

Report to:	Overview & Scrutiny (Regeneration & Skills)	Date of Meeting:	5 th March 2024
Subject:	Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan		
Report of:	Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing)	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Skills		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To update members on the:

1. Refresh of the Sefton Economic Strategy
2. Production of a Sefton Inward Investment prospectus

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet Members note and provide comment on progress with the Sefton Economic Strategy refresh and production of a Sefton Inward Investment prospectus.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To update members on this key decision and advise on progress with a refresh of Sefton Economic Strategy and the production of an associated Sefton Inward Investment prospectus to help promote the borough to attract business growth and investment.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

Do nothing and update the existing Economic Strategy -this was rejected as officers also needed to provide in one place a suite of key Sefton inward investment sites data and information to assist in current and planned national and international property marketing events led by the LCR Combined Authority and support the council's own business growth activities.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The cost of the refresh and Sefton Inward Investment prospectus is £15,000 and will be met from the existing InvestSefton budget. There are no other direct revenue (other than

staffing) costs associated with the implementation of the Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no direct capital costs associated with the recommendations within this report.

Implications of the Proposals:

<p>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</p> <p>Consultation co-ordination and ongoing delivery activities is being undertaken by Economic Growth & Housing staff within existing budgets.</p>									
<p>Legal Implications:</p> <p>None</p>									
<p>Equality Implications:</p> <p>The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated as shown in the previous Equalities Impact Assessment</p>									
<p>Impact on Children and Young People:</p> <p>Prevailing economic conditions will inevitably have an impact on children and young people and the implications of these will be captured under some of the key strategic objectives and subsets. The SES is also seeking to align with other council work in this space, most notably the Child Poverty Strategy. The services involved in the implementation of the SES are all actively engaged in promoting and progressing the Caring Business Charter as well.</p>									
<p>Climate Emergency Implications:</p> <p>The recommendations within this report will</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Have a positive impact</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a neutral impact</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Have a negative impact</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td> <td>Yes</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Sefton Economic Strategy has an associated action plan and some of the delivery activities (e.g new development, business expansion, inward investment) will have a negative impact on the footprint of the Sefton borough. These include direct emissions which result from the redevelopment of any vacant sites as well as long-term carbon emissions from each new building / operation created.</p> <p>However, the development of sites and buildings will be required to go through the planning system which will help to minimise the carbon impact of the building by applying the nationally required environmental standards. Economic growth will also impact businesses and transport negatively, but this could be minimised by adopting</p>		Have a positive impact	No	Have a neutral impact	No	Have a negative impact	Yes	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
Have a positive impact	No								
Have a neutral impact	No								
Have a negative impact	Yes								
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes								

green policies e.g., green growth where companies use green renewable energy, use electric vehicles, low carbon options. InvestSefton works closely with external providers of expert support to businesses seeking to reduce energy costs and introduce low carbon solutions to their operations.

InvestSefton also commissioned Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside to provide business sustainability support to businesses in Sefton town centres including developing green action plans to support reduction in carbon emissions.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:

Social Inclusion and Access for all is a core objective of the strategy framework to set a direction for action so that the impacts of economic growth reach many more of Sefton's residents including the most vulnerable.

Commission, broker and provide core services:

The Strategy Framework will help in identifying key priorities for action including services that require direct delivery or sub-contracting and commissioning. This includes commissioning on business start-up support and the business sustainability work.

Place – leadership and influencer:

Regenerated Places and Business Growth & Investment are core objectives of the strategy framework, and the council is already active in this work in terms of delivering area action plans and promoting Sefton as a place to support business growth, attract visitors and new inward investment.

Drivers of change and reform:

The Strategy framework provides a platform to prioritise and develop economic interventions where they are most needed and allows the council to refresh and update areas of work that require change and reform.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:

This is the overarching objective of any Sefton economic strategy and the four key objectives-Employment & opportunities for work; Business Growth and Investment; Social Inclusion and Access for all and Regenerated Places- are all geared to help maximise sustainable economic growth that will benefit residents, businesses, and communities in Sefton.

Greater income for social investment:

Opportunities for supporting income for social investment will be covered under the strategy's core objectives of Business Growth & Investment and Social Inclusion & Access for all.

Cleaner Greener

Under Regenerated Places reference is made to the mitigation of any adverse environmental impacts because of economic regeneration growth; the strategy also focuses on attracting new cleaner greener investment. e.g. Digital, particularly the roll-out of ultrafast broadband

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD 7543/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 5643/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

The Strategy framework has previously been the subject of extensive external consultation with businesses, stakeholders, community groups/charities and residents. This work continues in conjunction with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority by aligning Sefton objectives with those of the LCR Economic Opportunities work. Ongoing work is also discussed and presented at Sefton Economic Forum events.

Contact Officer:	Mike Mullin
Telephone Number:	07929 787436
Email Address:	mike.mullin@sefton.gov.uk

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Background papers, which are not available elsewhere on the Internet can be accessed on the Council website: [Sefton Economy business](#)
Business Growth activity is also promoted on www.investsefton.com

1 Background

- 1.1 On 3rd November 2022 Sefton Council Cabinet approved the final version of the Sefton Economic Strategy for publication. It also noted further work scheduled for 2023 on the development of an associated Action Plan and appropriate monitoring points. Cabinet also gave authority to the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Skills, to approve the Action Plan and Monitoring Reports as set out under the recommendations.
- 1.2 Members of this Committee received a full update on 16 January 2024. The update included plans to refresh the Sefton Economic Strategy. This also includes

the production of a Sefton Inward Investment prospectus to assist in promoting the borough as part of LCR Combined Authority national and international investment activities and events. It will also assist the council in its own inward investment and regeneration led activities.

Governance & reporting

- 1.3 A repurposed Sefton Economy Cell group of officers from across a range of services, led by the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth & Housing), meet quarterly to report on progress with each of the four strategic objectives and subset themes and activities. Officers update a dedicated dashboard which serves as an action plan. A copy of the Quarter 3 dashboard October -December 2023 is shown as **(Annex A)** and provides snapshot of performance of the strategic objectives. Members have already viewed and commented on Quarter 2 at January committee and there is little to report in anything significant for Quarter 3. Members will be kept updated with detailed action plan progress in future meetings.

2. Sefton Economic Strategy refresh

- 2.1 Sefton Economy Cell officers were keen to understand how the strategy can remain fit for purpose in terms of its objectives and alignment with the emerging Liverpool City Region Economic Opportunities framework which will serve as a sounding board to help drive, amongst other economic activities, new inward investment activities across the city region. To this end Mickledore, authors of the existing Sefton Economic Strategy, have been retained under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to undertake further work which is summarised below:
- 2.2 The work will be an addendum to the SES to ensure alignment with the emerging LCR Economic Opportunities Framework and the LCR Inward Investment work. This will provide a cohesive approach and maximise Sefton's economic opportunities for attracting inward investment, together with an overarching prospectus which identifies opportunities for attracting both institutionalised and end user investment in Sefton, site specific prospectuses will be produced, as an extension to the Economic Strategy to support the promotion of key opportunities at the International Market for Real Estate Professionals (MIPIM) and the UK Real Estate and Investment and Infrastructure Forum (REIIF) events in 2024- these events are led by the LCR Combined Authority with support from the private sector led Liverpool Place Partnership.

3 Base review & Analysis

- 3.1 The first phase of the methodology will be a review of the strategic context, examining current and developing strategies and frameworks, to include:
- LCR Plan for Prosperity
 - LCR emerging Economic Opportunities Framework
 - LCR inward investment strategy
 - LCR Investment Zone
 - LCR draft Spatial Development Strategy
 - LCR Innovation prospectus
 - Freeport

- Investment Zones
- Bootle Action Area Plan

Analysis of sector specialism in Sefton

- 3.2 A review of the specific sector specialisms in Sefton will be undertaken and aligned to the sector/cluster priorities of LCR. This part of the review will also examine macro trends in various industries to validate the choices for opportunities.

Skills analysis

- 3.3 Further to the agreement on sectors, a top-level review of the Sefton Skills base will be carried out, to assess the potential to match the sector opportunities or highlight potential gaps. This will be based on an update of the data set used in the Sefton Economic Strategy.

Key site Opportunities

- 3.4 The initial list of sites identified for the prospectus is as follows:

:

- Land North of Altcar Road, Formby
- Land East of Maghull
- Maghull Health Park
- Bootle Strand
- Bootle Office Quarter
- Bootle Housing sites
- Southport Business Park
- Southport Seafront
- Pontins Southport Holiday Park

- 3.5 Mickledore will conduct an audit of the information currently available about each key site and identify any gaps in the knowledge. They will review publicly available information including planning information to reduce the gaps identified.

The following information will be compiled for each site:

- Ownership
- Size
- Planning status and category
- Specific constraints
- Access and connectivity
- Utilities status and capacity
- Existing occupiers
- Neighbouring assets
- Unique feature (e.g. data cable node)
- Deliverability timelines/ market readiness

Aligning sites with sector opportunities

- 3.6 To complement this information, Mickledore will examine site specific sector opportunities, the trends in these sectors and the points of differentiation for LCR

& Sefton. They will also provide a commuting catchment area (drive time map) for each site.

4 Outputs

- 4.1 On completion of this work, Mickledore will provide Sefton Council with:
- An overarching inward investment proposition for Sefton
 - Key Site opportunities prospectus for each site in an editable PowerPoint form
 - A further document, commercial in confidence which will highlight more detailed site constraints.
- 4.2 The completed work will enable the Council to have a full suite of key investment opportunities which can be easily updated and added to. The intention is for them to be used for both strategic events such as MIPIM and UKREIFF amongst others, while officers will also have access to 'off shelf' material in response to business growth and new inward investment enquiries.
- 4.3 A sub-group of the Economy Cell led by the Assistant Director of Place (Economic Growth and Housing) will oversee this work which is expected to last 4-6 weeks. Members will be kept advised of progress at future committee meetings.