



Corporate Performance Report 2022/23

July 2023

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FOREWORD



Welcome to our Annual Performance report for 2022/23.

Since we published our last report safeguarding children, with our partners, has been our highest priority and improving services for children and their families has been at the heart of everything we do. We know that we still have much work to do in this area and this is recognised in our Corporate Plan 2023 – 26.

The actions in our Improvement Plan identify the steps we are taking with our partners to make the required changes. We want our all of our services to enable and support every child, young person and family to reach their full potential.

A key priority area is also Adult Social Care who provide long term care and support to over 4000 residents and carers per year. Last year saw confirmation that the Care Quality Commission would, from April 2023, be responsible for assessing the performance and quality of Adult Social Care.

Key to the Council's activity is the requirement and clear objective to deliver and maintain financial sustainability, make every pound count, invest wisely and creatively. Delivering Value for money for our residents is critical and this report sets out the Council's Performance in a number of key areas and should be considered in conjunction with the Council's Financial Outturn.

The Cost-of-Living Crisis has hit our communities hard, people and local businesses across Sefton are living with and facing so many challenges in light of the this. The combination of changes to the welfare system, energy and fuel prices, rising prices in the shops due to inflation has hit households and businesses hard, leaving many struggling to make ends meet. I am proud of the work that we have done with our partners to support local people and businesses.

I would like to thank all our staff, all ward councillors, volunteers, trade unions and our partners for their hard work over the year which has helped to achieve the many successes outlined in this report, and I look forward to working together over the next 12 months.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Maher'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Cllr. Ian Maher
Labour Leader, Sefton Council.



I'm pleased to introduce our Annual Performance report which aligns to the Council's Core Purpose and our contribution to achieving the partnership Vision 2030. The report highlights some of what we have achieved, where we have improvements to make and how we are approaching this, how we have managed the funding we received, and should be considered alongside our Corporate Plan which outlines our priorities looking forward. This year we have continued to develop and strengthen performance reporting and robust scrutiny with quarterly reporting to Cabinet alongside this Annual Report.

The energy and commitment of our workforce, partners and Sefton's many volunteers has continued to be second to none. I would like to echo the Leader's thanks to all our staff, all ward councillors, volunteers, trade unions and our partners for their hard work over the year.

We believe that we are well placed to continue to support our communities as together we face the challenges of funding, the cost-of-living crisis, climate change and health inequalities.

Paulette Lappin

Cllr. Paulette Lappin

Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services, Sefton Council.



Core Purpose

The Council's role in delivering the 2030 vision.

Sefton 2030

Protect the most vulnerable: i.e., those children and adults who have complex care needs with no capacity to care for themselves and no other networks to support them. For those who are the most vulnerable we will have a helping role to play, we will challenge others to ensure we all protect the most vulnerable children and adults and where we need to, we will intervene to help improve lives.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities: the Council will be less about doing things to and for residents and communities and more about creating the capacity and motivation for people to get involved, do it for themselves and help one another. We will create an environment in which residents are less reliant

Commission, broker and provide core services: the Council will directly deliver fewer services but will act as a broker and commissioner of services which meet the defined needs of communities, are person-centred and localised where possible.

Place-leadership and influencer: making sure what we and what others do are in the best interests of Sefton and its residents and has a contributing role to the 2030 vision of the borough. The Council will use data and feedback from our communities, children and young people in shaping plans. The Council will demonstrate strong leadership and influence partner organisations to

- work towards common goals
- deliver the best opportunities and outcomes for the children in young people in and leaving our care by being good Corporate Parents
- deliver the best opportunities and outcomes for residents and every child in Sefton

- ensure Sefton is a child, older person and disability friendly place

- and build pride in the borough.

Drivers of change and reform: the Council will play a key role in leading change and reform to improve outcomes for Sefton residents, every child's future and continuously improve the borough.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: that is, people having the level of money they need to take care of themselves and their family; creating the conditions where relatively low unemployment and high income prevail, leading to high purchasing power; opportunities for future generations and having enough money to invest in infrastructure.

Generate income for social reinvestment: the Council will develop a commercial nature and look to what it can do either by itself or with others to generate income and profit that can be reinvested into delivering social purpose and preparing for the future.

Cleaner and Greener: the Council will work with others to act as guardians and protect and maintain Sefton's natural beauty and ensure that its many assets can be enjoyed by everyone and future generations and provide a contribution to Sefton's economy, peoples wellbeing and the achievement of the 2030 Vision.



TOGETHER A STRONGER COMMUNITY

At the beginning of the year the Council and Sefton's Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector worked together to refresh the New Realities collaborative agreement. Originally launched in 2015, this agreement strengthens relationships and helps to 'get things done' whilst making the most of all resources available.

This has been another year where Sefton's communities have demonstrated their generosity, giving their time and talents to support each other and care for the place they live. Sefton's crowdfunding programme celebrated its third birthday, since it began in 2019 twenty-three projects have been supported by this platform, raising over £119,000. Projects have varied widely and they have demonstrated that they can improve health or have an environmental and social wellbeing impact for communities across Sefton.

In January 2023 Council approved the refreshed Consultation and Engagement



Framework. Our communities have had, and continue to have, the opportunity to influence major projects for example within the Growth Programme through extensive, meaningful consultation and engagement. Valuing the voices of local people and children and ensuring they are engaged actively in the plans and changes happening in Sefton is key to our future.

In January Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust, as well as Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust and Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, were awarded the Honorary Freedom of the Borough by Sefton Council for everything that they did to care for our community during the pandemic.



in Children's Services and the Council and partners are committed to delivering what is needed, so that all of our services enable and support every child, young person and their families to reach their full potential.

This year with our partners at Waterloo Community Centre and the Plaza Community Cinema we hosted Christmas



Throughout the year the Council has worked closely with partners throughout the year to build strong foundations to deliver the changes needed in children's safeguarding. At times the pace of progress has not been as quick as is needed and the Council and partners have taken several steps to address this including the creation of a dedicated Improvement Team.

Recruitment of Social Workers has been a significant challenge and to help address this the Council has created a Children's Social Work Academy which will see graduates in 2023 and commenced the recruitment of over 20 international Social Workers.

There remains a significant amount of work to do to deliver the required change

events for cared for children and care experienced young people. Care experienced young people enjoyed a full Christmas experience including Christmas dinner, quizzes and games, great raffle prizes and a personalised gift bought for them by businesses signed up to our Caring Business Charter.

Over the year the Council has worked closely with partners to develop the local offer for care experienced young people, with young people being involved in the redesign of the website and other supporting materials.

In July 2022 the Clinical Commissioning Groups ceased to exist and following the joint appointment of an integrated NHS Place Director responsible for health and social care planning and commissioning



in Sefton the Sefton Partnership was established. This Partnership includes the NHS and Sefton Council, along with NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) who have agreed to work together to respond to the health, care and wellbeing needs of the people of Sefton. The partnership has already made significant progress, with achievements including being shortlisted for two prestigious national awards, launching innovative new services that are already making a real difference to transforming the lives of local people of all ages. These include jointly funded services through the Sefton Partnership Board:

- New joint funding with health for our baby attachment and bonding service (BABS), which provides specialist mental health support for new mums during pregnancy and in the postnatal period, helping them to secure attachments and loving bonds with their babies
- The launch of the Crisis Cafés in Southport and Crosby that provide a safe space for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis, with 1:1 support available to help manage crisis situations. This service is jointly funded with the local NHS.

- A new two-hour urgent community response service that has been highly effective in reducing the need for our most vulnerable patients to be admitted to hospital.

A requirement of the NHS is to develop a local Place Plan which responds to the priorities in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and JSNA. This has been developed through a series of workshops involving a wide set of partners organisations and has been received by the Health and Wellbeing Board. Progress on delivering the Sefton Place Plan will be monitored through the Sefton Partnership Board.

The Adult Social Care team began preparing for the new Assurance Framework to oversee and assess Adult Social Care Performance. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) working with the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) will carry out regulatory visits of Adult Social Care from April 2023 similar to an Ofsted inspection. Workshops have taken place with staff, partners and people with lived experience to codesign our plan for the future of Social Care in Sefton. In preparation for the new framework, Adult Social Care took part in a Peer Review Challenge by the Local Government Association as part of ADASS'

programme of sector led improvement. The peer challenge included an assessment of current achievements and recommendations of how further improvements can be made. An action plan has been developed and this now forms part of the assurance preparation plan.

A co-production framework has been developed and partners are committed to seeing co-production with people who have lived experience of using care and support services.

This year saw the establishment of the Sefton Safeguarding Adults Board (replacing the Merseyside Safeguarding Adults Board) which is a statutory body with a responsibility to protect adults with care and support needs from abuse, harm and neglect in Sefton. It is a partnership set up to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are in place and services in Sefton are high-quality and safe. The partnership consists of local organisations including representatives from Merseyside Police, Sefton Council, Merseyside Fire & Rescue, the Probation Service, NHS agencies and several voluntary sector groups. Together, the partners have created a brand-new website at <https://seftonsab.org.uk>

Community Resilience Grants provide funds to individuals, groups and organisations. Over 180 organisations have been supported through the Grant Rounds equating to over £280k funding distributed across Sefton. Since 2020 it is estimated that the grants enabled community groups to impact upon approximately 10,758 individuals through their projects.

Activities funded have ranged from wellbeing focus sessions and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder support groups through our mental health round, to improving facilities and providing support packs as part of community resourcefulness to outdoor activities and preparing healthy meals to support our obesity agenda.



A BOROUGH FOR EVERYONE

Feeling safe, supported and free from discrimination and harm is important to our communities. Throughout the year the Council has worked with partners to highlight the support available to people experiencing anti-social behaviour and the work taking place in Sefton to prevent and tackle it. The Sefton Safer Communities Partnership has continued to fund many activities throughout the year that offer diversionary activities to help reduce Anti-Social behaviour.

As **Place Leader** the Council the Council has continued to demonstrate its commitment to driving forward the equality agenda, as an employer, service provider and as a partner both locally and regionally. The Council was once again awarded the Navajo Charter Mark for displaying good practice and commitment towards its LGBT+ staff and community at the annual Navajo Awards Ceremony. Over the year the Corporate Equalities Group worked with colleagues and partners to develop the [Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#) which was agreed by Council in April 2023.

August saw Council teams join the Pride celebrations in Liverpool. In partnership with Mersey Rail, Council staff decorated a train carriage for their journey into Liverpool city centre. Sefton's 'Pride Train' then travelled throughout Sefton, stopping at stations including Southport, Crosby and Bootle, picking up march attendees in the special carriage including the LGBTQIA+ Sefton Youth Group, New Beginnings, staff from Sefton@Work and foster parents. A huge celebration was enjoyed by all.



Black History Month, was an opportunity to celebrate the incredible history and contributions of our Black and ethnically diverse communities. In The Strand Shopping Centre, The Atkinson and Crosby Library the Council hosted art installations as part of The World Reimagined project. These are beautiful globes that tell the public about racial equality and black history. Events also took place in conjunction with groups such as Southport Against Racism, with talks and performances by musicians and poets. Our libraries were also involved in an extensive creative writing programme called Different Voices Shared Lives. In this, members of our ethnically diverse communities came together to work with professional writers to take part in creative workshops to write their stories about their background and experiences.

In January the Council made ‘care experienced’ a protected characteristic, putting it on equal footing with race and gender when it comes to fighting discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity for all. This is just one of the changes aimed at strengthening the voice and needs of cared for and care experienced children and young people in Sefton and strengthens the Council’s role as a corporate parent.

In line with our One Council values, we have continued to develop our staff networks. These contribute to addressing and solving problems right across the Council. Our staff networks offer a place for staff to come together, share experiences and facilitate learning and development. The staff networks include:

- Sefton Council Christian Workplace Group

- Sefton’s Black and Ethnically Diverse Staff Group
- Sefton LGBT+ Staff Network
- Sefton Disability Staff Network
- Sefton Women’s Network

This year over 75% of staff completed the mandatory Equality & Diversity training and over 200 attended a high-quality bespoke race equality training, developed with City Region colleagues, with the aim of building a collective level of racial literacy and inclusivity. The course has had a significant impact on those who attended with many recommending attendance to their colleagues.

The libraries joined a handful of library services in the UK to be awarded ‘Library of Sanctuary’ status. The award recognises and celebrates libraries that go above and beyond in welcoming refugees, people seeking asylum, or anyone in need of a safe place. Sefton’s libraries were recognised by the network for their work in supporting those seeking sanctuary and for their Human Libraries programme.

In November 2022 the Council supported the national White Ribbon campaign’s 16 Days of action to help eradicate domestic abuse across the borough. Following the consultation that took place in March 2022 the Council worked with partners to develop the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy which was agreed by Council in March 2023 along with the Safer Sefton Together Strategy.

In March Ofsted gave Springbrook Short Breaks Home a rating of ‘Good.’ The Report cited the overall experiences and progress of children and how well they are helped and protected. It also notes the effectiveness of leaders and managers

in making continuous improvements and providing a high quality service to our families.

The Education Strategy was launched this year, setting out what we want to achieve for our young people and reflecting our aspirational ambitions for young people in Sefton, not just educationally but in terms of their health, wellbeing and preparedness for adult life.

Over 500 people attended events across Sefton to learn more about Technology Enabled Care Solutions. The roadshows showcased a range of assistive technology that people can use to remain independent at home. They also provided information on how to access the equipment.

Ageing in Sefton was the theme of this year's annual report by the Council's Director of Public Health. The Report

points out that senior adults have an indispensable role to play in shaping strategic changes that meet their varied needs and benefit the wider community.

Adult Social Care also launched the third round of Care Home Improvement Grants to help improve care home facilities across the Borough. The Grant programme gives care homes the opportunity to develop projects that will improve outdoor or communal areas within care homes making them more dementia friendly to allow for more social interaction and activities. Projects also include the use of technological equipment that can improve residents' quality of life and digital solutions to support a greener carbon footprint and energy.





LIVING, WORKING & HAVING FUN

This year saw so many in our communities impacted by the Cost of Living Crisis benefitting from the work of our partners and so many volunteers. Their dedication and generosity and willingness to work with the Council meant that many were able to access much needed support locally.

As part of its **Place Leadership** role the Council ensured that people could access information and advice via the Council website and Sefton Directory. The Sefton Support Hub at www.sefton.gov.uk/seftonsupporthub continues to be a digital One Stop Shop where local people can find help, advice and guidance, as well as financial and social support. The Council also used its social media accounts to share signposting information to the community and amplifying the messages of Sefton CVS and other community groups that may be able to provide advice and support. The same information was made available in non digital formats to elected members and partners to share locally.

The Council also continued to support families throughout the year with over 9000 families who were eligible for free school meals receiving vouchers to help them over the school holiday periods and delivering Keep Warm Keep well events.

Working alongside voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and in we established a network of Welcome Spaces across Sefton. These included community centres, community hubs and other places offering a warm welcome and free to use for anyone feeling lonely or struggling with the cost of living. So many people have accessed these facilities and found them invaluable as they have supported them to access available support and create new friendships.

The Council and its partners are committed to increasing opportunity in employment and education and supporting the most vulnerable members of its communities. This year the Child Poverty Strategy was agreed, focusing on reducing the numbers of children living in

poverty, families with no qualifications or skills training, young people aged 16-17 who are not in education, employment, or training and families who are unemployed and in receipt of out of work benefits. It also aims to reduce the impact of fuel poverty on families, increase the amount of affordable housing across the Borough and raise average household incomes.

This year has seen many new, much needed homes being built in Sefton. In May the Council approved the Business Case for the first new properties to be used as council housing for since 2006, with properties for rent and shared ownership being made available. In November a revised Housing Strategy was agreed setting out the vision, key themes and strategic housing priorities for Sefton over the next five years. The Housing Strategy looks at ensuring that housing needs are met over the next 5 years, with the right type of housing in the right locations.

Work has continued to develop the exciting medium and long-term vision for growth at the heart of Bootle. This year saw the business case for the development of Bootle Canalside approved with an exciting programme of events and new branding of Salt & Tar agreed. The site has already hosted several trial events which have established widespread community support and an eagerness for more – more events, wider breadth, more development and more engagement. All of these are in train. A recent Comedy Festival with a number of national headlining comics (including Jo Caulfield, Chris McCausland and Jason Byrne) was exceedingly well received, well attended and will be back again next year. Bootle Music Festival has been headlined by the Lathoms, Cast and Red Rum Club,

sold out and brought over 9,000 into Bootle town centre. This is the early phases of regeneration plans which will build on the acquisition of Bootle Strand, the emerging repurposing and investment plans, the £20m Levelling Up funding and the commitment of support by the Combined Authority.

Sandway Homes the Council's wholly owned Housing Development Company, continued with the build out at its first 2 sites at Meadow Lane and Bartons Close and saw the first residents move in- at the start of this build sales of these houses were being conducted as soon as they were available but completions have slowed with the impact of the volatility and adverse conditions in the national economy, however expectations remain high for the success of this first phase.



Work on the Southport Marine Lake Events Centre project has continued which will bring local jobs, fun and exciting events for local people to enjoy plus thousands of visitors to the town each year and provide a boost to the local economy. This is a £73m scheme which includes a 1200

seated flexible theatre space/auditorium alongside a conference and events facility, and the largest permanent water and light show in the UK which will sit within the adjacent Marine Lake. It is expected to generate £18m to the town's economy annually, will generate 600,000+ visitors and is the centre piece of the Town Deal.

Over the year Public Health team has been working with colleagues and partners to develop Happy 'n' Healthy Sefton consists of a range of public health commissioned partners working collaboratively to improve children and young people's health and wellbeing by promoting a holistic approach, whilst reducing health inequalities. This will be achieved by facilitating strong partnership working, integration, co-production and co-delivery between the six children and young people's Public Health commissioned services (0-19 Healthy Child Programme, Kooth, Active Sefton, Change, Grow Live, ABL and sexual health).

The name Happy 'n' Healthy Sefton was co-produced with children and young people with further follow-up work completed in schools to ensure children and young people could choose their favourite branding.

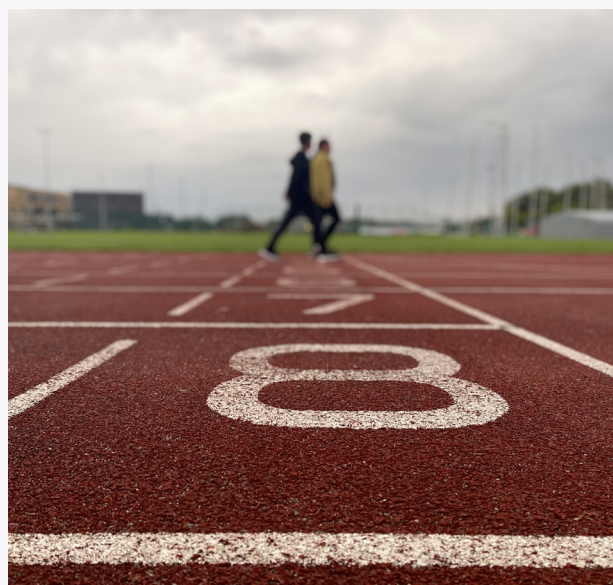
As a universal offer, Happy 'n' Healthy will provide support with:

- Healthy weight and nutrition
- Mental health and well-being
- Physical activity
- Sexual health
- Smoking
- Substance use
- Wider, universal healthy child support

Once launched in July 2023, Happy 'n' Healthy Sefton will also act as a point of contact for the public and wider professionals.

Since the pandemic the mental health of our children and young people has worsened, which is reflected in the continual increase in referrals received by the 1-2-1 programme. During 2021-2022, there were a total of 213 referrals, an average of 16 per month. This has increased to 246 and an average of 19 per month in 2022-23, with a further increase to 26 referrals per month in 2023-24.

1-2-1 is a physical activity programme designed to build positive mental and physical health and wellbeing of Sefton's young people (aged 11-19). The project offers weekly physical activity sessions in Secondary Schools and the community, using Development Officers as mentors. This approach builds a relationship, which allows the young person to feel able to engage in dialogue about issues that may be affecting them. The programme is bespoke to individual needs and utilises a variety of positive activities and techniques to motivate the young person and break down barriers, allowing them to feel supported.



191 young people engaged in the programme, an increase of **23%** (155) compared to the previous year. **89%** of children and young people accessing the programme demonstrated improved mental wellbeing, a vast improvement on **66%** from the previous year, as evidenced by formal wellbeing assessment. From the 32 children and young people classed as having a low mental wellbeing pre intervention, **72%** had a positive improvement, progressing to either average or good mental wellbeing.

Change, Grow, Live began providing the commissioned drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services in Sefton in 2022. Public health commissioners work closely with CGL and other partners,

including probation, the NHS, police and social care to ensure improvements in services for local people. During the year 237 new people entered non-structured treatment and 1042 new people entered structured treatment. This exceeded the targets set for Sefton by national funding bodies and public health monitoring authorities. Of those entering structured treatment 304 people had never accessed services before. As of quarter four the programmes achieved 74.3% continuity of care from prison so increasingly close to the 3yr Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) target of 75% in only the first year. This is one of the highest in the country.





VISIT, EXPLORE & ENJOY

During the year many people and visitors have enjoyed The Lake House and Southport Market. November saw the Council agree a new business plan for Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited. The company also successfully developed the White House Café which opened its doors in May 2023 providing another venue for local people and visitors to enjoy.

Southport Market has continued to go from strength to strength and after serving nearly half a million meals and drinks during 2022, the traders took a well-deserved two week holiday in January.

The Council commissioned a 22ft mural celebrating Bootle and England football legend Alex Greenwood to sit in pride of place on the busy Bootle town centre thoroughfare and this has been seen and enjoyed by thousands of schoolchildren, shoppers and commuters every day. Alex was also the first woman to be awarded the Freedom of Sefton.

So many friends and families enjoyed the Cinderella pantomime at the Atkinson. Once again children from across the borough enjoyed the partnership that sees the pantomime join up with Southport Eco Centre's Christmas campaign that helps to spread some Christmas cheer and some important eco messages about how we can all reduce, reuse and recycle over the festive period.

The Tourism Team deliver 3 major events throughout the year, the Southport Air Show, the Southport Food and Drink Festival and the National Fireworks Competition. All of which are extremely popular with our residents and bring tens of thousands of visitors to the Borough, supporting local businesses and town centre investments.

Over the year lots of people have enjoyed the golf facilities across Sefton with many polishing up their skills at the driving ranges in Bootle and Southport.



CLEAN, GREEN & BEAUTIFUL

Sefton's coastline, an internationally protected 'nature reserve', is stunning, and we understand why people want to visit. The coast again saw many visitors throughout the year. This year Green Sefton introduced a new campaign, "Give Birds A Break", to highlight the need for visitors not to disturb migrant birds as they rest on our natural coast. Many of the bird species that are seen along Sefton's coast have travelled from the arctic and take a much-needed break to rest, feed and build up fat and energy levels before continuing their migration south.

At both Ainsdale and Formby, there were Paws for Thought pop-ups from Dynamic Dunescape and Green Sefton who were on site raising awareness about dog walking on our coast. The Paws for Thought campaign encouraged visitors and their furry friends to enjoy our beautiful landscapes while also helping us make these habitats a safer home for the wildlife that relies on it.

Following extensive consultation a three year Coastal and Visitor Area Public Space

Protection Order (PSPO) was put in place at locations across Sefton. The order will help ensure the coastline and town centres can be enjoyed by everyone.

In March the Council launched a campaign to tackle the epidemic of fly-tipping that is affecting communities across Sefton. #CrimeNotToCare, was run in partnership with environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, aiming to educate householders about the right thing to do with their rubbish and to reduce the amount of household waste that is fly-tipped by rogue traders who offer to take people's waste away for money and then dump it.





King's Gardens in Southport retained its Green Flag and a number of Green Flag Community Awards were awarded to: Botanic Gardens Community Association (Fernery and bedding), Friends of Rotten Row, South Park Community Garden, Queensway Allotments and North Park Community Garden.

Once again the Green Sefton team were bowled over by the determination and commitment of our green-fingered community groups and volunteers, who once again were recognised for their green-fingered expertise for the 2022 North West in Bloom competition.



The Council has made further progress towards a net zero carbon target of 2030. The street lighting LED replacement project has already saved a whopping 2.8 million kwh electricity. Which is enough to power 979 homes for a year!





ON THE MOVE

In 2022/23, the council invested more than £14m in its highway infrastructure, maintaining and improving the network.

This year, we have started the development of a Low Carbon Transport Strategy. Transport is a major contributor to carbon emissions, whether that be emissions from motor vehicles or the materials used to build and maintain our highways. The strategy will confirm our baseline carbon footprint and set out our route to net-zero. The strategy will also lay the groundwork for how we adapt our transport infrastructure for climate change, including improving drainage systems, and introducing more sustainable drainage, and managing our highway landscaped areas differently, to provide more sustainable drainage, carbon capture, and increased biodiversity.

Work has also started on our strategy for E-mobility/Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. This will pave the way for an improved network of Electric Vehicle charging, enabling people to make the switch to cleaner, electric vehicles.

Cycling and walking will be an important part of future transport, reducing carbon emissions and pollution, and providing a healthier and cheaper means of transport. To support this we have started work on our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which will outline our plans for walking and cycling infrastructure for the next 5-10 years. Excellent work has continued with young people at 3 high schools in the borough, with the young people leading the way in the development of safer and active travel friendly changes to the areas immediately outside their schools. As a result, Sefton's first 2 School Streets will be launched in early summer 2023.

Temporary "pop-up" cycle lanes were introduced in 2021, in Bootle and Southport town centres, to help people get about more safely at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. These lanes have continued to be used since, as has monitoring and evaluation of their use and impact. A decision will be taken in 2023 whether to retain, modify or remove them.



Work also continued on the development and design of major schemes to improve transport connections to key facilities, services and employment sites, with permission granted for Les Transformation des Southport, phase 1, and significant progress on the Southport Eastern Access and Bootle Maritime Corridor schemes, along with plans to improve cycling and walking along the A59 through Maghull.

Our Network Management Team continued to perform well, managing and minimising the disruption caused by people digging on the highway, promptly issuing permits and effectively monitoring them to ensure works are completed on time, with less than 1% overrunning.

Once again Sefton welcomed thousands of visitors to the borough as part of the Aintree Grand National Festival, golf events, the Air Show and so many more great events. As always the Highways team worked alongside Merseyside Police, Merseytravel and several other partners, the Council's traffic management team helps coaches, cars, limousines and even horse boxes get to the right place at the right time.

Throughout the year the Highways and Communications team have worked closely together to advise people how they can avoid the queues particularly when travelling to Sefton's beautiful beaches, in the good weather. The Communications team even came up with some in car sounds for people who did and who did not take its advice.





OPEN FOR BUSINESS

This year the Council sought views on the Economic Strategy from everyone living or working in Sefton, as well as business owners, organisations, entrepreneurs, and investors. Over 200 people provided detailed feedback on the Economic Strategy and contributions were received from a range of business and community organisations at consultation events.

The Economic Strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2022 focusing on four key strategic objectives-Business Growth & Investment; Employment and access to work, Regenerated Places and Social Inclusion and access for all. The Council is now developing actions against each of these objectives.

The InvestSefton team has been busy all year supporting new and existing businesses and encouraging inward investment. The team met or exceeded its external funded contracts resulting in some notable achievements and outcomes:

- Responded to 1,323 business enquiries via phone/email/website
- www.investsefton.com had a total of 65,872 unique sessions from individuals, businesses and inward investors from both UK and overseas markets including USA, India, France and Italy
- Received the North West award for best Local Authority response to supporting businesses during Covid from the Federation of Small Businesses
- Established two new business networks-Sefton Huddle supporting Sefton's Digital & Technology businesses and Professional Sefton (Business, Professional & Financial services) involving over 50 Sefton businesses
- Supported new inward investment in Mersey Reach including an SME training company and a UK distribution site for European electric car component supplier who have recently taken leases on new units creating over 30 new jobs

- InvestSefton led the response working alongside teams from Business Rates, Risk & Audit, Sefton@work, Tourism, Early Intervention and Social Care & Wellbeing resulting in the following outcomes:

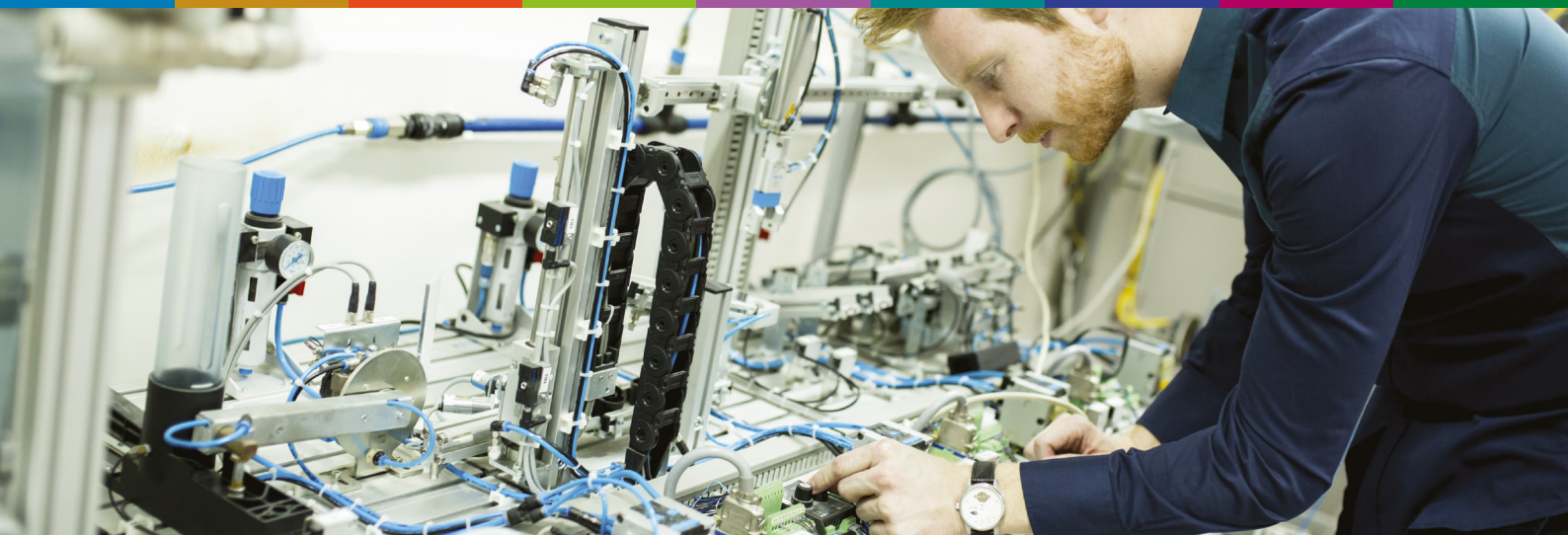


- Delivered 8 x business events, roundtables and workshops (including a Sandway Meet the Buyer session) which, in total, was attended by 276 individual businesses
- Delivered two Sefton Economic Forum events attended by over 200 delegates including a marketplace of business support providers and an array of speakers such as the Bank of England; Dept for Business & Trade; Export Academy; Business & Intellectual Property office and many more

In March many businesses enjoyed the ‘Health is Wealth’ workshop focusing on mental health wellbeing. The event provided ‘food for thought’ and highlighted practices that Sefton’s business leaders could incorporate to create a positive impact in their personal and professional lives and on their companies and workforces.

In a first for the North West, the Council launched the Caring Business Charter alongside local businesses, partners and care experienced young people – with 60 potential employers signed up. The Charter aims to improve visibility and access for care experienced young people to employment, training, apprenticeship, work experience and mentoring opportunities. Many cared for and care experienced young people are already benefitting from this in many ways including employment and taster days.





READY FOR THE FUTURE

The Council supports its workforce to develop new skills and this year saw 36 new apprentices employed and a further 31 members of the Council's workforce take up the opportunity to take up an apprenticeship. In November a care experienced young person was an apprentice in the winning team for the Local Government Apprentice of the Year 2022.

We have made good progress delivering our Digital Strategy which outlines our vision to become a place connected by people, supported by technology, with connected communities that thrive; with support for local people and businesses that are empowered to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by digital technology. We are all living in a time of unprecedented change; the growth of consumer technology is changing the way we all live, work and play and we will work hard to ensure that local people and business are empowered to take advantage of innovative technology to support both personal and economic growth.

The usage of Ask SARA has continued to grow, this is an online self-assessment tool and guidance tool for Adults, to allow people to browse a range of products and services to suit their needs and help them to live independently for longer. It is part of our Technology Enabled Care Strategy to support people to remain independent and as an additional offer to aids, adaptations and equipment.



The Council has maintained an excellent record with regard to financial management over the last 12 years, a period that has seen it experience substantial funding reductions and navigate its way through the covid pandemic and the resulting impact. This has continued to be predicated on medium term financial planning that enables effective planning of service delivery and the inevitable transformation activity. During recent years the Council's financial position has been impacted by the volatility within the Children's Services budget and has required substantial investment over the last

3 years including in year investment as pressure from staffing requirements and placement costs increase substantially.

There is full recognition of the demand on Childrens Services and the need to ensure that the Medium-Term Financial Plan is aligned to the Improvement Plan for the service and associated partnership work. This was a recommendation from the Commissioner and this work has been completed.

We have a 3-year medium term financial plan that will support services delivery, however, the management of the Council's finances over this period will rely, as with all local authorities, on the receipt of appropriate funding from central government. Adults' and Children's Services will continue to face significant budget pressure during this time and present the greatest risk to financial sustainability in addition to the High Needs Budget. The Council will also review its reserves strategy during this time.



FOCUS ON DELIVERY

279,231

Total Sefton Population

This includes:

0-17 year olds **52,998** (19%).

National average England is 21%

18-64 year olds **161,467** (58%)

National average England is 61%

65 years and above **64,766** (23%)

The national average in England is 18%



4,000+
Long-term service users

607
miles of roads

18
Nature reserves and sites of scientific interest

1,400+
Children are safeguarded

8
Leisure Centres

6
Libraries

5,000+
Children with special educational needs and disabilities

600+
Number of children in our care:


26 Main parks
140 Other parks and green spaces



Adult Social Care
£110.40m



Safeguarding Children
£69.4m



Children, young people and families
£31.3m



Cleaning your streets
£4.3m



Emptying your bins
£8m



Getting rid of your rubbish
£15.8m



Libraries
£1.4m



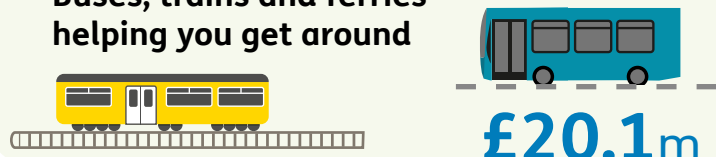
Sport and Leisure Centres
£1.8m



Neighbourhood management
£2.2m



Keeping your roads safe
£9m



Buses, trains and ferries - helping you get around
£20.1m



The Atkinson and Tourism
£2.1m



Skills & Jobs
£2.4m



Coast, Parks & Open Spaces
£5.2m



Protecting your Health & Wellbeing
£21.9m



Other Council Services
£10.3m

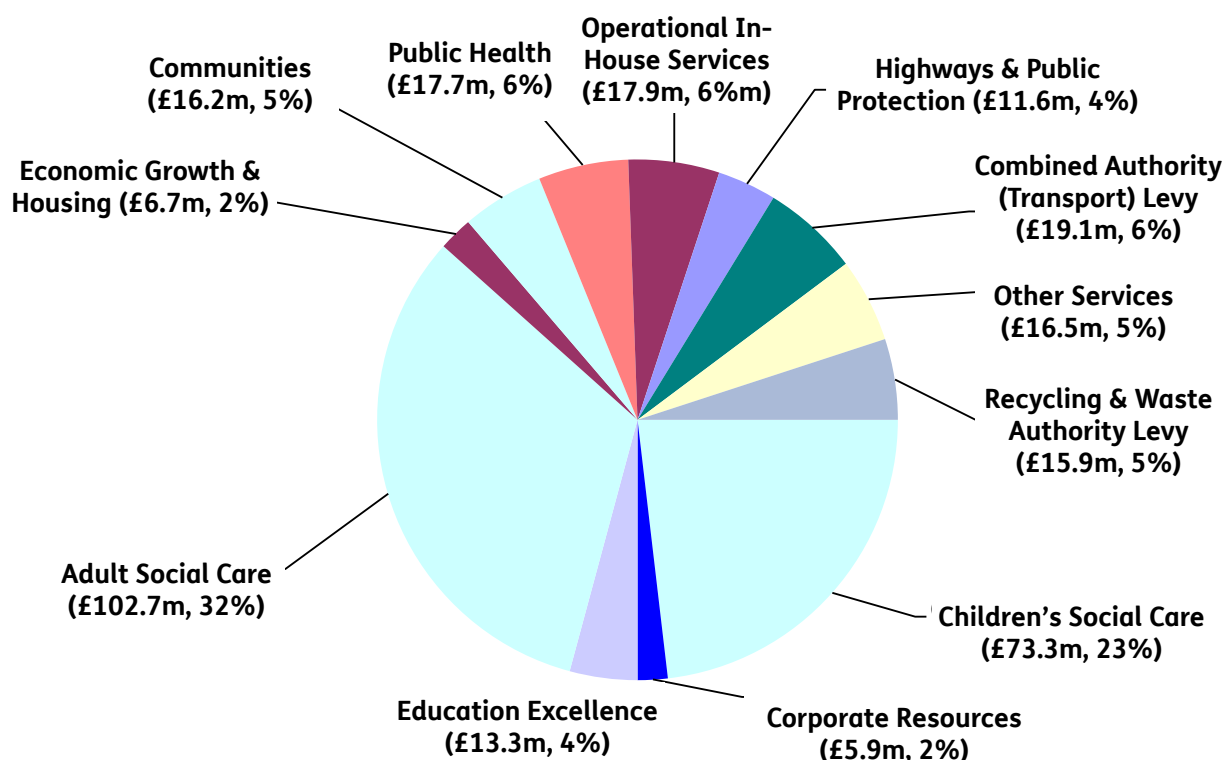


Planning, Building Control and Housing
£5.6m

FOCUS ON PERFORMANCE

Analysis of General Fund Expenditure and Income 2022/2023

Service Expenditure 2022/2023



Sources of Funding for 2022/2023 Budget Requirement

