

COUNCIL - 14TH NOVEMBER 2024

QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Prendergast (Leader of the Conservative Group) to the Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: Southport Market</p>
	<p>Southport Market has now been trading for over 3 years, with trading commencing on 21st July 2021, taking into consideration the, circa, £1.4 million capital costs of redeveloping Southport Market and the ongoing expenditure to maintain the facility, can the cabinet member respond to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Taking into account initial capital expenditure, how much profit has been generated by Southport Market, since opening, for Sefton MBC? b. Taking into account the capital costs, as well as income and expenditure since opening, when is it anticipated that the project will break even?
	<p>Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As part of the regular monitoring of Southport Market reports are taken to Overview and Scrutiny Regeneration and Skills. To date 2 reports have been taken with a 3rd report due in November 2024. These reports show the actual performance of the market. No profit was made in years 1 and 2 with a small surplus in year 3 as reflected in the existing business plan. The £1.4m capital expenditure was grant monies and is not used in the business plan calculations. b. Yearly reviews are presented to Overview and Scrutiny. The next report will be going to November's committee setting out the yearly financial performance. A revised business plan is being produced that will set out proposed financial performance over the next 3-5 years. The capital costs came from external grants and are not used when looking at the financial performance of an asset.
2	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Prendergast (Leader of the Conservative Group) to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Atkinson)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: DBS</p>
	<p>DBS Checks</p> <p>In light of the shocking revelations that a former member of the Sefton Labour Group has pleaded guilty to making indecent images of children during his time as a Sefton Councillor, will the Leader of the Council answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Will she now consider putting into effect what was called for by Sefton Conservatives in September 2022 in a Notice of Motion to this council that ALL elected councillors be subject to a mandatory DBS check?

	<p>b. Will she put into effect the recommendations of Simon Bailey's Independent Review of the Disclosure and Barring Regime (18th April 2023) regarding the eligibility of local councillors for criminal record checks, insofar as it relates to enhanced criminal record checks being made mandatory for ALL councillors who are appointed or being considered for appointment to committees concerning children's services and vulnerable adults?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>I will not wait until next year to start this process. I have discussed the issue with the Council's Monitoring Officer and asked him to prepare a report for the next meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee on 11th December 2024 so all the issues can be discussed, and a recommendation be made to the next Full Council meeting.</p> <p>However, I am sure he will agree with me that we all have a responsibility to make sure we uphold the highest standards, this includes preventative action. Therefore, Sefton Labour Local Government Committee expect DBS checks to be carried out at the candidate stage not when a councillor is elected. This takes the responsibility away from the council who in most circumstances are not legally able to act and provides reassurance to our communities that relevant checks have already been carried out.</p>
3	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Prendergast (Leader of the Conservative Group) to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways (Councillor Veidman)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: Southport Town Centre Parking</p>
	<p>Have any economic impact assessments been carried out in the last 3 years to assess the impact that parking charges across Southport town centre may or may not have on footfall across Southport town centre?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>No</p>
4	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Morris to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: The White House</p>
	<p>To ask the Leader/Cabinet member responsible how much Sefton Hospitality Operations Ltd have lost in their failed venture formerly known as The White House Brasserie and Bar?</p> <p>What steps have been taken to recover any costs for the Council Tax Payer?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited operated the White House. Financial information is reported at business level annually, but is not broken down to venue level. There are no "costs to the Council tax payer" – the business has</p>

	funded the venture, and via a shareholder loan which will be repaid in full, with interest, to the Council. The Council and the borough have therefore seen the asset brought back into life, and ongoing use, at no cost to the Council.
5	<u>Question submitted by Councillor Brough to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)</u>
	Subject: Bootle Strand
	In 1968 when Bootle Strand was completed – it boasted 407,000 square feet of retail space. I am aware that plans proposed for the refurbished Strand describe a substantial reduction of available retail space. Can the Cabinet Member provide an estimate (from the scheme’s outline plans) of the retail space to be available in the fully refurbished building ?
	Response: The proposals at this time estimate that circa 60% of the completed project will remain as retail space, with the remainder repurposed as diversification of uses is delivered (food, drink, hospitality, leisure, and so on), and a small proportion of the centre (less than 9%) being demolished to provide enhanced external public spaces.
6	<u>Question submitted by Councillor Brough to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)</u>
	Subject : Bootle Strand
	At this time, has the Council received notice of any commercial intent, interest or commitment related to taking space in the newly refurbished development?
	Response: Yes – vacancy rates in the centre remain low. Occupation continues with both existing and new tenants.
7	<u>Question submitted by Councillor Brough to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)</u>
	Subject : Bootle Strand
	Has any financial modelling been undertaken to establish the economic viability of the proposed development?
	Response : Yes – this forms the basis of the original business case, and is updated annually via the business planning process.
8	<u>Question submitted by Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Atkinson)</u>
	Subject : Local Government Association

	<p>The Labour controlled Local Government Association have made strong representations to the Government to allow Councils to remove the Single Person Council Tax discount which in the main is granted to widows/widowers in the Borough and the Local Government Association request to remove the requirement to hold a local referendum if the Council seeks to increase the Council Tax by more than 4.99%.</p> <p>Does the Leader of the Council agree with the Local Government Association and if not what representations has Sefton Council made in terms of not supporting these proposals bearing in mind the adverse financial effect they would have on council tax payers within the Borough and in particular pensioners who have already been badly hit by the withdrawal of the Winter Fuel Allowance?</p>
	<p>Response :</p> <p>The council welcomes the fact that the Government is committed to pursuing a comprehensive set of reforms to public services and local government funding.</p> <p>As we know, there are exponential rising service pressures in all of the key areas that matter to sefton residents, especially the most vulnerable, with a primary contributor being the austerity and underfunding programme of the previous government. This in turn has put the sector in an unsustainable position with a number of councils being forced to ask for exceptional financial support, the funding landscape is out-of-date, and the deep-rooted uncertainty fostered by the previous government has limited the ability for councils to plan for the future. After years of delay this new Labour government has said they will commence with the much needed fair funding reform. The council welcomes that this will be updated and will improve the approach to funding allocations within the Local Government Finance Settlement by redistributing funding to ensure that it reflects an up-to-date assessment of need and local resources including deprivation which was never a factor in the previous governments thinking. The council will contribute fully to this.</p>
9	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Sir Ron Watson to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Atkinson)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: National Insurance Contributions Increased Costs</p>
	<p>Will the Leader of the Council advise what action she has taken to press upon the Government the need to reflect the increase in Employers National Insurance contributions to recognise this through the grant settlement for 2025/2026?</p> <p>Whilst it is understood that the National Insurance employer increases will not apply directly to the public sector all those who provide goods and services to the Council have to meet this increased financial burden and this in turn will reflect on the amounts the Council will need to pay via the council tax to maintain service levels.</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>A policy statement from central government in advance of the local</p>

	<p>government finance settlement is due this month that will provide key detail on the principles that each council can expect from the settlement. The council is cognisant of the impact this will have on its providers and contractors and will as usual seek to gain the most positive outcome from the grant settlement as it can to support the council's financial position following 14 years of conservative neglect and cuts. It is also not lost on the council why this national insurance increase is required, and that is to help repair the damage caused by the previous government who have left a substantial black hole in the public finances and the fabric of public services massively underfunded.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Lauren Keith to the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families (Councillor Roscoe)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: Social workers education around coercive and controlling behaviour</p>
	<p>A recent BBC investigation highlighted that more than a third of social work university courses are failing to teach signs of coercive and controlling behaviour despite it being a criminal offence since 2015.</p> <p>How is the council ensuring that social workers being recruited are able to understand this behaviour and the law around this, given this behaviour is often frequently seen in child and domestic abuse cases?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>Most of our Social Workers are trained within the Cheshire and Merseyside Social Work Teaching Partnership (CMSWTP) (LJMU, Liverpool Hope, Edge Hill and Chester Universities). As a partnership we work closely to improve the life chances of children, young people, adults and their families by improving the recruitment, retention and the training and development of social workers and their practice. This includes a workstream dedicated to students – so covering placements, curriculum etc as well as training Practice Educators. Students are encouraged to attend programme boards and feed into the design of curriculum, giving feedback on students on placement, the knowledge they come to the Council with and areas that could be improved / or that are missing.</p> <p>Our partner universities have provided us with the following information:</p> <p><u>Edge Hill University</u></p> <p>When this article came out, they were asked about where this sits in their curriculum and the head of social work and wellbeing responded that it was great to see the topic is covered in so many places in the curriculum. They were also able to advise Social Work England that it was covered within the curriculum.</p> <p>They provide specific training for coercive and controlling behaviour and this is available for every student during the year (cycle) that the course is delivered.</p>

Liverpool Hope University

The programme was designed by key stakeholders and validated in 2021. They are also required to demonstrate to Social Work England that they meet and exceed professional standards in education and professional development each year. Understanding signs of coercive and controlling behaviour are scaffolded throughout the programme, culminating in a final year module that facilitates the opportunity for students to explore contemporary issues and critically, the concepts of power/empowerment in theory and practice. A growing number of dissertations focus on this topic too.

They have also arranged for Women's Aid to deliver a half day training package specifically focusing on coercive control to both BA and MA final year students.

Chester University

The BA Social Work students at University of Chester have a half day introduction to Domestic Abuse including coercive control which is delivered by one of their placement providers Domestic Abuse Safety Unit in their first year Skills Day and then a Powerpoint is delivered in the second year in the Adults module (this includes coercive control and a group activity on coercive control which explore understanding / identification of examples of coercive control). MA courses - Coercive control is introduced on the Adults module for one day and also on the MA skills days - the role play assessment is based on a domestic abuse scenario and students complete a Domestic Abuse, stalking and honour based violence assessment.

Liverpool John Moores University

In the 2nd year adult's module for MA and DA, the lecturer covers Controlling and Coercive behaviour in relation to domestic abuse of adults with care and support needs (itself part of safeguarding under the Care Act). This covers intimate partner relationships, where one partner has care and support needs, and also inter familial abuse, where it may be an adult child coercively controlling an older parent (with care and support needs) for example. This is covered in a separate standalone session, as it is clearly becoming more important in practice. There is also reference to it in the first year Law modules, again, as part of safeguarding.

In addition Staff in the Council have developed an introductory Domestic Abuse Awareness course which covers how Domestic Abuse can affect individuals and families living with abuse.

The Course is split into six sections and covers:

- What is domestic abuse?
- The impact of domestic abuse on adults
- The impact on children
- The reality of an abusive relationship
- Talking about domestic abuse

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting help and support <p>At the end of the course learners will have increased knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The signs of domestic abuse • The types of behaviours that are abusive • The effect of domestic abuse on adults and children • Some of the reasons people find it difficult to leave abusive relationships • Some tools and techniques to have conversations about domestic abuse • Where to get help and support for people living with Domestic Abuse <p>The course will be launched imminently and takes around 45 minutes to complete and includes an assessment quiz following completion of the content. The course will be available to all Sefton Council employees, Councillors and partners.</p> <p>Sefton council also continues to work positively with our commissioned service SWACA who do a monthly training course- 'controlling and coercive behaviour' 'post separation abuse' which also features coercive control (both in person and online). Our understanding and focus on coercive control as a critical typology of DVA is also recognise in our DVA strategy.</p>
11	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Pugh to the Cabinet Member for Cleansing and Street Scene (Councillor Harvey)</u></p>
	<p>Subject: Food waste recycling</p>
	<p>When does Sefton intend to reintroduce food waste recycling and what if any is the net cost to the council of doing so?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The collection and recycling of food waste in Sefton will help reduce the impact of climate change by producing green energy and compost, as well highlighting how food waste typically costs households £1,000 a year.</p> <p>The government has stated that all councils in England will be required to roll out weekly food waste collections by 31st March 2026. Work is ongoing within Sefton Council to meet this deadline, and I meet each month with fellow waste portfolio holders from the region, and Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) representatives, to discuss this matter and others.</p> <p>Along with our Liverpool Combined Region partners (Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Wirral and Halton) and the MRWA, Sefton is contributing to food waste collection workstreams studying fleet acquisition, caddy purchase, comms, marketing and more. This is in line with the LCR Strategic Waste Management Partnership's terms of reference.</p> <p>Whilst a shared approach will be taken where possible to develop a LCR</p>

	<p>common narrative for messaging and behaviour change, the food waste collections from 2026 will be undertaken by each local authority within their borough.</p> <p>In terms of finances, Sefton has been awarded £2.6m in capital monies from central government for the acquisition of specialist collection vehicles and food waste caddies. Diverting food waste away from general domestic waste for anaerobic digestion, and the creation of green energy, is also expected to be substantially cheaper than incineration.</p>								
12	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Pugh to the Cabinet Member for Cleansing and Street Scene (Councillor Harvey)</u></p>								
	<p>Subject: Recycling</p>								
	<p>Given that Sefton according to DEFRA had a recycling rate of 33% compared to 59% for Stockport in the 22/23 financial year what measurable target has Sefton set to improve its performance.</p>								
	<p>Response:</p> <p>A waste minimisation officer has recently been employed to analyse the latest data across the borough including participation rates, and to review best practice in high-performing authorities such as Stockport, as part of efforts to improve our recycling rate.</p> <p>Education campaigns and behavioural change activities will promote reducing our waste which is the initial key message, followed by recycling. While our aim is to see Sefton's recycling rate figure improve, and to encourage our residents to support us, a specific measurable target has not yet been set.</p>								
13	<p><u>Question submitted by Councillor Pugh to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways (Councillor Veidman)</u></p>								
	<p>Subject: Southport Park and Ride</p>								
	<p>What are the cost implications- including maintenance, security and any loss of revenue of ceasing to operate the Eco Centre and Esplanade Park and Ride subject to development?</p>								
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The Park and Ride ceased to operate on the 31st March 2024. The Eco Centre continues to operate as previously, as an education centre.</p> <p>The net saving of £200,000 was calculated as follows:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Savings</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bus Costs</td> <td>£214,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>APCOA (contractor)</td> <td>£63,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Saving</td> <td>£277,000</td> </tr> </table>	Savings		Bus Costs	£214,000	APCOA (contractor)	£63,000	Total Saving	£277,000
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	<p>Less costs / income reduction</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Income Reduction</td> <td>£50,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Enforcement Costs</td> <td>£15,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pay and Display Costs</td> <td>£12,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Net Saving</td> <td>£200,000</td> </tr> </table>	Income Reduction	£50,000	Enforcement Costs	£15,000	Pay and Display Costs	£12,000	Net Saving	£200,000
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14	<p>Question from Councillor Doolin to Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Doyle)</p>								
	<p>Subject : Monitoring air quality along the A5306 road between Switch Island and Princess Way</p>								
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Health Protection: The A5306 experiences significant traffic including significant numbers of Heavy Goods vehicles, which can lead to increased emissions of harmful pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM). Monitoring air quality helps identify pollution levels that could adversely affect the health of residents, particularly vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions. 2. Regulatory Compliance: Sefton MBC is required to monitor air quality to ensure compliance with national and international air quality standards. Regular monitoring helps identify areas that may exceed permissible pollutant levels, prompting necessary actions to mitigate pollution sources. 3. Environmental Impact Assessment: Monitoring air quality provides insights into the environmental impact of road traffic and helps assess the overall air quality in the surrounding area. This information is crucial for understanding how pollution affects local ecosystems, wildlife, and vegetation. 4. Informed Urban Planning and Policy: Data from air quality monitoring can inform local government decisions regarding urban planning, traffic management, and infrastructure development. Understanding pollution patterns can lead to policies that promote sustainable transportation options, such as public transit, cycling, and walking, which can help reduce emissions. 5. Community Awareness and Engagement: Monitoring air quality helps raise public awareness about air pollution and its effects on health and the environment. Providing residents with information about air quality levels can empower them to make informed choices and advocate for cleaner air initiatives. 6. Emergency Response and Planning: In the event of a pollution incident or an increase in emissions due to construction or other activities, having reliable air quality data allows for timely responses to protect public health and safety. 7. Long-term Environmental Goals: Continuous air quality monitoring 								

	<p>supports broader environmental and climate goals by tracking progress in reducing emissions and improving air quality over time. This is particularly important in the context of efforts to combat climate change and promote sustainability.</p> <p>In summary, monitoring air quality along the A5306 road in Sefton is essential for safeguarding public health, ensuring regulatory compliance, informing urban planning, raising community awareness, and contributing to long-term environmental goals. It plays a crucial role in creating a healthier and more sustainable community.</p> <p>In terms of Public Health Protection, how is the health of communities living along the A5306 currently being monitored by the Director of Public Health for Sefton and if there is monitoring where is the data?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of the health of a discrete population such as those communities living alongside this stretch of the A5306 would require collation of data from individuals living within specified postcodes. This is not currently within the powers or routine remit of Directors of Public Health. • The main means of monitoring health in these communities is through their contacts with primary and secondary health services – GPs, clinics and hospitals. Information from GP profiles, produced and published by the Department of Health and Social Care, includes health data about populations served by GP practices that are situated near to the A5036. Some other health data is extracted from NHS data, e.g. hospital admissions for heart disease, and is can be viewed at ward level or within smaller areas called middle super output areas on the DHSC local profiles dataset. Additional health data, which is relevant to understanding the health of communities who live around the A5036 is available from reports within Sefton's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. • These sources of data were used to inform decisions about where to establish a respiratory health improvement intervention focusing on non-medical ways of lowering health risks associated with chronic respiratory problems. The pilot phase originally focused on Derby and Linacre wards, which have high rates of lung and heart disease. Subsequently, the programme has been extended to cover areas which fall within the fifth most deprived within national rankings according to the index of multiple deprivation. This reflects the fact that exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollution tends to be higher in areas of overall high deprivation, particularly in urban areas. • Sefton council has an Air Quality Action Plan in place with a wide range of actions to reduce air pollution across the borough and in the two Air Quality Management Areas on the A5036. These include, Comprehensive Air Quality Monitoring, a HGV Booking System to improve movement of HGVs in and out of the Port of Liverpool, and improvements to traffic management and priorities at junctions to reduce congestion and standing traffic. In addition, we have invested more than £10m to improve walking

	<p>and cycling facilities and junction design to reduce traffic and congestion. Joint work with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to identify, investigate and take action against HGVs emitting unacceptable levels of pollution, planning conditions requiring actions to mitigate air quality impact from developments and encourage workplace travel plans, tree planting to combat pollution, educating and advising people on simple actions they can take to reduce emissions. These are just a few examples on how we are working to improve air quality.</p> <p>We acknowledge that this is a really important issue for residents and we will keep people informed as plans progress.</p>
15	Question from Councillor Doolin to Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways (Councillor Veidman)
	Subject : A565 Increase in Traffic
	<p>In relation to the A565 road between Princess Road Flyover and Crosby Village, I've been informed by council officers that there is a projection that traffic will increase along that road in the coming years.</p> <p>Can the data to support this projection please be supplied?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The appropriate Service Manager has been unable to determine which officers Cllr Doolin has spoken to.</p>
16	Question from Councillor Shaw to Leader of the Council (Councillor Atkinson)
	Subject: Expected Savings Needed for 2025/2025 Budget Shortfall
	<p>A report in the local press this week talks of Sefton Council having a "£59 million black hole" and needing to make "significant savings which will mean cuts to vital services across the borough"?</p> <p>Based on current information, what approximate level of additional savings does the Leader anticipate will be needed in 2025/26 in order to balance the books?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>I would refer Councillor Shaw to item 11 on this agenda rather than a Press release. Item 11 is the Medium Term Financial Plan that sets out the Councils financial position.</p>
17	Question from Councillor Sammon to Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways (Councillor Veidman)
	Subject: Solar Panels on New Build Homes
	<p>I notice that we do not see many solar panels on new build homes in Sefton. They are becoming increasingly important due to rising energy bills and the</p>

	<p>climate crisis. Many people are paying for them to be installed shortly after they have bought their new home which costs more than if they were done whilst the property is being built. What can Sefton Council do to encourage developers to install solar panels on new builds?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The Council's Local Plan includes a policy that looks to create energy efficiency in new developments - <u>Policy EQ7 'ENERGY EFFICIENT AND LOW CARBON DESIGN'</u></p> <p>It sets out that:</p> <p>Major developments should incorporate measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions where practicable, through one or more of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Making the most of natural solar gain through site and building layout and design, b. Energy efficiency measures, including for existing buildings, c. Use of low carbon, decentralised and renewable energy, d. Provision of infrastructure for low emissions vehicles. <p>Housebuilders could therefore provide solar panels to meet this policy if they wish.</p> <p>It is the Council's intention to review this policy when the next Local Plan is produced.</p>
18	<p>Question from Councillor Lloyd-Johnson for Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways (Councillor Veidman)</p>
	<p>Subject: Claims against Sefton for Defective Pavements</p>
	<p>Over the last 5 financial years, how many claims have been made against Sefton Council for injuries suffered as a result of uneven, broken or otherwise below standard pavements?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The following claims have been made for injuries sustained as a result of defective footways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apr-19 to Mar-20 66 • Apr-20 to Mar-21 46 • Apr-21 to Mar-22 52 • Apr-22 to Mar-23 57 • Apr-23 to Mar-24 54
19	<p>Question from Councillor Lloyd-Johnson for Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways (Councillor Veidman)</p>

	Subject: Complaints Regarding Telecommunications Works
	Council will be aware of many complaints which have arisen from the telecommunications work being carried out by Wingnut Utilities, on behalf of Virgin Media, what is being done to alleviate these issues?
	Response: Highway officers continue to monitor works and have recently met on site and in the office with Virgin Media and their contractor to discuss a number of concerns over the quality of their works. Trial holes have been arranged to check compliance on previously completed reinstatements and further meetings will be arranged once the results of these are known. Progression of new works will be dependent on officers being confident that suitable measures have been put in place to manage compliance going forward.
20	Question from Councillor Evans for Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)
	Subject: Cost White House Reopening and Conversion
	Can the Cabinet Member please disclose the costs incurred in redeveloping The White House, firstly for its re-opening in 2023 and again for its conversion to a community space in 2024?
	Response: There was no cost to the Council of refurbishing the White House in 2023. The refurbishment was funded by Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited. The new tenant has led on and funded current (minor internal) alterations to the White House. The Southport Business Recovery Fund is available to support businesses who have incurred unanticipated costs following the events of 29th July 2024. This may include certain relocation costs, but these are being finalised at the time of writing.
21	Question from Councillor Evans for Cabinet Member for Corporate Services (Councillor Howard)
	Subject: Live Streaming
	Can the cabinet member please confirm when live streaming of meetings will be implemented?
	Response: The installation of the necessary equipment commenced in Bootle Town Hall this week and will be undertaken in Southport Town Hall in the week commencing 2 nd December 2024. Thereafter staff will then undertake training and a plan will be made to roll out the streaming of meetings in the New Year.
22	Question submitted by Councillor Brodie Browne to the Cabinet Member

	for Children, Schools & Families (Councillor Roscoe)
	Subject : Educational Health and Care Plans
	How many Educational Health and Care plans which are subsequently approved have taken more than 20 weeks in Sefton to be granted?
	<p>Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a national target for all local authorities to complete and issue Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) within 20 weeks. In Sefton the compliance within the 20-week timeframe currently sits at 43% for the year. The national compliance rate stands at just over 50%.- (Calendar year, not academic year) • June's compliance was 57% and July's compliance was 45%. August's compliance was 52% and September was 57%. October was 68% • The trajectory for EHCP 20-week compliance is on target for a year end 60% average.
23	Question submitted by Councillor Brodie Browne to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills and Deputy Leader (Councillor Lappin)
	Subject : Impact of Train Cancellations on Southport Visitor Economy
	<p>The target audience for day visitors to Southport are those within a 90-minute journey time. A key transport route is the northern line between Southport and Manchester etc. Trains on this line have been frequently cancelled and travellers have been advised not to travel on some days.</p> <p>Is the council monitoring the number of cancellations and the impact on the visitor economy?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The Council is aware that the Northern Line between Southport and Manchester continues to underperform with far too many cancellations. These cancellations have taken place in key times such as The Southport Air Show and the peak summer season impacting on visitors coming to Southport. In partnership with Southport BID the Council has access to footfall data on Chapel Street that it monitors regularly to help assess the performance of the town. Train performance data is also published by Northern Trains and the ORR. However, we do not have the resources to continually track third party data. It is hoped and expected that the service improves to help support the Southport recovery.</p>
24	Question submitted by Councillor Thompson to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)
	Subject: Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre, Sandbrook Way
	Can the Cabinet Member provide any update on plans to regenerate Ainsdale

	<p>Neighbourhood Centre, Sandbrook Way, Ainsdale?</p> <p>The last briefing I received (July 2024) simply confirmed this site remains a priority for the Council. I understand the council's Regeneration and Property Teams are continuing to try and acquire the outstanding ownerships remaining on the site to bring it all under Council control (as originally agreed) whilst also exploring several developer enquiries for the site following a marketing exercise undertaken last year.</p> <p>I am aware there have been some "expressions of interest" this year from several retail developers. Can the Cabinet Member confirm the percentage of properties now under Council ownership and do we now have a viable development proposal for this site?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>Of the 23 leasehold interests that are to be acquired at Sandbrook Neighbourhood Centre, the Council has been successful in acquiring 13, with Legal recently being instructed to complete a further acquisition. 57% of the interests have therefore been acquired.</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing with a proposed developer for the site, but these are still in the early stages.</p>
25	<p>Question from Councillor Shaw for Leader of the Council (Councillor Atkinson)</p>
	<p>Subject: Changes to Employer National Insurance Contributions</p>
	<p>The report to this Council Meeting on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 to 2027/28 states in paragraph 2.11 that</p> <p>"It has also been confirmed that funding has been set aside to protect local government from our changes to employer National Insurance Contributions, and the impact they will have on their direct staffing costs."</p> <p>In relation to that statement in paragraph 2.11:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the estimated additional cost to Sefton Council in 2025/26 in relation to the increased cost of Employers National Insurance as regards direct staffing costs? 2. What is the comparable estimated additional cost to this Council in 2025/26 in relation to the increased cost of Employers National Insurance as regards indirect staffing costs of "bought in" services in the fields of adult and childrens social care. 3. In relation to the additional cost in 1. above, is it clear whether the "funding set aside" is within the additional funding to local government announced by the Chancellor on 30th October 2024, or additional to it? 4. In relation to the additional cost in 2. above, is there any indication from the

	Government of how this is to be funded by Sefton Council, assuming care providers pass through the additional cost to councils purchasing care?
	<p>Response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. £2.9m-councils are advised that funding has been set aside for this2. This work is ongoing and needs to be informed by final central government guidance3. This funding has been set aside so is in addition4. The autumn budget was not a local government specific budget or announcement and this detail was not contained within it