

Report Title: Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan Update Nov 2024

Date of meeting:	25 th November 2024		
Report to:	Overview & Scrutiny Regeneration, Economy & Skills		
Report of:	Assistant Director Economic Growth & Housing		
Portfolio:	Regeneration, Economy & Skills		
Wards affected:	All		
Is this a key decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt/confidential report:	No		

Summary:

To update members on progress with the Sefton Economic Strategy Action plan for the period April- September 2024.

Recommendation(s):

That members note progress with and provide feedback on the Sefton Economic Strategy Action plan for the period April- September 2024.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

Sefton’s Economic Strategy sets out the council’s framework and delivery for services providing support to the local economy and is aligned with Sefton 2030 Vision. It is also being aligned with the emerging Liverpool City Region Combined Authority’s emerging Growth plan. Cabinet approved the framework strategy on 3rd November 2022 and gave authority to the Assistant Director Economic Growth & Housing in conjunction with Cabinet Member Regeneration, Economy & Skills to approve the subsequent Action Plans which are reported to this committee and published on [Sefton Economic Strategy](#)

2. Financial Implications

There are no new financial costs associated with this latest work.

3. Legal Implications

None

4. Corporate Risk Implications

Risks associated with Economic Growth have been identified, mitigated and recorded in the service Risk Register which is updated quarterly.

5 Staffing HR Implications

Co-ordination and ongoing delivery activities are delivered by Economic Growth & Housing and other associated service staff within existing budgets.

6 Conclusion

The Sefton Economic Strategy sets out the Council's economic objectives in line with the Sefton 2030 Vision. The framework approved by Cabinet in November 2022 has been further refined but the key strategic objectives remain valid and, together with their subsets, will help shape and drive economic activity and regeneration in the borough. This work provides a basis for the continuance of the Council's commitment to sustainable and inclusive economic growth for Sefton.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Develop a new economic strategy-this was rejected as work previously undertaken by Mickeldore found that the current objectives of the framework remain valid and focussed and instead, a new investment prospectus was reported to this committee on 5 March 2024.

Equality Implications:
The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated as shown in the previous Equalities Impact Assessment
Impact on Children and Young People:
Prevailing economic conditions will inevitably have an impact on children and young people and the implications of these are already being captured under the key strategic objectives and subsets of the Sefton Economic Strategy. The work of the Child Poverty Strategy addresses this area in more detail.
Climate Emergency Implications:
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. 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 could also impact businesses and transport negatively, but this can be minimised by adopting 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.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7841/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5941/24.) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Not applicable

Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet decision.

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Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

A: Sefton Inward Investment Prospectus summary

B: Sefton Economic Strategy performance dashboard July-September 2024

Background Papers:

Sefton Economic Strategy framework and Action Plans <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/your-council/plans-policies/sefton-economy/>

1.0 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
- 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.
- 1.3 The full suite of prospectuses has now been produced and a summary (**See Annex A**) was also presented to Informal Policy Cabinet on 3rd October. This work was completed by Mickeldore who produced the original Sefton Economic Strategy. The work also included a review of the existing four key Strategic thematic objectives and subsets. It was felt and agreed that the following objectives remain valid with the addition of Culture as a subset.

Strategic Objective	Service Area/Team	Project lead
Employment & Opportunities for Work	EG&H Employment & Learning	Claire Maguire/ Tracy Brennan
Business Growth & Investment	EG&H InvestSefton	Mike Mullin /Evelyn McCowan
Regenerated Places (RP)-GSI Programme/UKSPF Co-ordination*	EG&H Regeneration	Heather Jago
Tourism Marketing/Events	EG&H Tourism	Mark Catherall
Housing	EG&H Housing Services	Lee Payne
Planning services	Local Planning	Ian Loughlin
Social Inclusion & Access for All (SI)		
SI-Net Zero/Low Carbon/Climate Change	Corporate Resources-Energy & Environmental Management	Stephanie Jukes

SI-Health & Wellbeing	Public Health	Helen Armitage
SI-Transport	Highways & Public Protection- Transport Policy & Sustainable Travel	Andrew Dunsmore
SI-Digital	Finance & IT/ <i>Executive Director</i>	Helen Spreadbury
SI-Equality & Diversity	VCF & Equalities-Neighbourhoods & Partnerships/ <i>Executive Director</i>	Emma Stewart
SI-Culture	The Atkinson-Arts & Cultural Services	David Eddy

Governance & reporting

- 1.4 A 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 2 dashboard July -September 2024 is shown as **(Annex B)** and provides snapshot of performance of the strategic objectives. Members have already viewed and commented on previous dashboards at this committee which are published on the council's website on <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/your-council/plans-policies/sefton-economy/>
- 1.5 Members may be aware that the Economic Growth & Housing service reached the top three shortlist for team of the year in the recent prestigious 2024 Institute of Economic Development Awards. This is in recognition of the broad range of work undertaken by the service.
- 1.6 The LCR Combined Authority produce quarterly LCR and Sefton economic updates which provide a snapshot of economic performance in Sefton. A summary of key headlines for Q2 July-September is provided below:

Economy

- The UK economy has seen slow economic growth since the initial pandemic recovery. In the 12 months to July 2024, national economic output grew by 1.5%, substantially slower than historic trends. **While LCR-specific data is not available, we estimate (based on our economy's sectoral structure and the assumption that national sectoral trends are similar to those in LCR) that GVA levels in Sefton have grown slightly faster than nationally.**
- Overall, the national economy grew slightly in the 12 months to July 2024. **However, some of Sefton's key sectors grew faster than average. Health and social work make the largest contribution to the Sefton economy and grew by 3% in the past year.**
- Over the last 12 months Transport and Professional and scientific services have seen the largest growth nationally growing by 8% and 4% respectively. **Interestingly in Sefton we have also seen growth, albeit with low concentration, in ICT, Professional & Scientific, Construction and Finance/Insurance-This aligns with InvestSefton's business network focus on Digital (Sefton Huddle) and Finance & Professional Services, plus of course the overarching Sefton Economic Forum**

- In the 12 months to August 2024, the consumer price index (CPI) fell from 6.7% to 2.2%. This is a significant decrease and means the inflation rate is near the Bank of England's 2% target.
- Over this period, Housing, water, electricity and gas and Clothing and footwear saw the largest increases in prices. While the growth rate of prices has returned to normal levels, the price level remains very high following high inflation rates over recent years. Since July 2021, prices have risen by 20%. This is the equivalent of nine years of normal inflation (around 2% per year) over the space of three years. Energy and food prices have risen even further over this period, by 42% and 31%, respectively. **At the same time, wages have only risen by 19%. This indicates that wages are now lower than they were three years ago after accounting for inflation.**
- High inflation had a large impact across the income distribution. In the period of high inflation between 2021 and 2023, poorer households saw larger increases in their costs. This is because they spend a greater proportion of their total budget on essentials such as energy and food, which saw the highest price rises. However, in the last 12 months higher income households have seen larger rises in costs. This is primarily due to increases in mortgage interest repayments and reductions in energy costs. Because of these changes, higher income households have now seen the largest increases in overall costs since 2021.

Business Growth & Employment

- Business birth rate in Sefton is comparatively low as net growth in the business base has been modest as the closure rate is also high. Business closures have exceeded starts in the latest quarter—leading to modest reduction in the overall size of the business base—This fluctuates annually and there is a similar pattern across the city-region.
- Most sectors are growing in terms of net foundations, but many are growing at a slower or similar rate than they were 12 months ago. After accounting for cessations, **real estate, hospitality, and retail** are contributing the greatest number of new businesses in LCR. These sectors tend to be lower productivity and non-tradeable, recovery in other higher value sectors is necessary, for a real transformation in our economy.
- As of July 2024, the number of PAYE employees (note this does not include those that are self-employed) **in Sefton was around 118,300**. This is +2,300 higher than in January 2020, representing +2% growth, which is 3% lower than the national average.
- While the number of employees remained relatively steady (largely reflecting the impact of major national interventions) throughout the pandemic, the number of self-employed fell sharply. Nationally, self-employment has not yet recovered and has remained at 88% of the pre-pandemic level as of June 2024. This may reflect previously self-employed workers being reclassified as employees, finding a new job, or leaving employment entirely, as demonstrated by rising levels of employees. This indicates that total employment remains below early 2020 levels. **While self-employees make up a smaller share of all employment in Sefton than elsewhere, there is still a large number of self-employed residents, making a significant contribution to the economy.**
- In the week ending 15th September, there were around 870 postings in Sefton. This is similar to pre-pandemic levels but is down -48% compared to the most recent peak in October 2022. This could indicate a reduction in business confidence and hiring. **Sefton has outperformed the national average in terms of job postings, with the number of jobs adverts down -30% nationally compared to pre-pandemic levels.** Posting growth in the latest quarter is strong in sectors such as utilities, financial & insurance, and culture & leisure.
- At the start of the pandemic, the claimant count peaked at 77,000 (or 7.9% of the working-age population). In the following years, this fell steadily. However, over the past 18 months, rates have stabilised at a slightly higher rate than before the pandemic. As of August 2024, there were 6,800

claimants (4% of the working-age population). This is 0.3 percentage points higher than pre-pandemic rates.

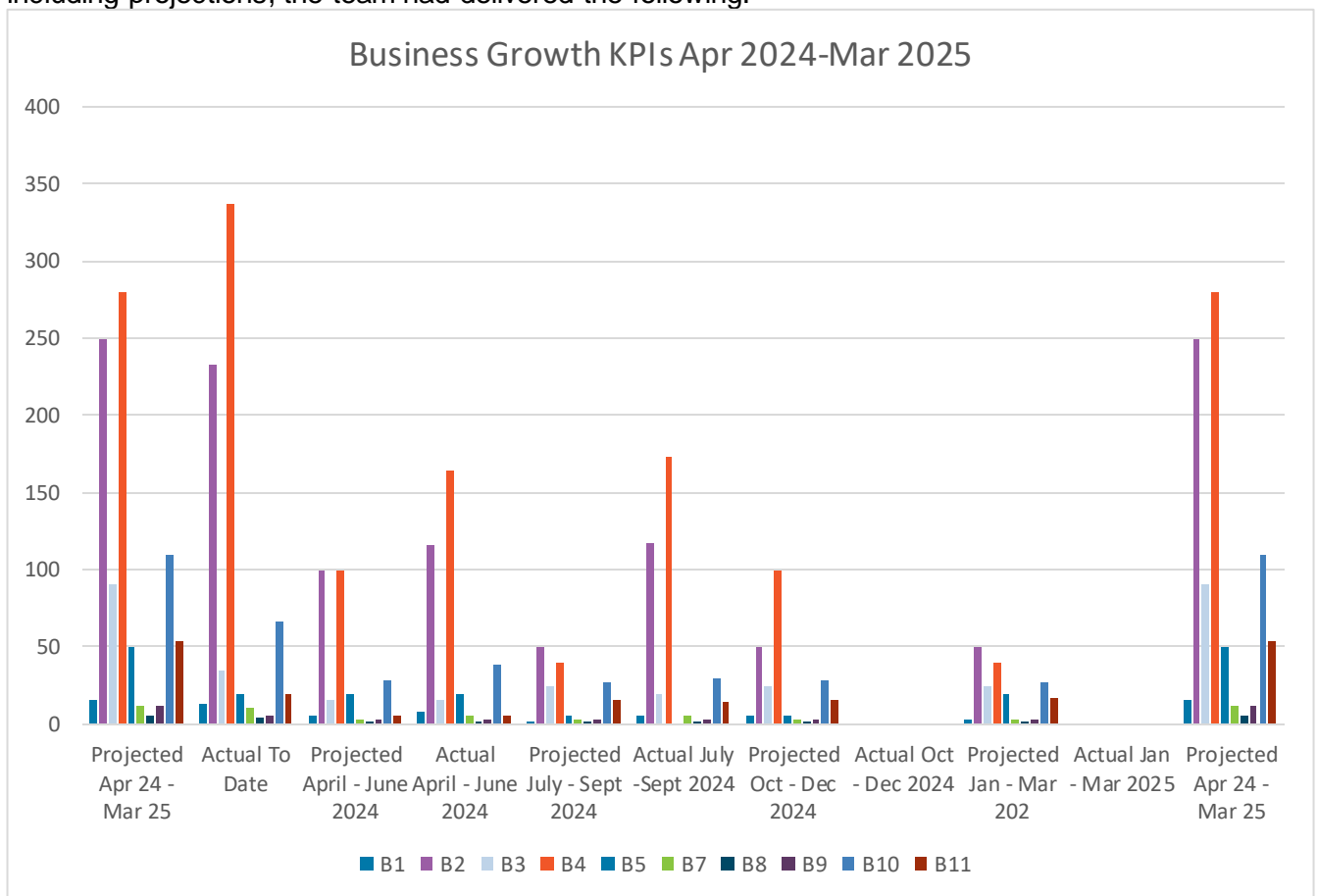
- Sefton has some of the highest economic inactivity and lowest employment rates nationally. There have been persistent gaps between Sefton and national averages. **However, Sefton has seen strong progress over recent years, closing gaps with national average. Recent data showed a slight upturn in recent months and the economic activity rate now stands at 81%, higher than both regional (77%) and national averages (79%). Similarly, the employment rate has also climbed in recent months to 79%, higher than both regional (73%) and national levels (76%).**

Annex B provides members with a summary of quarter 2 (Jul-Sept 2024) economic performance against each of the four key strategic objectives and sub-sets. Each dashboard is updated by relevant project leads listed in the table who provide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) progress (where applicable) and a Red/Amber/Green traffic light status and a short commentary and summary narrative. To expand upon the narratives some key highlights have been selected and expanded upon with examples below under each strategic objective and subset:

2. Business Growth & Investment

Contact: mike.mullin@sefton.gov.uk

- 2.1 Support to business continues to be delivered by InvestSefton in partnership with a wide range of public and private sector bodies including Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority and Growth Platform. The key financial vehicle replacement for European funding is the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and InvestSefton is using this as part of a LCR local authority and Growth Platform consortium to deliver Place Based Business Support. These Key Performance Indicators have been combined with the Council's Performance Plan. For the period April 2024 to March 2025 including projections, the team had delivered the following:



The team has met or surpassed its overall targets for the period April to July 2024. However, in terms of UKSPF performance requirements, like with all other local authority business teams, meeting job creation targets by 31 March 2025 is unlikely, particularly given the prevailing economic

climate. However, this is mainly due to the late start of the programme and the backloading of job capture into the final quarter.

2.2 The team has also used UKSPF to commission specialist support for:

- **Business start-ups** across the borough - this is delivered by Merseyside Expanding Horizons and Safe Regeneration. This is a Bootle based partnership and MEH also manage the Big Onion in Bootle Strand shopping centre and Southport Town Hall. The Big Onion facility is equipped with co-working spaces, meeting rooms, presentation facilities, and high-speed internet connectivity, and offers an incubator hub to up to 20 new start businesses. Within Southport, they use a prime location in the Town Hall. Safe Regeneration run incubator units in Bootle from the St Mary's Complex, this is their main delivery location. **This has already generated 14 new business start-ups.**
- The Big Onion more recently partnered with the Liverpool Business School (Liverpool John Moores University) and Oromo Consulting on a groundbreaking new initiative - the Liverpool Business School Commodity Trading Programme (LBSCT). The LBSCT Programme is designed to prepare Liverpool Business School students and local young people for professional commodity trading roles. Some 10 people have already participated in the programme, leading to interviews with major US and UK companies. A hub for this has been established in Bootle Strand.
- **Town Centres business support** - Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire & Merseyside - Groundwork is a Merseyside based national organisation with a team of professional in-house consultants and associates with a variety of technical expertise including energy auditing, carbon management and environmental training. Specialisms include delivery of sustainability support and action plans through Groundwork Sustainable Business Membership scheme.

Business events & Workshops

2.3 InvestSefton has a successful track record in reaching businesses through dedicated events and workshops. The events include specialist business networks managed by the team for Financial & Professional businesses (2 pa) and Digital & Creative - Sefton Huddle (3 pa) reflecting the boroughs strengths in these particular sectors. The prime networking event is Sefton Economic Forum which is held twice pa and attracts over 120 business delegates consistently with excellent speakers and presentations in north and south Sefton venues. In addition to this each Forum comprises a business providers marketplace including a diverse array of support such as Universities/Colleges, Finance, skills/recruitment, Chamber of Commerce, FSB, Social Enterprise, Manufacturing, Digital/cyber resilience and council services - Active Sefton; Business Rates; Sefton@work. In total there are IRO 27 providers in attendance and the feedback from both partners and businesses attending is excellent. A selection of key events is shown below:

Sefton Economic Forum - 6 June Formby Hall Golf Resort

Football, the economy and free support for businesses were the three main topics at InvestSefton's summer Economic Forum on 6th June. The extremely popular, free event was attended by some 150 delegates from the Sefton business community, held at Formby Hall Golf Resort & Spa. It was chaired by Fiona McGregor, owner of Southport digital marketing agency One Media Solutions Ltd. There were presentations from Everton Football Club's Mo Maghazachi on the club's new Everton Stadium at Bramley-Moore Dock and their work with the Council on transport links with Bootle for match days and other events.

Popular economist, Christian Spence provided an insight into the current state of the economy from Sefton's perspective and then Jim Mooney and Anthony Walker talked about the support available for businesses from the Horizons projects with the University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moore's University and Edge Hill University.

Mo Maghazachi, Senior Liaison and Engagement Manager at Everton (see pic below) said: "Events like this are really helpful in engaging with local businesses in Sefton and keeping them informed on what is happening at one of the most important and transformational projects in the country."

"Everton Stadium will become a year-round destination delivering more than a billion-pound boost to the economy, create tens of thousands of jobs and attract millions visitors to our city region. Our collaboration

with Sefton will ensure we are joined up in our thinking on transport and events while also giving local businesses an opportunity to learn more about how they can be part of match and event days.”

Afterwards delegates took advantage of networking and meeting over 30 support providers in the Business Marketplace providing a wide range of free advice and help including finance; digital boot camps, recruitment, intellectual property, education and skills ,business management, innovation and low carbon support to name for a few.



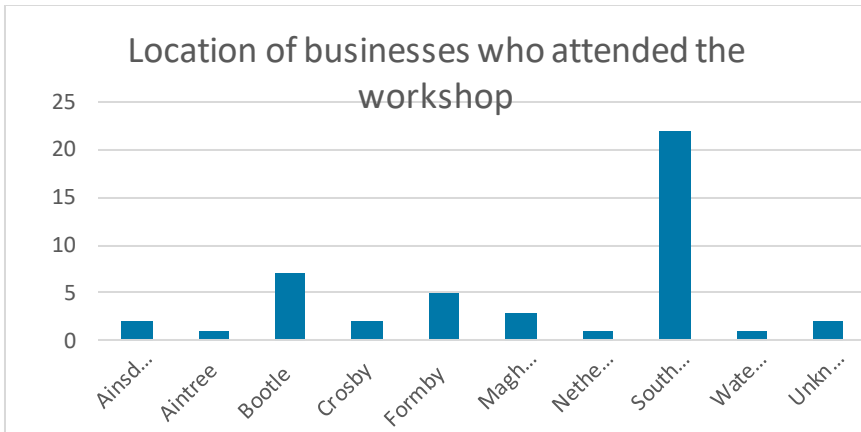
Sefton Huddle-Digital, Creative & Tech business network-20th June 2024

Over 30 digital, creative and tech businesses attended the Sefton Huddle to listen to presentations from Southport based gaming company Fallen Planet talk about growth opportunities in the sector; Resman talked about protecting businesses from cyber-attacks and Coast1079.com spoke about targeting sales and market segmentation.



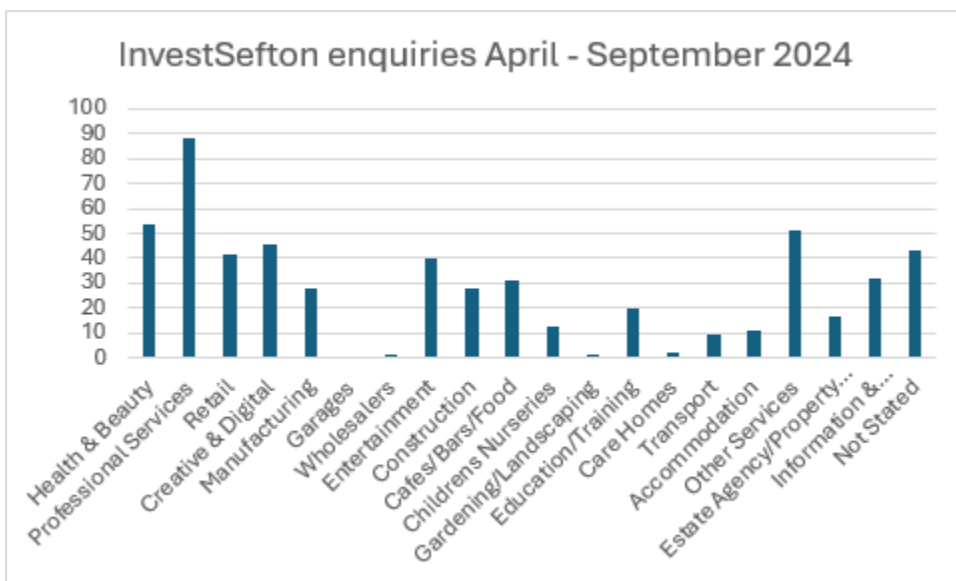
Instagram for Business-27th June-Southport 7 Birkdale Sports Club

54 Sefton business delegates attended a workshop hosted by InvestSefton and Birkdale-based One Media Solutions looking at how Instagram can improve business marketing and boost their online presence. Understanding Instagram's features and tools' and 'Creating a professional Instagram profile optimised for business', were among the subjects covered at the event, 'Using hashtags to increase visibility', 'Managing your followers' and the use of Instagram's analytics was also covered.



Business engagement

2.4 InvestSefton works with a diverse range of businesses using outward engagement such as events, workshops and www.investsefton.com plus twitter/facebook to reach as many businesses in Sefton as possible. The team has developed a database of over 2,000 businesses which has also been used to support council consultation exercises. The team continues to receive a large number of phone and electronic enquiries, and the graph below shows traffic for the period April-September 2024



The team received 557 enquiries with the majority coming from Professional & Financial services, Health/beauty/retail and Creative & digital.

www.investsefton.com enquiries

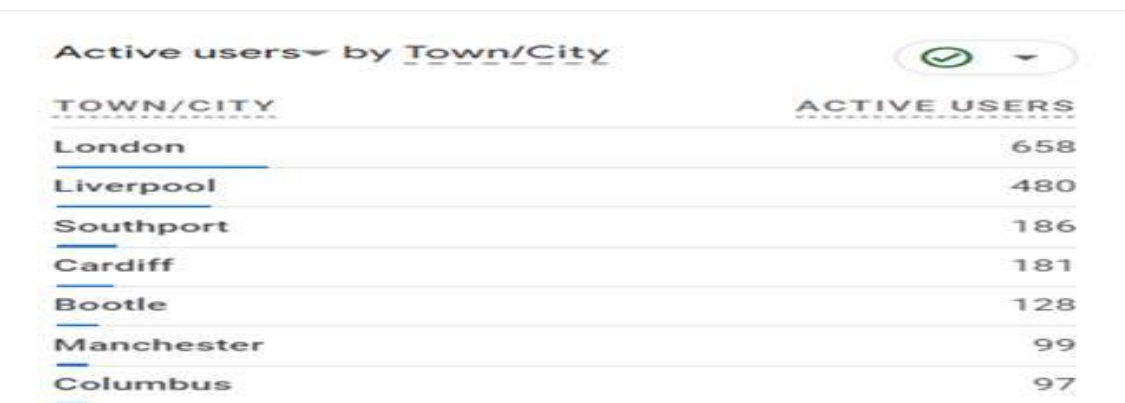
- From Monday 1st April to Friday 27th September 2024, the website had 3,600 unique sessions.
- There were spikes of visitors on 9th and 25th May, with the highest number on Sunday 4th August -it is believed the latter has coincided with the incident in Southport on 29th July.

Country of origin



COUNTRY	ACTIVE USERS
United Kingdom	2.4K
United States	458
Germany	129
China	69
Ireland	53
India	43
Canada	27

Town and city of origin



TOWN/CITY	ACTIVE USERS
London	658
Liverpool	480
Southport	186
Cardiff	181
Bootle	128
Manchester	99
Columbus	97

- 2.5 These indicators show large volumes of traffic to the site including 3,600 unique sessions. The site is currently being reviewed and this will provide an opportunity to maximise the information collated from the Sefton Inward Investment Prospectus presentation documents to develop improved investment propositions to attract business growth.

Case studies-(Some names anonymised due to confidentiality)

- 2.6 InvestSefton's aim is to support business growth and sustainability and the team's outward engagement results in an interesting array of businesses from a range of sectors and sizes. This is work is carried out firstly by Business Growth Officers providing an initial triage followed by more detailed diagnostic one-to-one guidance from Business Growth Advisers. Here is selection of just a few case studies from April-June:

A bed and breakfast based in Southport which the owners have been running for the past 17 years. The long-term plan when they bought the business was to sell it at the point the mortgage was fully paid or nearly paid. Now with 4 years of the mortgage left they are looking to start the sale process which they think could take up to 2 years. As part of their plan to sell they are looking to increase bookings to support higher offers for the business. InvestSefton supported the business by reviewing their website and SEO and comparing them to national competitors as well as providing the business with an understanding of the separate buyer personas for their venue.

A Southport based sole trader with an established web design business. In addition to build, he hosts and provides Drone services via upshot photos engaging with businesses such as Cobalt Housing and IFI Audio. The Business is looking to grow its customer base and wants to engage with larger developers where aerial drone footage could be used to market developments. InvestSefton supported the Business by providing access to free workshops and events to enable the business to upskill and develop its customer base through Networking opportunities.

A marquee hire and event dressing business based in Aintree. Due to Business Growth the Business has regularly had to hire a van to transport equipment to venues. To reduce costs and improve reliability the business is looking to purchase a van but needs to generate funds to do so. InvestSefton supported the Business with the development of a Business Plan and Cashflow forecast to support.

A vehicle recovery and transport business based in Bootle. Most of the work for the business comes through an agency and they need to provide a quote to the agency before any work is awarded. The business wants to promote itself better and is looking to introduce a website and begin regular social media activity to generate more direct enquiries. InvestSefton supported the business by reviewing their marketing approach and assist with queries and improve the use of AI, including Chat GPT.

Training and Recruitment Services business based in Formby. Due to increased funding being supplied for early years places, there will be a demand for additional staff to support the growth in early years' service provision. This business plans to be able to deliver training and workplace support through apprenticeships across the LCR. To do this the business needs to better market its service. InvestSefton supported the business by connecting them with other services being provided across the LCR to increase awareness of their offer as well as support planning their new website.

Supply company based in the Brighton-Le-Sands area is a supplier of workplace drugs and alcohol testing kits and training in the use of the kits. The original services of the business were the provision of first aid kits and PPE to businesses but these have become readily available online so they decided to diversify. The Business does however need marketing support to help them promote their new products and the training. InvestSefton supported the business by reviewing their existing website performance and Seo ranking against competitors and introducing the use of AI to help generate content. InvestSefton also provided support with tender searches and supply chain including an introduction to a supply chain workshop.

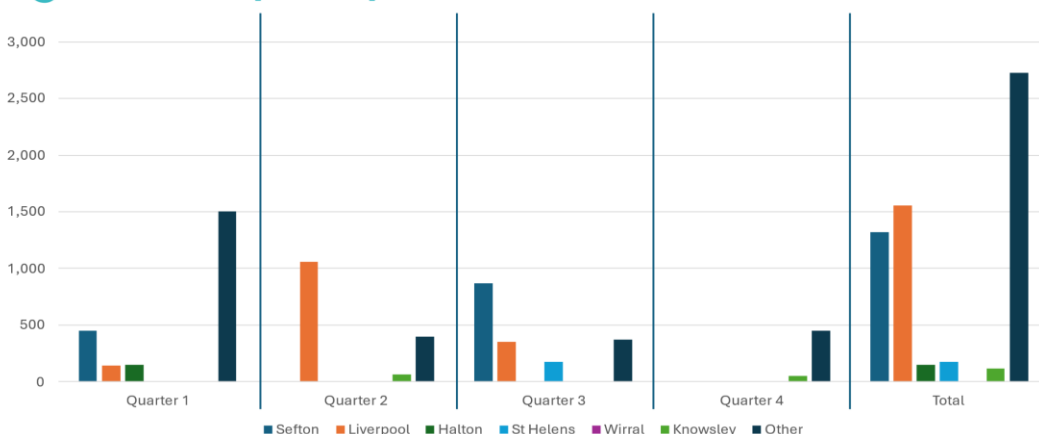
Richardsons Healthcare Bootle has achieved a remarkable feat by clinching not just one, but two prestigious Royal Awards for Enterprise. Following their 2019 triumph with the Queen's Award for Enterprise for their outstanding exporting, Richardsons has once again made headlines with their latest achievement. On May 6th, it was announced that the company has been honoured with the King's Award for Enterprise, recognising their exceptional growth in exporting.

Specialising in the manufacture of specialist operating table mattresses and accessory pads for leading medical device companies worldwide, Richardsons has established a strong presence in key markets such as the United States, various European countries, and even extending to regions as distant as China and Australia **InvestSefton has assisted the company with their application on both occasions as well as providing support to them over many years.**

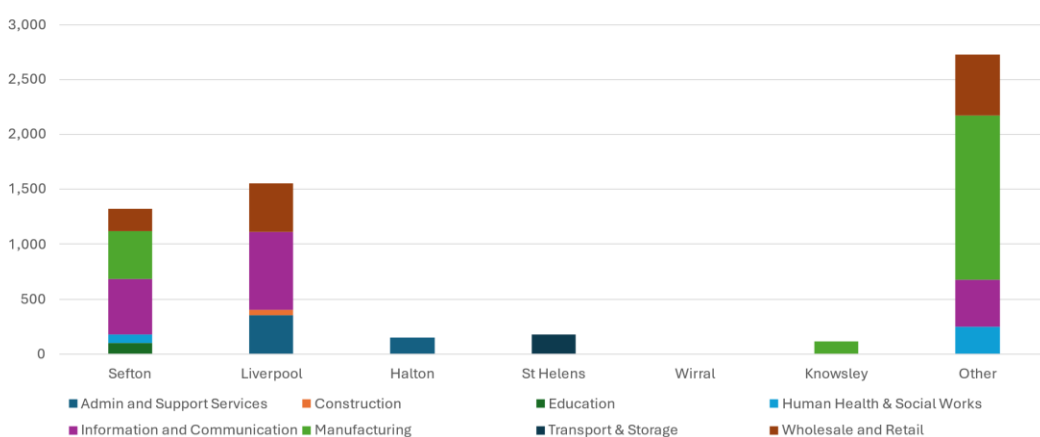
Partnership working

- 2.7 InvestSefton works with a wide range of partners, and this is reflected in their mass attendance and participation in the Sefton Economic Forum Marketplace. Merseyside Special Investment Fund (MSIF) is one such organisation helping them to access a wide range of loan, equity and start -up funding. Officers also sit on the MSIF quarterly Partners board to discuss performance and the

Investment Level by Borough by Quarter (£'000)



Investment Level by Borough by Sector (£'000)



2024 shows Sefton second only to Liverpool in terms of take up and investment *LCR Low Carbon Eco-Innovatory Grants*

2.8 The team has also established a good working relationship with Liverpool John Moores University on their Low Carbon Eco-Innovatory grant scheme, initially set up with EU funding and more recently extended by the Combined Authority. The grants help support capital investment in plant/equipment that help bring net -zero benefits such as low carbon emissions. To date InvestSefton has assisted the following Sefton businesses who received awards:

Construction company, Southport	Shopfitting, building and joinery manufacture
Retail Café, Crosby	Specialist coffee; cafes/concessions
Distribution company, Bootle	Freight forwarding & logistics/export
Leisure company, Formby	Swimming/leisure centre

Cross Council activities

2.9 InvestSefton has established close working links across many services and during April- September this has included:

- Sefton@work- referral of job opportunities and the Caring Business Charter, also wider links to the LCR Fair Employment Charter
- Business Rates-Supporting hardship cases and more recently work on developing a Southport Business Recovery Fund
- Active Sefton-providing UKSPF to help support health and wellbeing in Sefton workplaces -7 businesses supported with 12 employees accessing Health Checks, Cold Dip, Stress Workshop, 7 Dimensions of Health Workshop, Menopause Café, Online Menopause Groups, Online 10 Minute Movers
- Child Providers Grant-InvestSefton has been assisting the Children's Care Providers team on a new grant scheme they are introducing. This includes advice and guidance on governance, application process and supporting evidence requirements including risk assessments. The team has also offered to work with applicants seeking help with their business
- Planning services-close liaison on business and inward investment planning applications

Inward Investment

2.10 The team has worked closely at both LCR and local level with partners seeking to increase new investment in the borough. This includes cross cutting work across Economic Growth & Housing, most notably with the Regeneration Team. Work during April-September has included:

- Input of Sefton investment opportunities into the LCRCA brochure promoting the LCR investment opportunities overseas including UKREiiF, MIPIM and EXPO Real (Munich).



MIPIM-Investment-
Opportunities-2024.

- Co-ordination of the Sefton Inward Investment Prospectus (Annex A refers)
- Mersey Reach-Final unit available. Recent new occupiers are now being supported by InvestSefton.
- Southport Business Park-Ongoing work to support investment in the site, working alongside Regeneration colleagues
- L51 Campus, Bootle-Intention to demolish and rebuild confirmed by site representative. Site has been sold to a US company who are bringing in a global AI client. Approx. 50 jobs (predominantly mechanical & software engineering) which will include local recruitment.
- Atlantic Park Phase 1 is underway, expected to be finished November 2024. Consists of speculative development of 4 units (43,000 sqft, 53750 sq ft, 118,250 sq ft & 134,375 sq ft). Warehousing/light industrial usage expected with office space. All units are still being marketed by the agent. Interest has been high but no firm commitments to date. Phase 2 will have design & build opportunities up to 388,000 sq ft. [Atlantic Park](#)
- Former Santander site: Developer interest in building 9 units totalling 387,543 sq ft. Screening opinion requested re: Environmental Impact Assessment submitted and subsequent advised that this is not required. Interest from existing large Sefton employer in relocating to site if development proceeds.

3.0 Southport Business Recovery Fund

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Council established a Business Recovery Fund to provide financial assistance to businesses and organisations located in the Hart Street and St Lukes Road areas of Southport. This was seen as an immediate priority as the Council and its partners review wider impacts on the town's economy. InvestSefton designed and, at the time of writing, is delivering the fund providing financial support to businesses forced to close after the tragic events of 29th July.
- 3.2 The fund covers losses incurred and some 12 awards have been made to businesses totalling some £95k. The Council has also taken over the lease of the Hart Space in Norwood Business Centre where the incident took place. Members will be aware that businesses using this space have been offered the Whitehouse building in Southport Promenade.

4. Employment & Opportunities for work

contact: claire.maguire@sefton.gov.uk

- 4.1 Members will be aware that inhouse provision is carried out by the Employment & Learning Unit, which comprises three customer-facing services including Sefton@work, Sefton Adult Community Learning Service, the NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service (NREIS) and an associated employment contract management function.
- 4.2 Employment and Learning is linked into the delivery of the Growth Programme and seeks to maximise all opportunities for employment and training connected to larger developments. This also extends to planning decisions related to developments seeking consents where an employment and training plan with Sefton@work may be required as a condition which needs to be monitored and reported. The main impetus of this work is to generate opportunities such as jobs, apprenticeships, work experience placements, mentoring, interview coaching or site visits. This work is a key component of the Council's Social Value strategy and also underpins our corporate parenting responsibilities through the promotion of the Caring Business Charter. A key example where this link between planning and job creation has been established within this period has been the entrance to Sefton of a new trade warehouse company where we assisted the company to create 70 local jobs, we operated a training routeway for workless Sefton@Work clients, including some who were care experienced.

Sefton@work General Performance

Data Description	Figures
Total Clients accessing service for ESF support	5,296
Clients accessing service post ESF	1,080
New clients registering for support by age in this period	16-24 35% 25-49 52% 50+ 12% Not known 1
Male Participants	59.3%
Female Participants	40.6%
Other Participants	0.2%
Participants with Disabilities/Health Conditions	32.7%
Participants without basic skills	30.9%
People leaving the programme (into jobs/self-emp/training)	2,208
Starts on UKSPF Programme	237
Male Participants	57.0%
Female Participants	42.6%
Prefer not to provide gender	0.4%
Economically Inactive Participants	88%
Unemployed Participants (actively seeking)	9.3%
Participants at risk of redundancy	2.7%
Participants with Disabilities/Health Conditions	30.0%
Participants without basic skills	36.3%
Footfall (Face to Face contact with caseworker)	778

Southport Accommodation for Sefton@work

- 4.3 Members may be aware that Sefton@work has always been a service which operates across the borough and is open to all residents who need assistance with their employability and has operates a responsive and flexible outreach programme to promote access to residents in partnership with community stakeholders. However, the lack of a permanent base in Southport town centre has limited the scope of take-up for residents in the north of the borough.
- 4.4 We have now located a suitable permanent home for the Service in central Southport. The accommodation is currently in the process of upgrading and refurbishment and located directly adjacent to the Town Hall in Cambridge Walk. The contractor is due to complete works on this unit by end November and the service will be able to open to the public shortly after this, with space for an employment advise team and a small training/meeting space where residents can access community learning opportunities and other associated provision.

Working with Vulnerable Groups

- 4.5 Sefton@Work continue to attend events through the 'Team around the School'. The Team around the school model is attempting to address issues or concerns before they escalate through a multi-agency core team and supporting team. Advisers can take referrals for employment advice at these events especially for those cases where parental empowerment and skills for young adults feature as part of the progression towards greater resilience for the family.
- 4.6 We continue to refer to the new F.A.S.T. (Family Advice & Support Team) which has replaced the former MASH referral process. This is a more user-friendly process, and we pick up referrals through this. Further work and ongoing effort is still required to ensure that the FAST team continue to be aware of the Sefton@work offer, particularly in the context of a changing workforce across Early Help.
- 4.7 We continue to work with client referrals from Youth Justice, providing co-location to team officers in Bootle and this cohort of vulnerable young people remain a priority, particularly in term of provision of paid work placements.
- 4.8 The major focus of Sefton@work is currently on efforts to deliver the very stretching job targets of 50% job entry for the UKSPF project which only include economically inactive people. The programme requirements have meant we are working to a very ambitious set of performance indicators, given constraints that the economically inactive group need more time and variety of support than other clients, the duration available to work with them is very limited compared to other employment programmes and the ongoing demand from other residents who are seeking work but who do not meet the strict criteria for UKSPF. Maintaining our "open door" policy has left us in a position where, at the half-way point in the project, demand to join from new clients is growing but targets take more time to achieve.
- 4.9 With respect to the Service's commitment to corporate parenting, we have arranged for 7 care experienced young people to access paid work placements with local employers covering roles in floor fitting, joinery, hospitality, childcare and sports and leisure. Sefton is paying for further training whilst on placements to shore up their future chances after the placement ends which includes gym instructing, self-employment advice, and pool lifeguarding certification. In addition, we also have 2 clients on paid placements who are vulnerable due to other characteristics, and we have a further 6 residents awaiting a start date from an employer for a paid placement. All participants receive in-placement support throughout their work experience including job search and interview support and the Service briefs the employer in confidence about the issues they may present at work (with consent from the client) and the kind of individual assistance they may need to make the best of the time.
- 4.10 Clients who have faced trauma are currently being offered up to 12 counselling sessions with a psychotherapist. The sessions are available to clients who feel they have significant barriers that are stopping them from taking up opportunities and progressing on their journey back to work. Feedback from clients is positive with 90% of feedback stating that those who complete the sessions have a more positive approach to beginning to look for work than before.
- 4.11 Sefton@Work are continuing with a rolling programme of delivery in the new training room which consists of employability interventions, functional skills workshops, digital inclusion skills, sector qualifications and routeways, jobs fairs, employer and networking events and much more. As well as delivering ourselves some are in partnership with SCLS and other external partners and employers.

Working with Employers

- 4.12 The Sefton@Work STAR Employer Award 2024 took place on Friday 25th October. Sefton@Work's Employer Liaison Team continues to attract new employers to sign its new Employer Partnership Agreement, endorsed by the Chief Executive of SMBC. The Awards event was to recognise the particular efforts and commitment to partnership that some local employers have given us. This initiative aims to strengthen Sefton@Work's relationship with local employers, enhancing our ability to support our clients into work.

- 4.13 The recruitment drive for the Cash & Carry warehouse referenced above successfully supported its opening on Farriers Way in early November 2024. Sefton@work has been working closely with the company's recruitment team to understand their requirements and build a solution to maximise opportunities for clients while giving the employer the workforce they need. The roles were varied across a number of warehousing, stock control and administrative functions, and the employer has good terms and conditions and has been very open to providing opportunities for people who may have little recent work experience. Sefton@work offered briefing & information sessions delivered in tandem with the company, applicant sifting by advisers and intensive individual interview preparation for clients who may have not been actively job-seeking for some years. As the company had no local office space available until their opening, Sefton@Work also hosted recruitment interviews at the Bootle Strand office for their selections. This resulted in placing 28 clients into employment with more confirmations of starts to follow.
- 4.14 Sefton@Work also hosted a Caring Business Charter Careers event to promote career opportunities and wider support on 31st October, as part of National Care Leavers Week. 22 Local employers who have signed up to Sefton's Caring Business Charter attended to showcase their careers opportunities to our young people and care leavers. The event was hosted at Cambridge Road Community Learning hub and included a range of potential future employers, placement providers and specialist support services such as Sefton Early Years, Housing Options, Welfare Benefits, and Life Rooms. We also utilised the AI immersive room and its technology to engage in fun, informal learning activities. 19 young people attended the event, 5 of whom were care experienced and 14 were from our NEET group.

Working with Stakeholders

- 4.15 Career Connect continue to attend Sefton@Work on a weekly outreach Programme to engage with our young people who are NEET, care experienced or working with Early Help and this partnership seems to operate effectively for both clients and staff. Due to ongoing issues with money management, debt and housing arrears amongst our clients we have commissioned Citizens Advice (CAB) to deliver advisory services 2 days per week from our office allowing our clients fast tracked access to the support they need while on site. We continue to see a positive uptake in this since starting in January 2024.
- 4.16 The CAB has provided us with feedback on the detail of the cases being presented by Sefton@work clients, and it appears the most common factor is underclaiming by workless residents. The starting point in these consultations is to check that clients fully understand their individual entitlements and are receiving the benefits they need. However, The CAB advisers have stated they identify an underpayment of benefit at least once in almost every drop-in session. Most frequent underpayments relate to carers premiums, disabled child elements (this is exceptionally common) unclaimed extra bedroom allowances and unclaimed pension credit (which can help retain winter fuel allowance). CAB have calculated that since January 24 they have supported Sefton@work clients to identify almost £73,000 in benefits, they are entitled to including child disability premium and missing pension credit.
- 4.17 Housing Options continue to attend the Bootle Strand office to offer general housing advice and to link those who require ongoing support into the Housing Options offer which includes advice on accessing social housing through Property Pool, Section 21 eviction notices, and homelessness support.
- 4.18 Sefton@Work continues to support the SMBC Early Years and Childcare sufficiency team and are liaising with them and Sefton's out-of-school-hours organisations to utilise The LCR Young Persons Guarantee. These organisations can employ a Sefton young person, aged 18-25 (must have been out of work, education, or training for more than six months) and receive £500 for each month they are employed, up to 6 months.
- 4.19 Following the success of the Digital Inclusion Initiative in partnership with LCR & Lloyds Foundation where clients completed a short digital intervention and received a free tablet with 6 months data, more sessions are currently planned for October and November.

Sefton Adult Community Learning Service

4.20 Members will be aware that the Adult Community Learning Service, whose main delivery base is the Cambridge Road Community Learning Hub. The Service is funded through the LCR devolved adult education budget to deliver second-chance learning opportunities for adults aged 19 and above, with opportunities for progression to qualifications. The main curriculum areas of the Service relate to family learning, health, wellbeing and citizenship, English as second language and English, maths and digital skills embedded into a range of community interest courses such as arts and crafts and local history. The following table indicates progress so far this academic year.

Activity	Year to date From 01/08/24	Comments
Unique Learners	340	18 new courses due to start after half term. Onsite enrolment dates scheduled in October. Draft prospectus has been completed and shared with Comms team.
Unique Learning Aims	415	
Test and Learn pilot Learners (includes focus on green skills and retrofit sector and family learning together)	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 x workshops planned throughout the half term. • Linking up with Schools and Family Wellbeing Centres to promote activities • Engaging with 3 Primary Schools who have also agreed to display service banners to promote courses to families.
Multiply - national adult numeracy initiative	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 5 commissioned services have started delivery. • In talks with a 6th potential delivery service, application has been issued. • All vcf providers have experienced issues engaging learners through the summer as similar provision (UKSPF etc) by other providers offers competition in the area
Pathways to Teaching - growing local teacher talent for community learning	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First cohort of learners for 2024/25 have started. • Successfully appointed staff from year 1 have started their PGCE.

Curriculum Review: Alignment with Liverpool City Region Long Term Skills Plan

4.21 The service is currently assessing its curriculum plan against the Liverpool City Region Long Term Skills Plan to ensure alignment with the four strategic objectives. These are:

1. Improving technical education outcomes for young people
2. Enabling access to second chance learning to help people get into work.
3. Develop the skills that employers need:
4. Providing people with skills to progress:

This exercise will enable the Service to clarify its connections with areas of potential jobs growth within Sefton and the wider travel to work area across the city region.

Digital Inclusion Initiative

- 4.22 The Digital Inclusion Initiative (DII) is an exciting new project aimed at bridging the digital divide by improving digital skills and fostering economic growth. The service has been allocated 50 devices (tablets with sim cards and 6 months of internet connectivity) and will provide in-person digital skills training. Sessions are already planned, with the first two fully booked. The project is set to conclude by 13th December.

Adult Skills Fund/Be More Video Content

- 4.23 The service is collaborating with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCR-CA) Adult Skills Fund team to create promotional video content to raise awareness about the service. This will showcase our adult learning provision, aiming to raise aspirations and participation in adult education under the "Be More" campaign. The footage will highlight curriculum offerings and demonstrate real-world learning in action.

Improving Facilities at Cambridge Community Learning Hub – Phase 2 Refurbishment Project

- 4.24 An application for funding for £580,000 has been made to the Free Port Extension Fund to support the Phase 2 works for the Cambridge Road Community Learning Hub, which has been approved in principle. We are at present proceeding with completing a schedule of works and finalization of all costings to enable us to go ahead with a procurement exercise to appoint contractors as soon as possible when the grant is received into the Council. This will fund the refurbishment of additional training rooms on the first floor of the building, enhanced security for learners and staff, an upgrade of the digital connectivity across the building and the fit-out of the Cambridge Kitchen

Progressing the Cambridge Kitchen concept

- 4.25 Following the departure of the operator of the former community pantry at the site, the Service has taken the opportunity to re-evaluate the catering needs of its learners and the community it services. In consultation with Cabinet Member, we have drawn up a new concept of the Cambridge Kitchen which needs to be embedded within the site offer, focus on sustainable and affordable nutrition for learners and their families and offer a range of opportunities for work experience placements and new collaborations highlighting good and wellbeing. We are in the process of negotiating with a brand-new Community Interest Company about the concept and it is expected we can move to a clear agreement with them alongside the phase 2 refurbishment project about the use of space and the associated added value they can bring. Meetings are ongoing with Unique Blends CIC to progress their interest in operating Cambridge Kitchen.

NEET Reduction & Early intervention Performance

- 4.26 The data for monthly performance for NEET and Not Known is cleansed locally by Career Connect who are our contracted supplier and verified with local and national sources using the government database which each LA is required to update monthly. This forms part of the tracking element of the NEET Reduction and Early Intervention Service. The purpose of this tracking is to identify, target and support those young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training to provide them with timely assistance to re-engage in learning.
- 4.27 Sefton's NEET and Early Intervention provision continues to offer interventions to young people aged 16 – 18 across a range of vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities and health conditions, those who are electively home educated, young parents, and care experienced.
- 4.28 We have seen an increase in numbers within our vulnerable groups, where the new September Y11 young people with SEN-ECHP is now 278, an increase of 66 since this time last year. Elected Home Education young people has increased by 26 to 74. Within just these two vulnerable groups we are seeing an increase of 114 more young people who are at risk of NEET going forward. In addition, the cohort accessing Pinefield complementary provision in Year 11 has also increased to 52, which is 25 more young people than last year.

- 4.29 Vulnerable groups will continue to be a priority for the service in this coming year and all young people NEET and at Risk of NEET will continue to have a named advisor who will be in regular contact with them to coach and support a career pathway for a positive transition back to learning.

Advocating for young people in Learning Provision

- 4.30 Career Connect are still in the process of tracking destinations of 16 and 17 year olds and this exercise will be fully completed by the end of October. Some of the issues already being highlighted as part of the tracking are those recent school leavers who are still not enrolled at college to start their Post-16 phase of education. These students were not previously identified as being disengaged, disaffected or at risk of NEET, but young people engaging and wanting to commence their course. The majority of these students had applied to study vocational programmes including Motor Vehicle Engineering and Construction etc but due to limited places, connected with lack of capacity and poor retention of tutors etc they have not entered study.
- 4.31 In response to this issue, we now have four new pathways for our vulnerable groups in Sefton and in September, 56 young people who otherwise would have been NEET have secured access to this provision. This includes:
- 100 new places for study programme which has enabled Hugh Baird, Southport and other smaller providers to deliver a more flexible programme for our vulnerable groups.
 - New provision for young people in complementary education, yp with SEN EHC/EHE
 - Routes to EET course to bridge the gap to mainstream learning for 16 young people.
 - **Engage** - a new online pathway and virtual offer. The aim of this programme is, over time, to encourage learners to re-engage in face-to-face education while continuing to learn online until they feel the time is right for them to progress.

Caring Business Charter & Employment Support for Care Experienced Young People

- 4.32 Since July 2024, the Charter has received 34 referrals, primarily via a Get into Work Panel meeting, organised by Children's Social Care. The aim is to address barriers to employment or learning progression of our hardest to reach care experienced young people aged 18+ and to identify relevant and appropriate pathways to support them into positive destinations. At the Panel, Leaving Care Personal Advisers and Key Workers are encouraged to support their young people to register and engage with S@W to access externally funded skills programmes.
- 4.33 Sefton@Work prioritise support for care experience young people, NEET young people and care experienced adults across all its projects at all times. This includes prompt linkage to work focused casework and access to a range of support mechanisms including financial support to transition to work. The benefits of registering and engaging with Sefton@work are evident in some of the case studies set out below as these young people have been eligible for additional support from Sefton@work:
- 8 clients have been supported into S@W funded paid work placements.
 - 3 have been supported into apprenticeships.
 - 6 have completed the Digital Inclusion Course and received free laptops and data.
 - 3 have attended the Fit for Success course delivered by S@W
 - An additional 19 care experienced young people have registered with S@W
 - 6 care experience young people attended the Sound City Course, 3 of these have engaged with S@W and will be supported into paid work placements once suitable employment have been identified and matched to their skills and aspirations.

Case Studies

LE, aged 18 – since registering with Sefton@Work has been funded for a Barista Training Course, Customer Service Course, online Safeguarding Course and 2 Lifeguard Courses due to failing the first one. Has also attended the Digital Inclusion Course and received a free tablet and 6 months free data. In

addition, has received funding for work clothes, travel pass, enhanced DBS and, with the support of their PA, has been successful in assessing a Sefton@Work funded paid placement with Active Sefton, S@W will continue to pay for travel until the end of the placement. Moving forward, and with additional support from their PA to build up confidence, Sefton@Work have agreed to fund a Level 2 Gym Instructor course at a cost of £1,500 and will also be receiving ongoing in-work support during placement.

MM aged 17 – is an out of borough care leaver known to Youth Justice. They live semi-independently but due to their age is unable to claim welfare benefits. They completed a tiling course through a referral from Virtual School but was unable to secure paid employment after it had finished. Registered with Sefton@Work to access employment opportunities, since registering has completed a Mental Health & Resilience Training Course, also received funding for interview/work clothes, travel, and PPE. Through Sefton@Work's employer links, they were able to identify a local joinery company near to MM's home who was willing to offer a work trial. This was success and Sefton@Work has now agreed to fund a paid work placement with them and offer ongoing in-work support. MM is interested in the option for self-employment so will be supported with exploring this offer at the end of placement.

MS aged 20 -- lives independently, in receipt of Universal Credit. Since registration has received funding for CSCS card, PPE, and Enhanced DBS checks, also completed the Digital Inclusion course and received a free tablet and 6 months data. Has had CV updated, interview skills and attended CAB for a better off calculation. Participated in a work trial and employer was impressed, Sefton@Work agreed to fund a paid work placement for 16 hours per week as a result of better off calculations and is currently receiving in-work support from Sefton@Work. Sefton@Work is currently encouraging them to access a Level 1 scaffolding course which will support them in current and future employment. Sefton@Work will fund the cost of the £1,200 course.

AR aged 19 – young parent living independently, in receipt of Personal Independence Payment and Universal Credit, with an Education, Health & Care Plan for additional needs. Registered with S@W for support to find work but was concerned about how accessing employment could affect benefits and how they would fund childcare if they were working. Sefton@Work advisor supported them with an application for childcare and opening up a Childcare Account via Childcare Choices website, also with a crucial Better Off calculation based on a scenario of earning £11.65 for 18 hrs per week and childcare costs of £122.55 per week which indicated that starting work at this threshold would make them approximately £900 better off per month. Having completed a Disclosure and Barring check, funded by Sefton@Work and participating in a work trial, securing a nursery place alongside their job search, Sefton@Work has funded a paid work placement with a local childcare provider and will be offering the client travel throughout the placement alongside regular in-work support.

EM aged 18 – registered with Sefton@Work for support to enter employment, as they had dropped out of college and didn't want to return to any form of learning. The adviser identified a potential employer who was willing to offer an interview for a position within a local nursery. Since registering, EM has received funding to support a Citizen Card, supported to open a Universal Credit account as they had previously struggled through lack of acceptable ID documentation. Furthermore, they were not accessing welfare benefits they were entitled to since they could not locate their National Insurance number. Sefton@work supplied a mobile phone with data package to enable a benefit claim to be made and supplied funding for interview clothes and travel. EM attended an interview on 11th October for a paid placement funded by Sefton@work along travel funding for the duration and in-work support once in employment.

RJ aged 21 – lives independently but is currently at risk of being evicted due to rent arrears. RJ was encouraged to register with Sefton@work as they are currently working ad hoc for cash in hand and therefore unable to cover all their regular living expenses. Was initially interested in self-employment and was referred to Merseyside Expanding Horizons as they wanted to set up their own window cleaning company. After a full analysis of the viability of this self-employment option, Sefton@Work may be able to fund equipment to support this venture. However, having worked with Sefton@work a little more, RJ spotted opportunities within Green Sefton and attended an interview (accompanied by their PA) and as a result was offered a 2-day job trial with a view to a Sefton@Work paid work placement with them, including travel for the duration and in-work support.

DR aged 20 – lives independently. They have an EHCP and left school with no formal qualifications. DR Was referred by Career Connect as wanted support to access employment. As they live on their own, they were worried about employment affecting housing and Universal Credit payments. They received a Better Off calculation to identify hours they could work to ensure that they were financially better off. Since registering, DR has received funding for travel, they have engaged on the Digital Inclusion programme and has received a free tablet and data. PA has supported them to attend interview at Crosby Lakeside and was successful, S@W will fund a paid placement there as well as ongoing travel costs for the duration alongside in-work support.

LC, aged 22, was originally an out of borough young person but has moved into the area and is living in supported lodgings. They have an EHCP, since registering with Sefton@Work has been supported to apply for potential employment opportunities, PA identified an opportunity with SHOL Lakeside working front of house dealing with the general public, serving food and drink. The adviser arranged the interview and prepared a journey plan of how to get there, supported LC with interview techniques and organized funding for interview clothes and travel. LC was successful at interview and offered 18 hours per week paid employment with the potential of more hours once settled into the job, with wages funded by Sefton@Work. LC will receive ongoing in work support and travel costs for the duration of the placement.

4.34 In addition to the above, S@W is also working with 3 clients who registered with them and attended the recent Sound City Course, an independent provider of music festivals. Those clients who have engaged with Sefton@ will be offered paid work placements once a suitable employer has been matched to their skills and aspirations connected to careers in the music business.

4.35 Other positive outcomes in this period include:

- **New Directions** are continuing to be a pro-active member of the Charter and have already offered 2 apprenticeships through their guaranteed interview offer.
- **Plus Dane** have agreed to offer guaranteed interviews to all jobs subject to meeting minimum requirements to the role.
- **Plus Dane & Sovini** – have included the Charter on their vacancy mailing list and submit them to us prior to the opportunities being uploaded on to other online jobs sites.
- **Hugh Baird** - the young person who was offered a work experience placement with Hugh Baird College has been encouraged and supported with an application to apply for an IT Engineer post at the college and has been successful so is now in full time employment.
- **Career Connect** have delivered 11 face to face interviews and 8 over the phone to support care experience young people out of the current cohort for the NR&EIS, they have also made 4 home visits and as part of their Multiply contract with our Adult & Community Learning Service, have delivered numeracy courses to 3 care experienced young people – all interventions have been as a result of attending the Back to Work Panel.
- **Southport FC** – working in partnership with the Charter, Southport Football Club offered us the opportunity to participate in their community focused programme enabling up to 18 young people between the ages of 8 – 11 to represent the club as a mascot for each of their home games. All the children taking part have been chosen from our Fostering Service and the co-ordination has been through the Charter. To date, we have identified 12 young people and all home games until the end of January 2025 have been allocated. All mascots will receive 2 free adult tickets for the main stand, a Southport FC football shirt. With relevant consent from carers, they will feature in and receive a matchday programme, they will also meet the players, participate in a pre-match kickabout on the pitch and lead the players out at the start of the game. They will receive a photograph with the team and the coin toss with each of the captains.
- **26** employers have committed to offering a range of work placements, work trials and work experience as part of their offer over the forthcoming 6 months from September – March 25. As a result, the Charter employer list is expanding due to its close alignment with Sefton@Work and all new and existing employers registered with the service are being encouraged to offer support to our care leavers as part of their Employer Partnership agreement. We are also working closely with our Regeneration colleagues to expand our offer through new contracts

with the Council including Vinci, Skyline, Balfour Beatty, and a range of sub-contractors working alongside them.

Sefton@Work
189 followers
2w • 🌐

🎉 Congratulations to Connell Court - **Methodist Homes MHA!** They have recently joined the Sefton@Work employer community and plan to offer opportunities to local job seekers looking to work in Care. 🌟
We wish them every success! 🍀

🔗 To find out more about Sefton@Work visit <https://ow.ly/2gni50SNi8Y>
Pictured, Mark Graham-Grice Deputy Home Manager. #Employment #Support #SeftonAtWork #Sefton #SeftonCouncil #Community #Care



#SeftonAtWork @LearnWorkSefton

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🎉 Congratulations to yet another valued employer, Millennium Nails, on signing Sefton@Work's Employer Partnership Agreement. This agreement signifies their commitment to offering job opportunities to local people. 🌟 Let's make a difference, together!
Pictured, **justine chew** Director.
To find out more about Sefton@Work visit <https://ow.ly/mcmV50QLz24>
#Sefton #LocalEmployer #CommunityImpact #20Years #Anniversary #CIAG #Partnership #SeftonCouncil




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🌟 "This is why we went to Iceland!" The **Iceland Foods** store in The Strand, Bootle is the latest large retailer to join the Sefton@Work growing list of employers who have signed up to our Employer Partnership Agreement, endorsed by Sefton Council Chief Executive Phil Porter. 🎉
The ever busy store which is a stones throw from our new office will engage with us when any new opportunities arise.
The staff instore always give a warm welcome! 🌟
Pictured L-R Store Manager **Kate Daulby** and Store Colleague Amy Tangemans.
To find out more about Sefton@Work visit <https://ow.ly/mcmV50QLz24> #Sefton #LocalEmployer #CommunityImpact #20Years #Anniversary #CIAG #Partnership #SeftonCouncil



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🎉 Congratulations to yet another valued employer on signing our Employer Partnership Agreement endorsed by Sefton Council Chief Executive Phil Porter. Welcome Apollo Care and thank you for the work you do in our community. ❤️
🌟 Let's make a difference, together! 🍀
🔗 To find out more about Sefton@Work visit <https://ow.ly/mcmV50QLz24>
Pic below L-R **Julie Roche** Recruitment Officer, **John McGovern** Managing Director.
#Employment #Support #SeftonAtWork #Sefton #SeftonCouncil #NewBeginnings



#SeftonAtWork @LearnWorkSefton

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189 followers
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🎉 Congratulations **INDUSTRIAL HYDRAULIC SERVICES LIMITED** who recently received their Employer Partnership Certificate from Sefton@Work. IHS Ltd have been operational in Sefton for over 23 years and supply businesses in Merseyside and beyond. Originally developed with two partners **Ian Thomas**(pic) and **Ian McWade**, there is now another Ian, appointed as Director in 2021 their customers include Peel Ports and Tata Steel. IHS Ltd have a long-standing relationship with Sefton@Work having worked with us over the last 15 years. Admin Manager **Laura James**(pic) was a Sefton@Work client before joining the company! 🌟
To find out more about Sefton@Work visit <https://ow.ly/mcmV50QLz24> #Sefton #LocalEmployer #CommunityImpact #20Years #Anniversary #CIAG #Partnership #SeftonCouncil



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1 comment · 2 reposts

By Carmen Baccino, DipRSA, RCDP, MCDI, AIEP • 9/30/2024

Sefton@Work
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2w • 🌐

🎉 Congratulations to Saint Jude Care Home! They have recently joined the Sefton@Work employer community and plan to offer opportunities to local job seekers. 🌟 We wish them every success! 🙌
🔗 To find out more about Sefton@Work visit <https://ow.ly/2gni50SNi8Y>
Pictured L-R **Jo Roberts** Head of Care, **Michael Hughes** Head Housekeeper.
#Employment #Support #SeftonAtWork #Sefton #SeftonCouncil #Community



#SeftonAtWork

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You and 3 others

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Joe's Perseverance Pay's Off

Joe, 23 registered with Sefton@Work in May and actively seeking employment. He was facing challenges securing a suitable job despite his previous employment experience. With the support of Sefton@Work, Joe actively engaged in the program, determined to find a fulfilling role.

Through one to one advice and guidance sessions, Joe identified potential roles and was put forward for several positions. He was successful in getting interviews and despite impressing employers in his interviews and receiving positive feedback, he consistently missed out on the final selections.

Undeterred by setbacks, supported by Sefton@Work with job search, Joe persevered. His dedication and persistence finally paid off when he was interviewed by and offered a role with Dhamecha, a new company who came to Sefton@Work for help with recruitment for a new cash and carry wholesaler business in Bootle they were establishing.

Joe's strong performance in the interview secured him a warehouse assistant position, which he was scheduled to start on September 23rd.

Sefton@Work continued to provide essential support throughout Joe's journey. The program funded work attire to ensure he was well-prepared for his new role.

Additionally, Sefton@Work's in-work support team are committed to providing ongoing support every two weeks, ensuring Joe had the resources and guidance needed to succeed in his employment.

Joe's positive attitude and unwavering determination, combined with the support of Sefton@Work, led to his successful employment. He is eager to start his new role and grateful for the assistance he received in achieving his career goals.



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Ayla's Journey to Confidence and Success

Ayla, once plagued by anxiety and self-doubt, has embarked on a remarkable journey of transformation. Her story is a testament to the power of perseverance, support, and a belief in oneself.

Ayla's past experiences with employment were marred by the challenges she faced with her mental health. However, a turning point came after she had registered with Sefton@Work and participated in the Fit for Success program. This program, designed around the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, incorporating mindfulness sessions and physical activity, helped her build confidence, improve her teamwork skills, and develop a newfound sense of social ease.

Inspired by her progress, Ayla expressed interest in the Routeways program, a supported employment initiative. After a successful interview, she joined Rowan Park School, where she quickly began to flourish. The supportive environment and structured routine of the Routeway helped Ayla boost her confidence and motivation. She described herself as a completely new person, brimming with newfound self-belief.

Ayla's journey didn't stop there. Building on her success, she secured a paid placement at a local café. This transition marked a significant milestone for Ayla, as she faced her fears and embraced a new challenge. Despite initial nerves, she was warmly welcomed by the staff and quickly began to enjoy her role. The training and support she received helped her grow both mentally and socially.

A testament to her growing confidence and abilities, Ayla was recently asked to work weekends at the café. This opportunity showcased the employer's trust in her skills and dedication.

Ayla's journey from struggling with anxiety to thriving in a paid position is a remarkable achievement. Her transformation is a testament to the power of support, perseverance, and a belief in oneself. Through her experiences with Fit for Success and the Routeway programme, Ayla has not only overcome her challenges but has also discovered a newfound sense of purpose and fulfillment.



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Ethan's Story: From College to Work

Ethan, a 20-year-old recent college graduate, faced challenges finding employment due to a lack of formal work experience and social anxiety. Despite completing a joinery course, Ethan struggled to secure roles in his field of interest.

After registering with Sefton@Work for assistance in finding employment, the team helped him craft a compelling CV, highlighting his skills and qualifications in a way that would appeal to potential employers. Ethan also took advantage of our bespoke job matching service, which enables us to match individuals with suitable job opportunities.

To further enhance his skillset, Ethan was enrolled in a digital manual handling course. This course provided him with valuable training in safe and efficient handling techniques, making him a more attractive candidate to employers.

While Ethan initially focused on finding apprenticeships in joinery, he remained open to other opportunities. With the guidance of the Sefton@Work team, he decided to expand his search to warehouse roles, recognising that these positions could offer immediate employment and valuable work experience.

Sefton@Work arranged an interview with Dhamecha, a new employer in the process of setting up a new cash and carry warehouse in the local area, and provided Ethan with the necessary support.

The team assisted him in preparing for the interview, offering advice on how to answer common questions and present himself confidently. They also provided him with appropriate interview attire to ensure he made a positive impression.

Ethan's hard work and the support of Sefton@Work paid off, and he was successfully offered a warehouse position. With the support of travel funding from Sefton@Work, Ethan was able to commute to his new job without financial strain.

Ethan's journey from college graduate to warehouse worker is a testament to his resilience and the valuable support provided by Sefton@Work. His success story demonstrates that with the right guidance and resources, individuals can overcome challenges and achieve their career goals.



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Faye's Return to Employment

Faye, a single parent of two young children, registered with Sefton@Work after being unemployed for twelve months. She was struggling with depression and anxiety, which had significantly impacted her job search.

Faye's primary challenges were balancing childcare responsibilities with her job search, as well as managing her mental health.

Sefton@Work provided comprehensive support to help Faye re-enter the workforce:

- **Financial Analysis:** A Better Off calculation was conducted to demonstrate the financial benefits of employment, providing Faye with a clear incentive to return to work.
- **CV Enhancement:** We assisted Faye in updating her CV to highlight her skills and experience in a way that would be attractive to potential employers.
- **Job Matching:** We worked closely with Faye to identify a cleaning role that aligned with her childcare needs and skillset.

- **Interview Preparation:** Faye was provided with guidance and support to prepare for the interview, ensuring she was well-equipped to present herself effectively.
- **Financial Assistance:** We funded work clothing and travel expenses to help Faye successfully transition into her new role.

With the support of Sefton@Work, Faye was able to secure a new job within two months of joining the program.

She is thriving in her new role and is grateful for the assistance she received in overcoming her challenges and achieving her employment goals.



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Chloe's Journey to Employment

Chloe, 25 had not worked for three years, taking a career break to raise her child as a single parent. She approached Sefton@Work in search of assistance to re-enter the job market. Despite submitting numerous job applications, Chloe felt discouraged due to a lack of responses from potential employers.

Chloe's primary goal was to secure employment that would provide financial stability for herself and her child. She expressed frustration with the job application process and a lack of confidence in her interview skills. Sefton@Work tailored a support plan to address Chloe's specific needs and challenges. The intervention included:

- **Confidence-Building Sessions:** To help Chloe overcome self-doubt and develop a positive mindset for job seeking.
- **CV and Cover Letter Development:** One-on-one sessions were conducted to create a professional and compelling CV and cover letter that effectively highlighted Chloe's skills and experience.
- **Job Application Guidance:** Chloe received personalized support in completing job applications, ensuring they were tailored to each specific role.

Through the dedicated support provided by Sefton@Work, Chloe successfully achieved her goal of securing employment local with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service. The intervention enabled her to:

- **Gain confidence:** Chloe developed a more positive outlook and belief in her ability to find a suitable job.
- **Improve job application skills:** She learned how to effectively present her qualifications and tailor her applications to specific roles.
- **Enhance interview skills:** Chloe's interview techniques were refined, allowing her to confidently articulate her skills and experience.

As a result of these positive outcomes, Chloe was able to successfully navigate the job market and secure a new role. This achievement not only provided financial stability for her and her child but also boosted her self-esteem and overall well-being.



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5. Regenerated Places -GSI Programme

Contact: heather.jago@sefton.gov.uk

- 5.1 The Growth and Strategic Investment (GSI) programme continues to develop and grow with a range of projects and investment growth priorities across Sefton. These ranging from town centre regeneration and place making projects to facilitating and assisting delivery of key investment and economic growth opportunities. The team are responsible for securing external funding and assurance reporting for key capital projects in Sefton, including Southport Town Deal (MLEC, Enterprise Arcade, Les Transformation de Southport and Customer Experience training (delivered in partnership with Southport College), levelling up funding for Bootle Strand and LCRCA funding including strategic investment funds and UK SPF.
- 5.2 **Marine Lake Events Centre** - The Marine Lake Events Centre project is delivering to expected milestones with demolition work progressing on site following DSM being appointed to carry out the demolition and enabling works contract in April 2024. Demolition is anticipated to complete early 2025 and procurement for the main contractor is ongoing and will be announced in due course.
- 5.3 **Enterprise Arcade, Eastbank Street, Southport** - The Enterprise Arcade made considerable progress this year following start-on-site in January 2024 with the appointed contractor Skyline Property Solutions. Refurbishment of Crown Buildings in Southport's town centre for a new business hub is a key Town Deal project and will be the first ever purpose-built workspaces for start-up creative and digital businesses in Southport. External works are now complete, and scaffolding has been removed. Internal works continue and are anticipated to complete early 2025.
- 5.4 **Les Transformation de Southport(LTS)** - The first phase of transportation improvement works to the area around Southport Market – Kings Street, Market Street and Eastbank Street - is undertaking further detailed design work along with further discussions with local businesses to share the details of this programme and minimise disruption. The contract is anticipated to commence early 2025. This exciting project should help transform this area of the town centre by updating and improving the quality of the public realm and improving directional signage. Additional later phased of the LTS programme are also being explored along with possible funding that might be available through the city region transport funding.
- 5.5 **Building a Better Customer Experience** - This key training programme has been operation for a year now and is progressing well. The pilot of the Building Better Customer Experience Training with

Southport College has now been completed, in total 212 learners have participated in training along with 22 business collaborations. The feedback received after the pilot programme was exceptionally positive and Southport College have now rolled the course out to a larger cohort to meet demand. Training for volunteers and workless people through Sefton's Adult & Community Learning service is also proposed as part of this pilot programme. Southport College have collaborated with local businesses and delivered focus groups with a range of learners and feedback was very positive, learners felt that the modules covered a range of topics which have enhanced their skills and increased confidence levels.

- 5.6 **Southport Cove – The Esplanade** - An Exclusivity Agreement in place with GSL has enabled the team behind the Cove Resort proposals for the Esplanade site in Southport to progress work to develop their proposals and work on the details of the scheme, prior to agreement from the Council on any future lease arrangement for development of the site. GSL are progressing planning discussions and all matters relating to delivery of the project on this site.

BOOTLE

- 5.7 **Bootle Strand Repurposing** – the Bootle Strand Shopping Centre transformation project continues to develop its detailed design work to inform the project detail. A planning submission was made in October 2024 for the £20m levelling up funding approved by Government in March 2023. Pre-planning consultation was received positively for the main works and further information can be found on the Council's website. A key catalyst project for Bootle's wider regeneration, this complex project will be delivered in phases to ensure the Strand remains open to the public to support the community that rely on its shops and services. Work is underway with this exciting project following planning approval for partial demolition early this year and contractor Vinci Build UK appointed to carry out these works, prior to letting the main contract. This first phase of work will build on the Salt and Tar events space, undertake selective demolition of part of the centre. (The Palatine), provide a new town square fronting Stanley Road, provide new steps and transition down onto Salt and Tar and repurpose the former M&S Building for a mix of uses including retail, community and health uses. Vinci Build UK are progressing with ground investigations and survey work at present as well as utility and service diversions.

- 5.8 **Bootle Regeneration Strategy** - Work is ongoing to develop and inform this strategy from a range of sources. The recent Bootle AAP preferred options consultation has completed its consultation stage and will help inform the wider town centre strategy. Further work is needed however to review market conditions and key sector information on demand; identify key areas of opportunity and how these can be combined to bring forward viable investment and development propositions, including wider city region identified opportunities for growth and economic development and how this could help support Bootle's transformation programme. People can find out more about the Bootle Strand scheme on the Council's website [Bootle Strand](#)

AINSDALE ON SEA

- 5.9 **Ainsdale Coastal Gateway - Ainsdale Beach Improvement Works** Following conversations with residents, community groups and previous wider consultation on this area, the Council undertook to update the vision for this key coastal gateway in response to the feedback received. The Council appointed specialist planning and development consultancy Turley's, to undertake a feasibility study for the coastal gateway. The study looks at all the assets at this site including The Sands, Toad Hall, Council operational bases, and options for their development and delivery. The work is under consideration and development options being considered for this area.
- 5.10 **Ainsdale Toilet Refurbishment and Changing Places Toilets** completed this year and is now operational. The refurbishment of Ainsdale toilets including a new Changing Places Toilet is now complete and the new facility is open to the public. The Phase 2 external rendering was completed in August as part of this programme, slightly later due to the environmental considerations in this area.
- 5.11 **Former Sands Public House, Shore Road, Ainsdale.** - Sefton Council went out to the market for the former Sands Public House in Ainsdale (Opposite Pontins) following soft market testing that indicated a sufficient level of interest to encourage a formal marketing of the site. Sefton is considering and assessing responses received and carrying out further discussion with parties who have expressed an interest, as part of ongoing due diligence.

- 5.12 **Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre, Sandbrook Way** – Work continues to buy in the remaining interests in this site following February 2023 Cabinet decision to bring this centre into full Council ownership. A further three properties have recently been acquired and efforts are ongoing to bring the remaining ownerships into Council control. Parallel to this process, agents have been appointed continue to market the site to support the Council's ambitions for change and redevelopment of this site. Expressions of interest are continuing to come forward and lines of enquiry explored further with the market, and members are being updated on progress.

MAGHULL

5.13 **Maghull Health Park**

MerseyCare are working closely with Sefton Council to develop plans for a Mental Health Digital Research and Innovation Centre at Maghull Health Park. Building on the significant investment in the site to date by MerseyCare to this site - Europe's largest concentration of complex secure mental health services and sector leading clinical excellence for serious mental illness. Phase 1 of this health park development will look to bring forward a world class Mental Health Digital Research Centre, a landmark centre of excellence for digital mental health research in Sefton.

- 5.14 The proposals under development include plans for a business park of 320,000sqft for medical research, technology and data occupier space which will anchor the development of a new regionally significant 10 ha Health Park for investors, innovators, clinicians and academics to revolutionise the future of mental health care, research and digital innovation, including immersive and interactive spaces, augmented reality labs and research accommodation. The site forms part of the successful LCRCA bid for Life Sciences Investment Zone funding approved in March 2024 to develop and life sciences cluster in the region building on significant assets within the region the proposal will safeguard 1800 jobs currently on site and develop 1270 new jobs, training, research and product development opportunities as well as attracting private sector investment. The Investment Zone status offers a number of tax reliefs to business looking to locate within the Health Park, making it a more attractive investment location.

6. Regenerated Places - Tourism

contact: mark.catherall@sefton.gov.uk

- 6.1 The tourism service continues to deliver a wider range of services across Sefton that includes:
- Destination Marketing
 - Major Events
 - Conferences and Sales
 - Salt & Tar
 - Seafront Operations
 - Southport Market
 - Visitor Economy Strategy
 - Visitor Economy led regeneration projects such as MLEC
- 6.2 There have been several highlights over the last quarter with major activity at Salt and Tar and the MLEC demolition work underway.
- 6.3 Salt and Tar Event space in Bootle continues to develop and grow following pilot events last year. Our high-profile music event headlined by Tom Jones, Status Quo and Red Rum Club attracted 11,000 attendees across one weekend, approximately 26% of whom were from outside the Liverpool City Region. Alongside this, our smaller activity throughout the year has drawn custom from across the Liverpool City Region and beyond, opening up Bootle as a viable destination in its own right and changing perceptions .

"It was a great night. Tom was amazing and such a good set up and location. I hope to attend many more events held here." – Music Weekend Attendee



- 6.4 We have also seen the impact our events have had on other local businesses, with neighbouring shopping centre, The Strand, reporting a 15% footfall increase over the event weekend, and their car park seeing a 51% increase in revenue. Local business Lock and Quay have also shared their revenue was up by 30% from pre-gig visitors to their venue.
- 6.5 **After the success of the events held this summer Salt and Tar has been shortlisted as 'Finalists' for the 'New Tourism Business Award' and 'Entertainment Venue of the Year' at the LCR Tourism Awards along with being shortlisted as the 'Best New Festival' at the UK Festival Awards.**
- 6.6 The tourism team also successfully delivered The Southport Food and Drink Festival, Southport Air Show and British Musical Fireworks Championship attracting tens of thousands of visitors to Southport.
The Marine Lake Events Centre is progressing with key milestones being met, when finished the venue will generate over £18m to the local economy and attract an additional 500,000 visitors to Southport.
- 6.7 Some of the key milestones achieved to date include:
- Appointment of DSM to undertake the demolition and enabling works, demolition of the STCC is progressing well and will be complete by early 2025.
 - The procurement of a main contractor has been completed and will be announced in due course.
 - Main works will commence in 2025
 - ASM leisure operator continue to be actively engaged in the project, ensuring the building is designed and operated to the best quality.



6.8 The 2023 Tourism STEAM figures have now also been calculated, the 2023 season was another strong season for Sefton, Key highlights include:

- Visitors number up 3.3% to 7.9m
- Total employment up 9.3% to 6,678
- Economic Impact up 17.5% to £698m

7.0 Summaries of other SES objectives & subsets

Regenerated Places-Housing-Contact lee.payne@sefton.gov.uk

Annual social housing completions and overall housing net growth for the 2023/2024 have been updated in this action plan. Ongoing dialogue with both social housing providers and market-led volume housebuilders has ensured that net completions in this period remain significantly above the current Local Plan target (645 pa). Further to this, development on numerous housing allocation sites continues, helping to deliver new market-led and affordable homes in the borough. Housing growth targets were met in 2023/2024 for both overall net housing completions and affordable homes. Despite ongoing economic challenges, the Housing team continues to collaborate closely with Planning colleagues to facilitate growth, especially in affordable and aspirational housing. Market concerns have created opportunities, allowing successful collaborations with several RPs to purchase over 50 open market sale units in the current financial year in the borough where private purchaser demand has dropped. These properties will be offered as low-cost home ownership products, such as shared ownership and rent to buy opportunities. Finally, the development of the first Council-owned housing for almost two decades is underway at Buckley Hill Lane, Netherton & due for completion in early 2025. All housing additions will be reflected in future (24/25) returns.

Regenerated Places-Planning- Contact: ian.loughlin@sefton.gov.uk

There is no target in Local Plan for amount of employment floorspace development or number of jobs provided. However, reference can be made to previous years for comparison where an increase of previous years should be the aim. The figure for 2023/24 was lower than in previous years (at just 5,622m²) but this is largely due to the figure for 2022/23 being a bit of a high outlier. Nonetheless, there is currently significant employment development under construction at Atlantic Park and this should give improved floorspace and job figures for 2024/25.

The target of 640 net additional dwellings is the Local Plan average annual requirement for 2012-2030, although the government's standard methodology figure has 578 homes for Sefton. In recent years the Council have comfortably met its housing delivery target, with an average of 757 per annum over the past 5 years. However, it should be noted that the government recently consulted on a new method of calculating

housing need which, if confirmed, would give Sefton a housing target of 1,466 dwellings per annum - almost twice as much as it has been able to for many decades.

Social Inclusion- Equality & Diversity- Contact : emma.stewart@sefton.gov.uk

A Corporate Equality Group (CEG) has been newly established to support the Council with its commitment to integrate Equality and Diversity throughout its services and to help secure its vision of creating stronger, more resilient communities (Sefton Vision 2030). CEG will monitor the council's performance in relation to equality and diversity and KPIS focus on communications and engagement, improving employment rates and business support for people in disadvantaged areas, reviewing equality and diversity data and engaging with the LCR Race Equality Monitoring group.

The Council has produced and launched its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-27.

InvestSefton meeting with the LCR's new Director of Race Equality Group in November to discuss business engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic business groups. Work has also been commissioned to Sefton based MEH/Safe Regeneration to provide business start-up support to individuals seeking to become self-employed and/or start their own business. Specific focus areas include town centres and people from disadvantaged areas and special characteristic groups.

Social Inclusion-Sustainable Travel -Contact: andrew.dunsmore@sefton.gov.uk

Low Carbon Strategy: In response to the Council's climate emergency declaration and an increased focus on active travel measures, work is continuing the development of Low Carbon Transport Strategy for the borough. Baseline work has been undertaken and a report completed.

Plans are currently being refined for member engagement in advance of a wider consultation. The report will provide a quantification of the current transport related carbon position for the Council and a future trajectory for reductions towards Net Zero. Progress is also being made on the development of an Active Travel and E-mobility Strategies for the Borough. WSP have now been engaged to complete an assessment of the Carbon impact of the Capital Programme and to provide advice and instruction on carbon assessment of transport schemes. This work should be completed by late Spring and Early Summer 2024. One of the key elements of the E Mobility Strategy will be defining the Council's approach to On Street Charging.

Some further discussion will be held with Cabinet Member and Cabinet colleagues to help inform the Council's Policy to On Street charging which will help inform resident engagement and focus investment. The LCRCA have submitted a bid for Local Electrical Vehicular Infrastructure (LEVI) funding. If successful, this will enable the Council to roll out new EV infrastructure across Council owned car parks whilst developing proposals for further potential installation. In order to identify potential improvement to the Council's walking and cycling network a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan is being developed. Proposals for stakeholder engagement were presented to the Consultation and Engagement Panel in early November.

Several engagement sessions were held with specific interest groups and some initial plans developed for helping inform the engagement process. Detailed plans for further engagement, initially planned with Members, are being developed. It is envisaged that these will follow engagement on the LCTS which hopefully should provide some context to the need for an LCWIP. Maritime Corridor Business Cases: The detailed design work is now progressing on both schemes and the final details will be included within the Full Business Case submission as requested by the LCRCA. Part of the Maritime Corridor scheme, Phase 1, will be funded from the Levelling Up Fund, following the success of a transport bid submitted by LCRCA.

The amount of Levelling Up Fund allocated to the MC scheme has been increased following a Baseline review. In order to ensure that sufficient work is expended within the timeframe, there is some pressure to progress the scheme to construction. As such, it is proposed to secure the services of, Balfour Beatty, through the SCAPE framework to complete some Early Contractor Involvement. Balfour's have already completed some feasibility work at no cost to the Council. This has helped define the likely cost and probable construction phasing. Cabinet will be asked to approve Balfour's appointment into the Early Contractor Involvement stage of the scheme which will enable some initial enabling works to be completed and the Target Cost to be established.

Some further engagement to ensure that local Members, businesses, and residents are sighted on the proposals and have an ability to shape them has been completed. Analysis work has been undertaken of the responses and those relevant to the Phase 1 scheme have been reported to L&R Committee who have approved the changes to the highway. Engagement has also taken place with some key stakeholders, including National Highways (for their works on the A5036) and landowners and discussions held with Planning colleagues over the elements of the scheme for which Planning approval will be required. The re-baselining process has led to a revised total. The agreed allocation is £21.2m (MC). There may be some elements of MC which were included in the Outline Business Case which won't be deliverable under the current programme. These elements are likely to be delivered in CRSTS 2. Southport Eastern Access Business Cases: The detailed design work is now progressing, and the final details will be included within the Full Business Case submission as requested by the LCRCA. It is proposed that the same Procurement Route be adopted for the delivery of the project.

The feasibility stage of the project is ongoing. Further engagement with local Members, businesses and residents is nearing completion and feedback is being appraised. In order to scope the necessary mitigation measures within the Norwood Ward, some specific targeted engagement with residents and businesses is required. The details of the process are being agreed with Ward Members. Sustrans will also be completing some school engagement work with schools in the area to help ensure that safer routes to schools are considered in the development of the proposals. The baselining process has resulted in £16.8m being allocated in the current CRSTS programme. As with the MC scheme which were included in the Outline Business Case which won't be deliverable under the current programme. These elements are likely to be delivered in CRSTS 2.

Social Inclusion-Net Zero-Contact: stephanie.jukes@sefton.gov.uk

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority have set a target of net zero for all parts of the economy to be net zero by 2040. This will require all Sefton businesses to halt the use of gas, diesel, oil and only use energy from renewable resources by 2040.

Details of the actions within this plan will be reported to the next SES meeting. Examples within this Action plan includes (TBC) On transport - Complete Phase 2 of 'State of Freight' investigation into a future zero carbon freight solution, ensuring that this is aligned with our Freeport goals of decarbonisation and good jobs to deliver outcomes including last mile ZE deliveries and reduce trips, scope options for mechanisms to seek to support decarbonisation of freight, and develop a freight strategy and that connects Freeport locations in a net zero manner On buildings - Identify high-opportunity zones as areas for groups of home/business owners to plan retrofits together or create low carbon communal/district energy schemes and smart networks. On Industry - a series of targets around the following;

- To effectively transition to net zero, our industrial base will need cost-effective access to clean power, clean hydrogen and effective access to clean power, clean hydrogen and carbon capture and storage technologies alongside efficiency and storage technologies alongside efficiency improvements in process and delivery systems improvements in process and delivery systems.
- On Clean Energy - Progress the Phase 3 development activities related to Mersey Tidal (LCR Year 1 action plan review SE6) and commence Phase 4 activity to Consent a UK first of a kind (FOAK) Tidal range scheme.

On Natural Environment - Develop a pipeline and identify potential funding for pilot innovative and sustainable agricultural projects, such as urban farming, greenbelt agroecological farming, carbon capture etc. Other issues pertinent to business - MEES Regulations applies to non-domestic rented properties, by 1/4/23 must have an EPC rating of E as a minimum to be able to be rented, plans for this to increase over time (possible EPC D by 2025, EPC C by 2028 and EPC B by 2030) Investment in green technologies e.g. building retrofit, EV charging, Heat pump installations will help to generate local jobs and training opportunities

InvestSefton has also allocated UKSPF to provide business sustainability support in town centres

Sustainability is high on the agenda for conference buyers and events/exhibition organisers and with this in mind it is critical that as part of the planning process for the Marine Lakeside Events Centre (MLEC) opening 2026 that as a destination Sefton begins to build the sustainability offer. The project will measure

the business carbon footprint, design an action plan to reduce and produce a sustainability policy. The LCR Combined authority have been awarded £5M in Summer2024 under the Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme fund. An allocation of ~£900K has been made to Sefton to enable Bootle Library and the Netherton Activity Centre to improve insulation and install a low carbon heating system as part of similar works across the LCR.

Sefton are working with the LCR Combined Authority on preparations for the next phase of the domestic retrofit programme (phase 4 of the Local Authority Delivery Green Homes Grant) where domestic properties are upgraded with insulation and low carbon measures. This is expected Summer 2025. As part of phase 3 works efforts were made to establish a local supply network with local job creation.

Social Inclusion-Digital: Contact helen.spreadbury@sefton.gov.uk

Sefton's Digital strategy work is now complete with boards and sub-groups having delivered a raft of activity and projects -A similar dashboard for Sefton's digital strategy has been updated and reported. A summary is provided above in the commentary table. The Digital strategy has been well received embracing and harnessing a diverse range of internal and external digital focussed priorities for the Council and it's partners. The strategy has been particularly instrumental in helping to direct InvestSefton's digital work over the past two years culminating in the establishment of the popular Sefton Huddle . The event on 22 February in the Atkinson in Southport attracted over 50 people were present including, some 32 Sefton digital & Tech businesses. Delegates received presentations on Eastbank, the new Enterprise Arcade initiative in Southport, the LCR Digital & Creative Cluster board and a case study from a local thermal heating business using drone technology. The event received excellent feedback from delegates and lots of networking took place before and after the event. There was also a mini- marketplace of support providers present including Innovate UK; University of Liverpool Horizon project, Dept of Business & Trade (DBT)and Sefton@work .

Seftons Digital Strategy 2024- 2027 is due out to consultation , with residents and businesses encouraged to respond to the Consultation. The new Digital Strategy will be presented to Cabinet for approval prior to Christmas 2024 , and given this there will be no further programme updates on the previous version.

Social Inclusion-Culture: Contact -david.eddy@sefton.gov.uk

LCR consultancy report has been submitted to Chief Executives with recommendations for amendments to the Borough of Culture programme - awaiting decisions. Cultural strategy aligning with Public Health Child Poverty strategy. 'Poverty Proofing' project delivered by Children Northeast to commence from October. Action Planning for Cultural Strategy has been deferred during Southport Incident Response and will require review against emerging community needs. This to include management of tribute materials. External funding from Shared Prosperity Fund has enabled delivery of Library heritage project, infrastructure improvements at the Atkinson and sustained community delivery of shared reading groups.