

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Paul Tweed	Corporate Support Services and Performance	December 2012

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

A. Operational Issues

1. A full case load of disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work issues are being progressed and this includes delivery of a comprehensive personnel service to schools.
2. Detailed preparation work associated with statutory pension scheme changes known as Auto Enrolment is well advanced. Alongside this the transfer of Public Health functions and staff to the Council will occur on 1st April 2013.
3. Officers continue to regularly meet with the trade unions on all matters including the impact of budget reductions and restructuring exercises.

B. Pay & Grading Review/Equal Pay

4. Approximately 215 JE appeals remain to be processed. These figures relate to 120 separate roles. Some additional work is being carried out to resolve outstanding appeals that relate to Academy School staff.
5. The table below provides a brief analysis of the equal pay cases that have been submitted and that are being processed by Personnel Department.

Cases and dates submitted	Total number of individual Employment Tribunal Equal Pay cases submitted against the Council	Cases Settled	Cases outstanding
From February 2007 to January 2011	513	501	12
From February 2011 to March 2011	31	18	13
From April 2011 to May 2012	147	7	140
Received August 2012	150	0	150

C. Establishment Control, Pensions, Payroll & HR Transactional Services

6. Regular Client meetings are continuing with the objective of improving processes and data quality.
7. The Pensions Officer is continuing to work closely with the Transformation team and Personnel Officers to provide the necessary redundancy/pension information.
8. The Council has been given their Auto Enrolment staging date of 1st April 2013, by the Pensions Regulator and the Commissioning Officer and Pension Officer have set up a working group, which includes staff from Personnel, Finance and arvato. The Council is working closely with arvato to ensure correct process is implemented.
9. The Establishment Control Panel is now embedded and occurs every 2 weeks, to consider requests to release vacancies and approve any changes to the Establishment held in ResourceLink. All changes to the Establishment are being mapped by the Council and arvato to ensure correct procedures are followed.
10. The roll out of MyView continues and all employees with a Sefton Outlook email address now receive an e-payslip and will in the near future claim their expenses via MyView. Corporate Commissioning and Corporate Support Services are already claiming their expenses via MyView.
11. The Council has to implement Real Time Information (RTI) to comply with HM Revenue & Customs. This will be done early in 2012/13 financial year.

D. Health Unit

12. The tendering process for the Occupational Health Contract has now concluded. Formal offers have been sent and accepted by the new service providers.

From 1st January 2013 services will be provided by:

- Occupational Health Physician – Healthwork Ltd
 - Physiotherapy – Southport and Formby Physiotherapy Clinic
 - Counselling – Compass
 - Psychotherapy – Compass
13. In addition to the above the current service provider for Counselling (AB Counselling) will be retained for some of the existing cases and on an ad hoc basis.
 14. As there will be new providers for all four Lots of the contract the Health Unit is working to ensure contract meetings are set up so that there is as little disruption to the service as possible. There may need to be some changes to the way in which the service is administered in future but hopefully these will be minimised

wherever possible. Meetings for Counselling, CBT and Physiotherapy have already been undertaken and one for Occupational Physician services is scheduled for 4 December 2012.

15. The Unit has been working closely with HR to set up and agree service level agreements with schools for occupational health provision. Secondary schools have indicated that they will be happy to purchase an all inclusive service however negotiations with primary schools are ongoing. It is hoped that these will be concluded as soon as possible but no later than March 2013.

E. PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Learning and Development

16. A range of learning and development continues to be delivered across the Council, Partners and the wider social care sector. Since April 1st 2012, in total, 4,614 places have been provided. Adult and Children's Social Care Providers including VCF and Partner Organisations took up 2,258 places on courses such as Think Family Safeguarding and a range of sector specific training, whilst 2,356 places were taken up by Council staff. "Planning for the Future" sessions have been attended by 12 staff that may be potentially at risk of redundancy or are considering retirement.
17. **Public Health:** To assist in transition and integration, the Learning and Development Team have supported "meet and greet" sessions for public health staff. The first session took place with representatives from the Place Directorate and a session is booked for the People directorate. Liaison is also taking place with regard to incorporating Public Health Learning and Development into the Council systems and relocating library books to one resource at Sefton's Corporate Learning Centre in Ainsdale.
18. The delivery of training for the Integrated Adult System (IAS) continues, 48 mentors have received training across specific areas, 297 people have attended the Overview training and 80 Social Workers have received training on the practical application of the system. To date 158 Children's services staff have received training on the Children in Need (CIN) module and 25 on the ICS Child Protection (CP) module.

Workforce Planning and Organisational Development

19. Work continues to support the implementation of service redesign across Children's and Adult's Social Care including the revision of Job Descriptions. A number of Manager Consultation events have been facilitated for Adult Social Care. Based on the outcomes of the earlier consultation events, Children's Services have agreed and launched Vision and Values statements that apply not only to Council employees but to the wider Children's workforce. Training has begun on the first of the Evidence Based Assessment Tools; up to 300 practitioners will be trained before the end of March 2013.

20. The Council wide Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was made available for completion on the Intranet. The completion period has been extended to the 30th November. Once all the information has been gathered a Workforce Learning and Development Plan will be produced and costed. Delivery of bespoke Customer Care and Equalities training has taken place as a pilot with employees from Cemeteries and Crematoria.

21. **Cheshire and Merseyside Social Work Partnership:** Sefton continues to Chair and facilitate the Partnership Board meetings and the various subgroups. Since the launch of the ASYE (Assessed Support in Year of Employment) in September, the Partnership continues to plan and present training for the ASYE's and their Supervisors and Assessors across the Partnership. On 30th November 40 ASYE's from across the Partnership received training on "Using Research in Practice" and early in 2013 they will receive a session on writing assignments at MA level. 40 Supervisors will receive 4 half day sessions covering:

- Future Development and the Final Report.
- Giving Feedback and Challenging Performance.
- Reflective Supervision.
- The PCF (Professional Capabilities Framework) and Holistic Assessment.

All sessions will be delivered by our HEI (Higher Education Institute) partners.

22. **Apprenticeships:** Apprenticeship Recruitment has taken place with St Ambrose Barlow High School and support is on going with Cleansing and Holy Family High School to recruit 6 Apprentices.

7 Employees within Cleansing have signed up to an Adult Apprenticeship, the qualification will commence in January 2013.

7 Employees at Crosby Lakeside have signed up to an Adult Apprenticeship within Hospitality and Catering.

Briefing sessions have taken place with employees to inform them of the changes to the Level 3 qualifications from August 2013. From August 2013 all Level 3 qualifications will have to be paid for by the individual or the employer; student loans will be available for individuals to access. If an Advanced Apprenticeship (L3) is suitable we are encouraging employees and their managers to sign up before August 2013.

4 Employees have signed up to a Higher Apprenticeship (L4) within Business Administration.

23. **Skills for Life:** Unison has been successful in drawing down a small amount of funding to support 'skills support within schools for non teaching staff'. An advert has been circulated within all schools for a 6 month secondment to roll out skills

development especially focusing on Skills for Life, Apprenticeships and the recruitment of ULR's (Union Learning Representatives).

A joint application from all the Merseyside authorities has been submitted via NWEO (North Wes Employers to LSIS for consultancy work to support the ongoing skills for life agenda.

24. **NVQ's** – Work with Building Cleaning is still on going with 40 employees having been signed up to a level 2 NVQ.
25. **Preparation to Work Programme:** This programme supports young people Leaving Care and Looked after Children in gaining employability experience, skills and knowledge. Recruitment has taken place for Group 3 and 6 young people started the programme in October. Group 3 are now on Stage 1 of this programme and are being supported by the Leaving Care Team, their mentors and Workforce Planning.

Support Services Team

26. The work of the team is routine mostly and volume based. This continues on a daily basis and most of that which was reported previously remains current.
27. **External Mail Service:** Support Services implemented the use of the business mail advance product from the Royal Mail (Clean Mail) in early May. The intention of using this product was to streamline the outgoing mail so that Sefton can maximise the discounts available to it through Royal Mail and obtain the benefits associated with using this product. Since this date, savings of £3,250 have been generated, which represents an approximate 17% saving on 2nd class postage.
28. **Orange Mobile Phone Contract:** The Orange Mobile devices contract continues to be actively monitored. Work is ongoing in relation to reducing the number of devices/contracts on the estate where applicable. This is achieved through staff leaving the Authority, and/or reviewing whether a device is still required by an existing member of staff, as well as the re-utilisation of phones still in contract through reassignment of the device to new users.
29. The mobile devices contract is due for renewal shortly. As such, Support Services are working in conjunction with the Central Procurement Team in order to obtain the best deal for the Authority. Work is currently being undertaken on reviewing the wider usage profile across the Authority to further target cost reductions. Mobile phone recycling income, generated from the recycling of surplus mobile devices has so far reached £3,185.
30. **Review of Service:** As part of the organisational need to generate £43 million worth of savings, the whole of the Support Services Team have been put forward as a potential saving for 2013/14. A Transformation review has now been undertaken the outcomes from which are still subject to internal consultation.

CORPORATE FINANCE & INFORMATION SERVICES

F. Finance / Budget

36. The Budget Gap of £43m for 2013/14 & 2015/16 is currently identified within Medium Term Financial Plan. Further work will be necessary following the Government's funding announcement in December. In addition to direct Government grant funding, work is ongoing to assess the potential budgetary implications for the Authority regarding the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the Non-Domestic Rates Retention Scheme.
37. A review of alternative investment opportunities for temporarily available cash resources has been undertaken. Whilst the status quo, has been agreed for the present time, the opportunity to invest some resources over slightly longer time periods (and hence slightly better returns) has been taken. The Council's adviser Arlingclose is comfortable with this approach. Further opportunities to invest in other financial institutions are also being assessed;
38. The Department has been heavily involved in assisting Children's Services and the Schools Forum in taking forward Government decision to introduce the new School Funding Reform: next steps towards national funding formula which will be implemented from April 2013.
39. A major consultation exercise was undertaken with all schools to discuss possible funding changes to existing funding models and the local authority was required to produce new model funding formulae for both the primary and secondary school sectors using prescribed Government criteria.
40. Work is still continuing in support of funding for Early Years education and Special Needs provision and should be completed by December 2012.
41. The Financial Management Team is currently reviewing the systems and processes we currently use to support Service Departments with the budget monitoring and control responsibilities. Staff have been consulting / engaging Service Managers and budget holders on possible improvements that will help give managers more effective financial support. The first stage of this process is due for implementation for the November budget monitoring.
- 41.a. The Department is also heavily involved in assisting Adult Social Care with the implementation of the new Integrated Adult System (IAS) / liquid logic. There has been a delay in the system going live due to migration of data issues, which have delayed testing of the system. The new care management system will be used to identify the needs and support of all Adult Social Care clients and also any financial commitments to the Council. The system is also intended to be rolled out to include all support for Children's Social Care clients in the next financial year.

G. Client Unit (Management of arvato contract)

ICT:

42. arvato has presented an initial proposal regarding a secondary data centre. SMBC's preferred option is for arvato to set up an arrangement with a new, locally-based venture called The Vault, and arvato is firming up the relevant details & costings for an updated proposal, expected in early December.
43. The corporate rollout of Office 2007 is progressing well; over 2000 PCs have been updated, and the rollout is due to complete before the Christmas shutdown.
44. The Adult Social Care PC refresh has now been completed within the required timescales, with circa 400 devices either upgraded or replaced.
- 44a. arvato is finalising plans and timescales for the final phase of the Microsoft migration programme, which will see the replacement of legacy Novell servers with a new Microsoft environment.
45. **Customer Contact:**
Self service PC's are now available in Bootle and Southport enquiry offices. A small stream of customers are using this facility to complete on line application for Job seekers Allowance.
46. **Benefit Service:**

A report will be submitted for 13th December 2012 Cabinet outlining the proposal for the Local Council Tax Reduction scheme and proposed changes to council tax discounts and exemptions for unoccupied properties.

The Service is currently working with the Registered Social Landlords identifying claimants who will be impacted by the Welfare Reform changes which take effect from April 2013. Lead Officers are also working with the Council's Welfare Reform working group and providing data to help mitigate the impact on benefit payment cuts.
47. **Revenues Service**

A number of business rate payers have opted to take advantage of regulations allowing them to defer part of their rates bills to 2013-14 and 2014-15. As at 31st August 2012 the value of these deferrals is £311k of liability that will not be collected in the current year. This amount can be taken into account in returns to the Government after year end.

48. **Transactional HR & Payroll**

Working groups continue to meet to ensure the implementation of statutory requirements for Auto-enrolment and HMRC Real Time Information are both on target for April 2013.

49. **Accounts Payable**

Work continues to encourage customers onto BACS payments from cheques.

H. Procurement

50. The Risk & Audit Service Manager (Chief Internal Auditor) is continuing to act as Interim Manager of the Service.

51. A Procurement Toolkit has been developed; this was fully funded by the Low Emissions Partnership, who are a national group developing and sharing best practice on low emissions. The Procurement Toolkit will be launched in the next month and is designed as a guide that will support users through the procurement process at whatever level they need. If adopted across the Council it will make procurement more effective and reduce risks to the Council from incorrectly managed procurement exercises.

52. A number of procurement collaborations have taken place across the Mersey sub region and Heads of Procurement are continuing to look at opportunities for collaborative working.

Audit & Risk Service

53. The Chief Internal Auditor has responsibility for Risk & Resilience across the Authority; this includes responsibility for Insurance, Health & Safety, Emergency Planning and Risk.

54. Internal Audit

The Internal Audit Service continues to implement improvements in working and reporting practices. The latest progress report for work undertaken between April and November 2012 is reported to the Audit & Governance Committee on 12th December 2012. There are no significant issues arising from the reviews completed in that period.

Internal Audit are now operating a mutually beneficial shared service arrangement with Warrington BC in where IA provide Computer Audit Services to

Warrington and Warrington provide expertise to Sefton in regard to the robustness of our approach to Fraud.

Internal Audit have produced 2 reports following investigations into Internet Misuse / Abuse, these reports have resulted in 2 staff resigning / employment terminated following disciplinary.

Internal Audit continues to receive positive feedback from Clients with 90% of clients rating the service Very Good / Good.

55. **Risk & Resilience**

Insurance

The review of Insurance is continuing with a consultant providing an independent review of the service; a report will be provided to Members on completion of the review. The review of all liability claims is ongoing and issues raised as necessary via the Risk Management Group.

There is currently no significant increase in claims for Sefton against a market that appears to be increasing and the Team continue to improve the Council's defensibility of claims, an example of this is a recent Motor Claim being awarded in our favour during the previous month.

56. **Health & Safety**

The first meeting of the Health & Safety Forum / Committee is set for January 2013, this is to be chaired by Margaret Rawding – Head of Corporate Finance & ICT. A revised Health & Safety Policy will be presented to the first meeting for discussion and approval. Further a strategic and operational Health & Safety Audit Plan is being developed, this will be agreed by the Health and Safety Forum / Committee and also presented to Audit & Governance in March 2012 for approval.

57. **Emergency Planning**

The Emergency Planning Team have continued to be heavily involved in the response and recovery in regard to the flooding incidents that occurred on Monday 24th September in Sefton, particularly in Maghull. They have been involved in a multi agency response, met humanitarian needs and supported residents throughout the continuing recovery process.

The incident management has also been reported via the Corporate Risk Management Group and some valuable lessons learned.

I. CORPORATE LEGAL DEPARTMENT

58. Legal Support Provided to the People Directorate

Recent cases include :

- Advice to the Sefton Community Safety Partnership on the appropriateness of commencing a Domestic Homicide Review.
- Participation in the Local Safeguarding Children's Board management review following a serious incident involving a child which may pose questions about inter-agency working.
- Membership of the Public Health Transition Group with particular reference to the provision of advice concerning complex contractual issues.
- The provision of advice on to the Council's responsibilities to a number of service users residing in the borough who where originally from areas outside the borough.
- Advice to a meeting of the Sefton Adult Safeguarding Board under its Allegations Against Professionals Protocol.

59. Legal Support Provided to the Place Directorate

Current projects include:

- Recent benefit fraud prosecution where Defendant was summonsed for 3 offences of furnishing false documents with a view to obtaining Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Income Support. Defendant had failed to declare substantial property ownership and savings. He entered guilty pleas and was sentenced to 12 weeks in custody.
- Successfully obtained a highways stopping up order in the Magistrates' Court in respect of the Connolly Centre.
 - Advising on legal aspects of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Community Right to Challenge, Neighbourhood Planning and Local Plan for Sefton.
- Advising in connection with proposed Litherland "at grade" canal bridge.
- >Advising in connection with ERDF Funding Agreement with Liverpool City Council.
- Two sets of Judicial Review proceedings in relation to HMRI Project. Awaiting outcome of hearing on 27/11/12 in respect of first set. Second set due to be heard in London on 28/01/13.
- Continuing work on Thornton-Switch Island Link Road Project. Preparing for Public Inquiry in early 2013.

60. Corporate Legal Advice

- A range of legal advice is given in relation to the Transformation agenda to ensure that decisions are legally sound including the library review, reductions and cessation in a number of Council services
- Advice is being provided on new secondary legislation concerning the transparency of executive decision making processes within the Council as it affects both Member and Officer decisions
- Work continues with colleagues from Governance and Civic services to review the constitution. In particular work is being undertaken to review the Member Code of Conduct following a resolution of Council in April 2012. Work is also being undertaken to review Finance and Contract Procedure Rules. The outcome of the reviews will be considered at Audit and Governance Committee in December 2012 and March 2013.

J. CORPORATE COMMISSIONING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CO-ORDINATION

Strategic Partnerships

61. Operations Board

The meeting in October gave full consideration to the issue of gun and gang crime in Sefton; the Operations Board had a presentation from Detective Chief Superintendent Paul Richardson Head of Matrix around the Merseyside context and strategy, colleagues from Liverpool and Knowsley shared their experience and practice, and partners considered how we need to respond to this issue from a Sefton perspective

It was agreed that responsibility be delegated to SSCP to develop appropriate mechanisms for Sefton's strategic and operation response to issues of gun and gang crime

62. Area Partnerships

4 out of 5 Area Partnerships have met and agreed Terms of Reference and their priorities, identified as follows:

Sefton East

- Health focussing upon access to services and issues of obesity
- Anti Social Behaviour focussing on youth behaviour and youth disorder building in links across the border with Knowsley

South Sefton

- Welfare Reform focussing upon food and money elements
- Gang and gun crime but with consideration of wider community safety issues in the area

Formby

- Safety primarily low level ASB and looking at what is available for young people to engage them, also Beachsafe which is an ongoing initiative

- Health and well being with a focus on the ageing population and issues around social isolation and support via VCF organisations in the area. Also problems around binge drinking and further exploration of this

Southport

- Housing focussing upon private sector rental market
- Health and wellbeing with need for further consideration of specific issues within this
- Jobs and prosperity looking at the retail and tourism industry as one

63. Safer Communities Partnership

Meeting in December focussed upon the issue of gun and gang crime and focused upon developing Sefton's strategic and operational response. Detective Chief Superintendent Paul Richardson gave a presentation on the Merseyside context and strategy and focused in upon what the issue meant for Sefton. Partners then considered what is already in place and what else needed to be put in place to ensure an effective response to this issue. The following actions were agreed:

- A small executive of the SSCP be established to determine the local strategy and action plan
- A Sefton MARGG be set up to be chaired by the Police
- Terriers play to be booked for March 2013 with local venues to be determined
- A series of community action weeks be planned
- Further joint working be undertaken with Merseyside colleagues around this issue

A third Domestic Homicide Review has been initiated

Hate Crime MARAC has responded to 6 referrals (1 race and 5 disability related) with support and advice for victims

64. Neighbourhood Co-ordination

Key headlines within this period:

- Successful Halloween and bonfire period with the partnership delivering a range of positive outcomes:
 - 54.16 tonnes of combustible material removed
 - Overall reduction in deliberate secondary fires/bonfires by 23.4% based on 2011
 - Police reporting a third less ASB incidents
- Community Action Week planned for Linacre Bridge to commence on 10 December. Full involvement of partners and the approach has been developed to encourage strong community engagement
- Anti-Social Behaviour has delivered the following over the last 3 months
 - 2 x Youth CrASBO's obtained from Sefton Magistrates Court for Ford / Netherton and SONO Wards.
 - 1 x Youth CrASBO obtained at Sefton Magistrates Court for Linacre & Derby Ward.

- 1 x Youth and 2 x Adult CrASBO's obtained from Sefton Magistrates Court for Litherland ward.
- 1 x Section 21 order applied for Manor Ward.
- 1 x Adult CrASBO obtained at Sefton Magistrates Court for Dukes Ward.
- 1 x Premise Closure Order to be taken to Sefton Magistrates Court for Dukes Ward.
- Youth Care Home work in Birkdale ward.
- 5 x CrASBO applications pending at Sefton Magistrates Court for Ford / Netherton, Derby & Dukes Wards.
- A number of Christmas trees have been installed across the Borough for the festive Period. There have been local organised switch ons in Crosby, Formby, Maghull, Waterloo, Seaforth and Southport. (Hightown to follow). The switch ons in Waterloo and Seaforth were both hugely successful with a great resident turnout and included community choir performances, School performances and local stalls provided by businesses. Support was given to both which were organised by Crosby Housing Association and Sing Plus provided Santa's grotto and Father Christmas!
- Work is scheduled to take place on Cheshire Lines week commencing Monday 10th December 2012, to install two chicane barriers, in order to stop illegal motorbike activity on Cheshire Lines, to the rear of Sefton Meadows. Illegal motorbike use in the area has been a persistent problem for residents for a number of years, but Sefton Council, working alongside Merseyside Police and Sustrans (as local land owner) with funding from Area Committee have organised the installation of barriers, thereby preventing illegal motorbike on the bridleway

65. Domestic Violence (Vulnerable Victims Advocacy team)

27 cases considered at MARAC in December

66. Other areas of work

Successful delivery of welfare reform and foodbank workshop sessions; significant progress is being made on rolling out Sefton's network of food banks

K. Democratic Services

67. In addition to the provision of administrative support for meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Area Partnerships, the Section has organised and clerked school admission appeal hearings involving 6 applications for 5 High Schools and 22 applications for 19 Primary schools during the period from 6 October to 6 December 2012. In addition, arrangements were made for a further 4 appeals to be heard during this period, which were subsequently withdrawn.

68. Members of the above Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services) Committee agreed to review the Troubled Families programme later in 2013 with a view to initiating a review at that time. The Director of Young People and Families advised the Committee that it would be useful for his Department to work

closely with one or two Committee Members on Falling School Numbers with a view to reporting back to the Committee. Councillor Hands and Parent Governor Representative, Mrs. S. Cain were nominated for this purpose.

69. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Health and Social Care) deferred consideration of a topic for review to the next meeting of the Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Performance and Corporate Services) deferred consideration of a review investigating Asset Management until January 2013.
70. In relation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services), at the time of writing this report the Employment Development and the Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group had met twice. They have made some good progress in drafting the Scoping Document, establishing the Terms of Reference and Objectives of the working Group. They have also interviewed expert witnesses from Sefton@work and intend to invite expert witnesses to each meeting in order that good progress is continued.
71. A Joint Review between Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) and (Children's Services) has been initiated to investigate NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). At the time of writing this report the Group has met once and the Scoping Document is at draft stage. This Working Group will work closely with the Employment Development and the Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group to ensure that no duplication of work occurs as the themes do overlap. The intelligence gathered will be shared between both Working Groups in order that time is spent in the most efficient way.

Civic & Mayoral Services

72. All first aid trained Civic Attendants and Supervisors have now been re-trained for the use of defibrillator machines within Civic Buildings..The training was provided by the Northwest Ambulance Service free of charge and this continues to enhance our first aid provision within our public buildings.
73. The Remembrance Sunday Services across the Borough took place on the 11th November. The Mayor attended Kings Garden's Bootle, The Leader of the Council attended the Cenotaph, Southport. All organisational aspects of the Services went well, with de-brief meetings carried out by the Head of Service with the Royal British Legion and Police. Any operational issues have been noted and changes made within the operational plans for 2013. The Mayor's HM Armed Forces Reception was held in October and was well attended.
74. The new Polish Consul General visited the Borough in late October. The Mayor, Chief Executive, Honorary Ambassadors of Gdansk and the Head of Civic & Mayoral Services met the Consul General in Southport and a wreath was laid at the Polish War Memorial.

75. The annual toy appeal was launched in November and toys continue to be donated at Southport and Bootle Town Hall receptions.

Electoral Services

76. The Electoral Services team have now completed the Police and Crime Commissioner elections and are now undertaking all evaluation work and post election procedures. The New Year will bring the second phase of the postal vote refresh programme for all existing postal voters from 2008 after which the team will start initial preparations for the move towards Individual Electoral Registration.

L. Place Directorate

77. The proposed disposals of sites at Runnells Lane, Thornton, Kirwan House/139 Marshside, Southport, Land at Hillary Drive, Crosby and the former Sefton Resource Centre, Kilnyard Road Crosby were reported and approved by Cabinet Member at his briefing on 12th November and the decisions subsequently reported on the Intranet
78. The proposed disposal of a council owned, vacant development site off Farriers Way, Netherton to support the development of a joint Police and Fire Brigade control centre on the Fire Authority's existing HQ site on Bridle Way was approved by Cabinet Member at his briefing on 12th November and the decision subsequently reported on the Intranet.