commencement of the employment and skills strand of UK Shared Prosperity Funding in March 2024.

Sefton@work

Sefton@work General Performance Data for November 2022

Data Description	Range	Figures
Total Clients accessing service	Since 01/01/2016	5,444
New Clients accessing service	November 2022	111
New clients registering by age	November 2022	16-24 18 25-49 71 50+ 19 Unknown 3

W2W contracts Male	Since 01/01/16 November 2022	57.9% 51.3%
W2W contracts Female	Since 01/01/16 November 2022	42.0% 46.0%
W2W contracts Other	Since 01/01/16 November 2022	0.1% 2.7%
Positive Inclusions Male	Since 01/01/21 November 2022	68.8% 75.0%
Positive Inclusions Female	Since 01/01/21 November 2022	30.7% 25.0%
Positive Inclusions Other	Since 01/01/21 November 2022	0.5% 0.0%
ESF clients with Disabilities/Health Conditions	Since 01/01/2016 November 2022	32.3% 7.3%
Supporting Families (new project replacing Turnaround)	Current Active Total	23
People leaving programmes (into jobs/self-emp/training)	Since 01/01/2016	W2W & PI + 200 from other programmes Total 2,070
Ways to Work Starts	Since 01/01/2016 November 2022	4595 35
Positive Inclusions Starts	Since 01/01/2021 November 2022	204 4

End of Year Video

- Staff have produced a video to highlight some of the work conducted over 2022 across all the service areas which form a part of Employment & Learning. The video can be uploaded onto websites either as a composite or 2.2in stand-alone elements for each service area.

[Christmas 2022 Year in Review \(canva.com\)](#)

Southport accommodation

- Staff have now moved out of the Atkinson and into temporary accommodation to be co-located with other agencies in Southport.
- The Restart staff are working in an agency called Humankind that also deliver DWP programmes for workless people, so there is good synergy for clients in this arrangement and this is working well. However, this agreement is only a trial and has only been made for a period of three months to allow for some breathing space for other accommodation, preferably within Council premises, to be obtained.
- The ESF funded staff for Ways to Work in Southport are located for timed sessions within the Light for Life organisation for a similar three-month period.

Caring Business Charter Project

- The post of co-ordinator for the project has now been filled and the post holder has commenced with the team. She is being line managed within the Employer engagement team of Sefton@work and she is settling in well.
- Work on a roles and responsibility protocol with internal partners is being progressed to ensure that all stakeholders are aware that Sefton@work's main responsibility will be for liaising with signatory employers and securing suitable opportunities to meet demand, together with provision of monitoring the progress of the project.
- The co-ordinator will act as advocate on behalf of the employer and the participant where necessary. We expect that primary responsibility for the recruitment and targeting of care experienced people and ensuring their retention within opportunities will remain with the referring partner.
- A project implementation plan is also being produced, with input from the Co-ordinator.

Promoting Women in the Workforce

- Following on from earlier discussions with Cabinet Member, it has been agreed that the service should undertake some actions to promote the fuller engagement of women of working age in our services. At this preliminary stage there are some emerging themes for further investigation we intend to take forward in 2023:
 - Recovering from Covid - Understanding and managing stress and wellbeing and why women have not returned to the workforce.
 - The changed landscape for women and carers entering employment in Sefton. Gathering information on support and childcare measures and recent changes. The service has already purchased improved systems for individual "Better Off" calculations featuring variables such as childcare fees.
 - Women into Key Growth Sectors in Sefton. Dialogue with named employers (eg. Network Rail among others) to better understand their approach to gender balance in the workforce and assist with recruitment and customized pathways to entry
 - Working for Yourself. Entrepreneurship and practical skills for business. Turning Community Learning into Self Employment

Relocation project into the Bootle Strand Centre

- The budget for the re-fit is funded through external means from the Restart contract as a relocation for Sefton@work Bootle operations was part of our contract agreement with G4S.
- The overall target deadline for the re-fit is to have this completed by end March 2023, with the service fully relocated in the following quarter of 2023. This now seems a very challenging timescale but unless we are obliged to alter this, we will continue working towards this date.

Sefton Adult Learning Service

Performance update

Year to Date Comparison

	Target	18/19* Aug to Mid Nov	20/21 Aug to Mid Nov	21/22 Aug to Mid Nov	22/23 Aug to Mid Nov
Total number of learners	2000	831	257	437	701
Total number of unique learning aims	2940	1098	340	527	866

SSA	Learners				Learning Aims			
	18/19	20/21	21/22	22/23	18/19	20/21	21/22	22/23
01-Health, Public Services and Care	7	7	132	146	7	7	136	149
02-Science and Mathematics	8	0	0	0	8	0	0	0
03-Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	0	18	10	34	0	18	10	34
06-Information and Communication Technology	138	5	21	84	162	5	21	105
07-Retail and Commercial Enterprise	71	8	8	40	80	8	11	45
08-Leisure, Travel and Tourism	31	0	0	0	37	0	0	0
09-Arts, Media and Publishing	206	31	70	169	223	33	85	185
10-History, Philosophy and Theology	0	15	17	50	0	15	17	53
11-Social Sciences	0	0	7	0	0	0	7	0
12-Languages, Literature and Culture	40	39	28	45	41	39	29	46
13-Education and Training	26	11	9	7	26	11	12	12
14.1-Foundation for Learning and Life	245	92	122	170	373	138	161	200
14.2-Preparation for Work	136	51	33	26	141	66	38	28
15 - Business, Administration and Law	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	9

* 18/19 Included for comparison as it was the last full year before covid

- From 1st August 2022 the Service has enrolled 741 new learners, who have completed a total of 944 learning aims. The data shows that the number of learning aims has significantly increased compared with the same period last year, however, it has still not returned to pre-covid levels.
- Community Learning courses make up the majority of learning activities so further work is required to increase the number of learners starting and achieving qualifications for us to fully meet our targets.
- To increase learner numbers, arrangements have been made for the new course prospectus to be distributed to 70,000 homes in L20, L21, L22, L23, L30 L31 areas.
- An additional 2,000 prospectuses have been distributed to 40+ partners and outreach locations across the borough with a further 80 going out in Hampers via colleagues in Sefton Localities and Early Help services.

The conclusion of 2021/22 progression survey:

- 100% of all learners were contacted following the completion of learning, this resulted in a 63% survey completion rate of those that completed the survey 69% indicated that they have progressed into a positive outcome.

Cohort	Total	
	Learners in Survey	1393
Contacted	1393	100%
Completed Survey	884	63%
Progression Outcomes		
Education	343	39%
Employment	244	28%
Voluntary Work	20	2%
Unemployed	270	31%
Other	7	1%
Positive Outcomes		
	607	69%

Staff Training and Development

- OFSTED Nominee and shadow nominee training took place 18th November.
- Governors Learning walks were conducted 8th and 12th Dec. These were felt to be very helpful by learners and tutors.
- LCR CA Quality assurance bootcamp training will take place on 12th and 13th December and is being hosted by Sefton. AEB funded organisations from across the Liverpool City Region will attend.
- Mental Health Training for Managers and Leaders sessions will take place on 19th December. This will be a key part of our plans to improve our wellbeing and pastoral care for learners.

Pathways to Teaching Programme

- The Service has commenced recruitment on to this much-awaited new Programme. It will offer places to individuals who are interested in teaching as a career path in the adult education sector.
- Applicants need to hold a relevant vocational and/or academic award in their chosen subject area together with suitable qualifications in English, they need to reside in the LCR area, be aged over 19 years and either be workless or earning under the threshold of £19,305. Applications from people seeking to retrain from various backgrounds are most welcome.
- The project will deliver a package of teaching, learning and assessment to Liverpool City Region adult learners as part of a Pathways to Teaching in Adult Learning initiative aimed at growing the local adult learning workforce.
- On completion of the programme, participants can progress to a Level 5 Certificate in Education (Post – Compulsory Education and Training).
- From this Level 5, participants can then progress to “top-up” to a degree and /or on to a Level 7 Post Graduate Certificate in Education at a University.
- There are 5 candidates expected to join the project in Sefton, with more places still available.

Street Food Test and Learn Pilot

- Preparations are underway to commence the test and learn pilot project in January. This will be linked to wider development connected to events in the Sefton marketing calendar and the Bootle Canalside initiative.

- For the test and learn element, there will be a combination of activity with both intergenerational family learning and preparation for employment in food and drink as pathways.
- The service has been working with the National Catering Association (NCASS) commission to ensure their expertise can be drawn upon.
- To meet the requirement of the funding with the LCR-CA the service will need to recruit 60 learners through the combination of family learning and employment pathway, to be completed by end July 2023.

Multiply

- The opportunity for voluntary and community agencies to access Multiply funding through the service was published on the Chest in line with the Council's contract procedure rules. The deadline for responses has now been extended to allow more time for potential applicants to respond.

NEET Reduction & Early Intervention Service

Headlines

- The following are the headlines for the main performance measures for the Service for October 2022:

Performance summary: LCR comparison

- Sefton has the lowest % for Not Known and NEET & NK Combined across all Local Authority Areas and is below the England and north-west averages

Performance Summary: North-West comparison

- Sefton is performing better than North West for the NEET and Not Known Combined measure reported to government

Performance Summary: National comparison

- Sefton remains in the same position as October 2021 ie - ranked 3rd best in the country from 152 Local Authorities
- Sefton has reduced the Not Known % compared to September 21 with Sefton ranking 2nd best in the country, moving up from 3rd position.
- Sefton NEET has however increased by 0.05% (ie 29 more young people aged 16 and 17 are NEET now than in October 21) and the complexity of some of their issues is increasing and requires more intensive support
- We are seeing an increase in NEET rates within the SEND group for 16- and 17-year-olds in 2022.

	NEET	NK	Combined	Current NEET Rank	Current NK Rank	Current Combined Rank
Sefton	2.90%	0.50%	3.40%	39	151	150
Halton	3.60%	1.40%	4.90%	25	141	138
St. Helens	4.30%	2.90%	7.10%	12	127	119
NORTH	2.80%	9.10%	11.90%			

WEST						
Wirral	2.50%	12.30%	14.80%	51	54	52
ENGLAND	2.20%	15.00%	17.20%			
Knowsley	4.30%	30.10%	34.40%	11	18	18

Partnership working across Sefton Services and Stakeholders

- In November, Career Connect participated in meeting with the representatives from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This is part of the Supporting Families programme meeting looking at how strategic partners are embedding within whole family working.
- The Career Connect team has also been Involved in preparing data and offering input to **the Council's Ofsted Annual Conversation** regarding NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service contribution to support and outcomes for young people.
- **Sefton Council Caring Business Charter for care experienced young people.**
The Charter represents a commitment from local business and partners to offer high quality opportunities to young people who have experience of the care system. Some businesses have committed to guaranteed interviews for care experienced young people or work experience, while others have committed to paid roles and apprenticeship. Protocols are being put in place
- Career Connect chairs **Sefton's NEET Case Conference working group.** There have been 10 meetings over 18 months with 40 "stuck" cases being discussed and actioned by stakeholders. The outcomes of this work have been very positive, with 85.7% of cases moving into Participation in education, employment and training as a result. The group's Purpose is to target and plan individual pathways around Sefton's cohort of young people from 16-18 who are NEET. The group is expected to identify creative solutions to each young person's situation and through Collaborative approaches remove barriers and address problems. 75% of the cases coming to the group have had EHC plans, 90% have had below 30% school attendance at pre 16 phase, 20% have had 0% school attendance. The group has been characterized by lots of learning, networking, and sharing of good practice. Suitability of provision does not seem to be the most pressing issue but rather the comprehensive personal development support and the holistic approaches that are required to sustain medium to long term goals with the young people.
- Career Connect chairs **Preparation for Adulthood SEN group.** This meets 3 times a year and the purpose of the group is to ensure continuous improvement in outcomes for young people aged 14-25 with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in terms of Community, Health, Independent Living and Employment. It will provide oversight and secure evidence that young people with SEND are receiving appropriate support and progressing into positive destinations in line with the implementation of the SEN Reforms.
- Career connect have participated in LA training on "**Leading for System Change- Early Help**"-delivered by SYSTEMLEADERSHIP NHS NORTH WEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY. This included:
 - 'Developing a Reducing Parental Conflict Outcomes Framework'.
 - Developing a shared understanding of the impact that parental conflict has on child outcomes
 - Increasing understanding of what child outcomes are, how they're measured, and how they relate to the local context in Sefton.

- Recognise the roles that different agencies and professionals play in reducing parental conflict across the different contact points in families' lives
- Build consensus in working together to reduce parental conflict and prioritising what matters
- Career Connect also participate in the following Sefton groups:
 - Youth Justice Board
 - Youth Justice Operational Group
 - Early Help Board
 - Corporate Parenting Board - also member of working sub-groups on Aspiration and Transitions
 - Sefton Leadership Collaborative Multi Agency Working Group
 - High Needs Panel
 - Next Steps Panel for Care Experienced young people
 - Placing and Monitoring Group for Children Missing from Education/exclusions etc
 - Youth Justice Risk Meetings

Listening event

- An informal Meet and Greet event promoting the NEET Reduction Service Offer was held in November at Cambridge Road. It was attended by me and offered young people, their parents and carers an opportunity to let commissioners and lead Members know about how the Service has impacted their lives.
- These listening events form part of the communications and feedback arrangements for young people, which were halted during the pandemic. Similar events will be held in early summer of 2023.

TOURISM UPDATE

Destination Marketing

- **Christmas Campaign** – Marketing Southport worked in partnership with Southport BID to promote Christmas in Southport. We concentrated on sub-regional activity to draw visitors into the town via digital and Out of home advertising. The BID concentrated on the local market via leaflet, local radio and digital activity.
- **Design & Campaign Management Agency** – The tender for our 2023 agency was awarded to Gingerhead via The Chest. This will be the 4th year we have worked with them
- **PR** – The contract with our current agency finishes December this year. We went out to a number of agencies for proposals for 2023 and the contract was awarded to Social PR.
- **Visitor Guide** – the 2023 guide design is nearing completion (to go to print mid-January) The print run is 45,000 with the majority going directly to regional distributors and the national TIC network.
- **Southport Restaurateurs Association** – The 2023 guide has been delivered and will be distributed locally, with the visitor guide during February.
- **E-newsletter** - Database stands at circa 50,000 with the addition of 2022 data and regular newsletters are sent to this audience.
- **Travel Trade** – advertising has been placed in key travel trade publications. Editorial has been secured alongside all ads to date. We have joined AGTO and CTA to increase our communication with GTO's and coach companies. A Southport

Showcase (mini exhibition) is being held on 24 April next year. Invitations have gone out to local Marketing Southport members to exhibit at the event. We will be attending BTTS at the NEC in March having a stand directly opposite Liverpool.

- **Golf** – 2022 has been a very busy year for international visitors and the England's Golf Coast shoulder season package. We have recently held a meeting between EGC, Southport Golf Tours and tourism to ensure cooperation between the three partners and a golf activity plan is being produced. The EGC website will sit as a micro-site within Visitsouthport when the new site is launched in 2023.
- **Marketing Southport** – membership currently stands at 104 (106 this time last year). The next Marketing Southport board meeting is to be held in March. An annual report will be produced in January.
- **Eurovision** – MS is plugged into LCR planning and activity around Eurovision. More detailed information will be available in January. We will of course be looking to engage with local businesses to ensure we maximise available opportunities.

Events

- The dates for 2023 have been announced as follows:-
 - Food & Drink Festival - 2nd – 4th June
 - Air Show - 9th & 10th September
 - The British Musical Fireworks Championship - 22nd – 23rd September.
 - Budgets for the 2023 events are being finalised
 - Procurement of infrastructure and event planning has started

A new 2023 events programme is being devised for Bootle at Salt and Tar, this will include:

- Comedy Weekender in May 2023 with comedians such as Jason Byrne, Jo Caulfield and Scott Bennett, Chris McCausland, Daliso Chaponda, Nina Gilligan and Brendan Riley.
- A large scale music event spread across July, Red Rum Club confirmed to date with over 2,600 tickets sold and more major acts to be announced
- Planning has commenced around other events such as a food and drink festival, winter wonderland etc..

Marine Lake Events Centre

- The MLEC project continues to make good progress, RIBA Stage 3 is now complete
- ASM Global have been selected as the preferred operator, the biggest events venue operator in the world. It is planned for the Agreement for lease to be signed by January 2023
- The procurement of the build contractor is complete with all submissions scored and checked, with a view to appoint by January 2023 to carry out demolition and enabling works.
- The Contractor will then work with us on Stage 4 looking at appointment of main works in October 2023
- Full planning application submitted.
- Government for Town Deal funding now confirmed with full business case approval.
- Planning to be on site Q1 2023.

REGENERATION, GROWTH & INVESTMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

- The Regeneration service is providing both a lead and supporting role across the Growth and Strategic Investment Programme delivery on a number of key Council priority projects and external partner projects.

Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Round 2

- Sefton Council submitted two levelling up funding bids in August 2022 for Bootle and Crosby. Totalling £30.3 million, both bids are designed to help regenerate these areas, tackle local deprivation, enhance and/or provide new facilities to serve the local communities and support the creation of investment and employment opportunities in the two town centres. Initial indications suggested a decision would be made by December 2022 however DLUHC have recently advised the decision will be made early 2023 for the remaining £2.1 billion LUF of the fund.

Bootle Town Centre

- The Council is progressing plans for a repurposed Strand Shopping Centre and further work and development of Bootle Canalside:

Bootle Canalside

- Re-branding of Bootle Canalside to “SALT AND TAR: MADE IN BOOTLE” has been released (referring to the town's rich industrial heritage, with the Brotherton's Tar Distillery on Hawthorne Road and the area's historic link to the salt trade. Detailed plans to provide an attractive entertainment complex with covered areas, bars, food outlets and canal-side access are being progressed and the project is scheduled to be completed for opening in Spring 2023. The below press release refers:
- [Bootle Canalside events area to be branded 'Salt and Tar' - My Sefton News Channel](#)

Strand Transformation

- January's Cabinet - latest Business Plan for The Strand presented, which sets out how re-purposing The Strand will create an enhanced and more diversified town centre, support the growth of a night-time economy and deliver new amenities needed by local people and businesses. Among the proposed changes are better retail provision and the introduction of alternative uses including health, education, and technology. Additionally, the adjacent Canalside site will continue to be developed, along with the introduction of new green corridors and improvements to The Strand's public spaces. The report includes the three-year Business Plan for the Strand Shopping Centre, an overview of the emerging vision for the future of the Strand, and of the Levelling Up funding bid submission. The Government is now expected to announce the outcome of the Levelling Up bidding process early in 2023.

SOUTHPORT

Southport Town Deal

- Work continues on the delivery of Southport Town Deal. This year has seen the approval of the business cases for funding the projects in accordance with the Town Deal bid submission requirements.
- Business cases have been approved for:
 - Southport Enterprise Arcade
 - Les Transformation de Southport (Public Realm enhancement) Phase 1

- Building a Better Customer Experience
- Marine Lake Events Centre and Water and Light show which was approved in December 2022.
- MLEC Business Case was the final project funding approval needed for the whole scheme which will now progress forward into delivery (as stated above). Overwhelming support has already been shown for the transformational project, which will see a brand new state of the art events centre and accompanying water and light show built on the site of the former Southport Theatre. See press statement here- [Sefton's Marine Lake Events Centre business case praised by Government - My Sefton News Channel](#)

The Enterprise Arcade, Southport

- Refurbishment of one of Southport's central town centre buildings next to Southport Market for a new business hub is a key Town Deal project. This will be the first ever purpose-built workspaces for start-up creative and digital businesses in Southport.
- Cabinet approved plans to transform the Crown Buildings into a high tech, collaborative and affordable workspace for small businesses, dubbed the 'Enterprise Arcade.'
- Forming part of the Southport Town Deal, £1.5 million has been earmarked for the regeneration and transformation of Crown Buildings, eventually creating a purpose-built hub for individuals, freelancers, enterprises, and independent professionals who are taking their first steps into setting up their own business.
- The Enterprise Arcade project is a key project within the Southport Town Deal programme to kickstart the previously untapped digital, creative and technological sectors within the resort.
- Design work is continuing for the project and the process of appointing contractors to carry out the works will be completed early in the new year with works starting later in 2023.

Les Transformation de Southport

- The business case for this project was submitted to Government in March 2022 following endorsement by the Town Deal Board and approval by Sefton Cabinet. The business case has been accepted by central Government and Sefton Council are progressing with the next stage of the project.
- This involves the delivery of the first phase of the improvements, focussing on the area around Southport Market, and the development of the proposals for future phases.
- The Town Deal will provide the funding for the first phase of the works and the business case will be used to pursue funding options for the future phases of the project.
- Public consultation and engagement was undertaken this year in February and March 2022 , with follow up consultation in November including key businesses in the area likely to be affected. This concluded support for the first phase of work from residents, businesses and young people (through the schools' responses) for many aspects of the Town Deal proposals. Works will start to be implemented early in 2023 with the main programme of work commencing in the autumn after the summer season to avoid disruption.

Building a Better Customer Experience

- Following approval of the business case for this training project earlier this year by the Council and Town Deal Board, training providers have agreed activity to be delivered to support the hospitality sector in Southport at a crucial time. Training provision through Sefton Adult and community Learning and Southport College will start in 2023.

CROSBY

Crosby Town Centre Regeneration

- Sefton Council is awaiting the outcome of a decision on the submitted Crosby LUF bid in August 2022. The £10.3 million bid for Crosby Town Centre underpins the programme of regeneration ambitions of the local community set out in the Crosby Investment Strategy. The proposals will enhance the viability and vitality of Crosby town centre and support local businesses by helping to attract more residents and visitors. The proposal if approved will build a new learning, skills, health and well-being hub, library and GP/community health care. It will be a place for people to both work and develop skills within Crosby. Levelling Up Fund resources would also allow for a significant upgrade of the main gateways into the town centre, better pedestrian and cycle access and new electric vehicle charging points in car parks, while also fund on the appearance of public spaces.
- Work is continuing to prepare a planning application for highway and parking works linked to support access and accessibility in Crosby.

Crosby Lakeside

- The main contract for Crosby Lakeside refurbishment is now complete and the restaurant facility opened to the public in August 2022.
- The Sefton Council hospitality company (Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited) is in place to oversee the hospitality management of the facility now it is operational.
- Marketing of the location for Christmas events has gone well with Christmas being a sell out.

Carnegie Library, Crosby.

- Preplanning consultation is underway on the Grade II listed Carnegie Library following investment interest. Local restaurateurs Moose Coffee are to partner in this exciting project – returning home to Crosby with a new flagship eatery. A new digital hub is also proposed in the former library building, providing accessible digital resources, meeting rooms and co-working desks. Consultation undertaken in December returned a positive response from the local community. More details can be found here - [Former Grade II Listed Carnegie Library reimaged as family restaurant and digital hub - My Sefton News Channel](#)

AINSDALE ON SEA

Ainsdale Coastal Gateway

Former Sands Public House, Shore Road, Ainsdale.

- Sefton Council have gone out to the market for the former Sands Public House in Ainsdale (Opposite Pontins) earlier this year, following soft market testing that indicated a sufficient level of interest to encourage a formal marketing of the site.
- External Agents were appointed to ensure maximum visibility for the opportunity both local and nationally and formal marketing took place in summer 2022 generating several formal expressions of interest. The marketing remains 'live' and the opportunity continues to be made available to other parties subject to progress with and conclusion of consideration of the current submissions.
- Brochure can be seen here: [Former Sands PH Marketing Brochure](#)
- Marketing Website link: [Former Sands Public House, Shore Road, Ainsdale, Ainsdale, PR8 2QD | Property to rent | Savills; and Shore Road, Ainsdale, PR8 | Fitton Estates](#)

Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre, Sandbrook Way

- Following Cabinet agreement to acquire the current leasehold interests in this centre by agreement and to bring it into full Council ownership, negotiations with owners are continuing.
- Approximately 50% of the interests have now been acquired and brought into Council control.
- A review of an agreed shortlist of options for this site is now complete and will inform the best approach for this site once in Council ownership including how it can support the wider neighbourhood and community.
- Consultation on site development options with Cabinet and local ward councilors, which has helped inform the option appraisal shortlist being assessed.
- Cabinet member support will be sought to progress with a Compulsory Purchase Order for this site.
- Members will consider in 2023 the next stage needed to bring all outstanding ownerships into Council control and seek views from the market on potential interest.