

THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON FRIDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2013. MINUTE NOS 94 AND 95 ARE NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL-IN".

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE ON THURSDAY 31ST JANUARY, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor P. Dowd (in the Chair)
Councillors Cummins, Fairclough, Hardy, Maher,
Moncur and Tweed.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Booth, Papworth and Weavers.

91. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received from Members of the Cabinet. Mr P. Morgan (Strategic Director – People) declared an Other Interest in Minute No. 94 as he is a Director of the Connexions Charity.

93. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 December 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

94. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME AND REVENUE BUDGET 2012 - 2015

Further to Minute No. 82 of the meeting held on 13 December 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Transformation Services and Head of Finance and ICT which:

- provided an update on the recently announced local government settlement and concluded that the Council now faced a budget gap of £50.8 million over the next two years. This compared to the previous forecast of £43.7 million.
- provided details of a number of grants which the Council had been notified about after the settlement announcement which helped to mitigate some of the budget gap;

- provided an update on the outcome of consultation on options previously approved for consultation and recommendations on what should now be included in the final two year Budget Plan;
- identified further new budget options and assumptions for consideration and consultation; and
- illustrated how the two year Budget Plan could be balanced within available resources assuming the options identified were approved and implemented.

The report was arranged in a number of parts with associated annexes as indicated below:-

		Annexes	Potential Financial Impact
			£m
Part 1	Provisional Local Government Settlement and impact on the funding gap.	A	7.100
Part 2	Consultation and Engagement Overview	B	-
Part 3	Options previously approved for Consultation	C & D	1.490
Part 4	New Options for Consideration by Cabinet	E	-13.791
Part 5	Two year Budget Plan	F	-
Part 6	Robustness and Risk	-	-
Part 7	Next Steps and Conclusions	-	-

The Leader referred to the revised version of Annex F to the report previously circulated to Members and to the addendum note, setting out the various amendments to the content of the report which had been circulated prior to the start of the meeting.

The Chief Executive indicated that the report was a major milestone in the budget setting process. The resolutions to be made would form the basis of the report to Budget Council on 28 February 2013, which would enable the Council to set its budget. She requested the Cabinet to take into account amongst other things, the consultation and engagement activity to date and the impact and risk associated with each option.

Members of the Cabinet raised questions on the following issues referred to in the report and officer responded to the issues as referred to below:

Page/Paragraph in Report	Question/Response
Page 114 (Councillor Moncur)	Over the last couple of years, the Council has undertaken extensive consultation. Have any other methods used proven to have particular success and what lessons have we learned? Response: The Director of Corporate Commissioning indicated that a number of lessons had been learned over the last few years.

	<p>This year, we had been proportionate and more targeted. All methods have their place and the telephone survey had proven to be very successful. Interest groups had been consulted on the principles of the budget options, with the majority of them being supported. Consultations had been held on issues relating to the Sefton Strategic Needs Assessment with the Voluntary, Community, Faith Sector, who had indicated that they fully understood the issues and problems the Council was facing in dealing with the budget gap.</p> <p>The press had been briefed throughout the budget process and overall, there had been a balanced coverage. The trade unions and staff had been consulted on different issues and the consultation had been and would continue to be robust.</p>
<p>Page 116 (Councillor Moncur)</p>	<p>Can you outline the impacts of the proposed changes to terms and conditions that the Cabinet has been asked to agree?</p> <p>Response: The Director of Corporate Support Services indicated that the changes would impact 3,500 employees. 800 were at the top of their grade; 2,700 at a point within the grade and 1,200 were previously on spot salaries.</p> <p>The Equality Impact Assessments had been shared with the trade unions to demonstrate a gender balance.</p>
<p>Page 117 (Councillor Cummins)</p>	<p>Can you update me on the consultation that has taken place to date with regard to the strategic review of parking services?</p> <p>Response: The Director of Built Environment indicated that consultations had been held with businesses and the retail sector in the North of the Borough and lessons had been learned from that exercise and</p>

	<p>best practice.</p> <p>Officers would liaise with the Sefton Chamber of Commerce and Industry to ensure that businesses throughout the Borough were consulted and consideration would be given in due course to the impact on residents and also the footfall in respect of rented and employment zones as part of the of the comprehensive strategic review.</p>
<p>Page 127 (Councillor Cummins)</p>	<p>Will there be further information provided regarding robustness and risk? If so, will this outline the financial risks that the Council faces and whether the Council has sufficient balances to cover this risk?</p> <p>Response: The Chief Executive indicated that the Council had a legal obligation to consider the report of the Chief Financial Officer (Head of Corporate Finance and ICT) on the robustness of the Council's budget.</p> <p>One of the key issues of risk was the deliverability of the revised services and whether the Council had the capacity to deliver those services. These issues would be fully covered in the Robustness Report.</p> <p>The Chief Executive also indicated that she was confident that the Council would have sufficient balances to manage any future risks. The External Auditor would assess those balances, based on an assessment of risk.</p>
<p>Page 211 (Councillor Tweed)</p>	<p>We currently spend £3.5m on providing support for children with additional needs. How is this money spent? (Option E2.1).</p> <p>Response: The Strategic Director – People, indicated that the complexity of managing the budget of £3.5m was increasing. In addition, support is also provided by the Dedicated Schools Budget.</p>

	<p>The majority of the expenditure was on residential placements, respite care, including overnight stays at two centres and on a range of short breaks. All of the service provided would be personalised to meet the needs of the individual concerned with Direct Payments provided as appropriate.</p> <p>Consultation had been held with young people, families and careers, on the services last year and that consultation would continue and be ongoing.</p>
<p>Page 172 (Councillor Hardy)</p>	<p>Will all Day Care Centres close and what will happen to the Day Centre buildings if the service is remodeled? (Options F3.2/D1.39/D1.41).</p> <p>Response: The Strategic Director – People indicated that the Council commissions a range of services and some of those services were delivered through day centres.</p> <p>Consultations have been held with a representative group of 131 service users who had taken part in the pilot scheme last year and had enjoyed the range of services provided.</p> <p>The level of complexity varied and the Council and service users were looking at different ways of meeting needs. Officers are looking at providing opportunities in a broader range of services and it was anticipated that this would meet the needs of a significant number of service users.</p> <p>Some of the day centre buildings are old and in need of investment. The pilot scheme had indicated that people were not prioritising the day centres due to the environmental problems in the buildings and the range of other services available elsewhere. The Council would work with Sefton New Directions with regard to the future use of the buildings.</p>

<p>Page 183 (Councillor Fairclough)</p>	<p>Given the option to cease the provision of Adult Social Care Community Meals (Option F1.6), how are we working with service users and their carers to support them to access alternative meal provision?</p> <p>Response: The Strategic Director – People indicated that consultations were being held with service users and carer groups. Letters had been sent to all current users of the service and a high percentage had already responded with regard to their individual needs. The Council was working with social care providers to provide direct support to service users.</p>
<p>Page 200 (Councillor Fairclough)</p>	<p>What impact will the changes to the reablement service have on new and current service users (Option D1.43)</p> <p>Response: The Strategic Director – People indicated that the changes to the service would have a beneficial impact. Investment had been made nationally to enhance services which would enable people to regain previous skills they had lost and allow them to cope in their own homes and remain independent. This would reduce the number of people who were dependent on social care.</p>
<p>Page 141 (Councillor Maher)</p>	<p>Option D1.16 – this Option will remove a further 34% for the Schools’ Targeted Intervention Service. Are we confident that the service can be delivered with what is left?</p> <p>The Director of Young People and Families indicated that the School Improvement Service was previously targeted at all schools within the Borough, but the Council now, only works with those schools that need targeted support.</p> <p>Due to Government changes, the Council is no longer responsible for Academies and that a third of our secondary schools</p>

	are now Academies. The Chief Inspector of Schools had recently reported that Sefton was the third highest performing local authority nationally with more than 85% of its primary aged pupils attending good/outstanding schools. As a consequence, he was confident that the remaining budget would meet the needs of any schools that required intervention for targeted support.
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The Leader of the Council (Councillor P Dowd) referred to the proposals set out in Paragraph 4.4 of the report relating to the introduction of a Transition Fund / Invest to Save initiative of £1m, aimed at creating capacity within the community to reduce the reliance on Council resources and services. The Leader also expressed concerns that Government Ministers and a local MP had claimed that local authorities had large balances to finance the budget savings. He called upon all the local MP's to vote against the Government's proposals which affect Sefton's financial settlement.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

Part 1 - Provisional Local Government Settlement and impact on the funding gap

- (1) it be noted that the funding announcements for 2013/14 are subject to Parliamentary approval and that the 2014/15 funding is based on the announcement and the Autumn Statement of 5 December 2012 but is the best available information available and would be subject to change over the coming year;
- (2) it be noted that figures and phasing in the annexes to the report are working assumptions of options to be considered and the figures should not be seen as predetermining any decisions. Some of these options remain subject to consultation, engagement and Public Sector Equality Duty assessment, and any figures indicated were being used to facilitate outline budgetary forecasting only;
- (3) it be noted that the report to Council on 28 February 2013 would include the estimated phasing of the budget options to ensure that the budget can be balanced in 2013/14 and 2014/15;

Part 2 and Annex B – Consultation & Engagement Overview

- (4) the consultation and engagement feedback outlined in Annex B of the report be noted;

Part 3 - Options previously approved for consultation

Public Sector Equality Duty

- (5) it be noted that the detail within the equality analysis report, the consultation feedback and the mitigating actions within each option had been taken into account;

Option F.3 – Recharging grounds maintenance/utility costs for organised junior sports activities

- (6) that option F1.3 be not progressed at this point;

Option D1.26 - Governance & Civic Services – Mayoral services - reduce the function of Mayor to the statutory minimum (that is to Chair the Council meeting)

- (7) that option D1.26 be not progressed at this point;

Terms & Conditions

- (8) that the total savings from the terms and conditions option be reduced from £6m to £3m;
- (9) approval be given to the following measures (subject to further consultation with all recognised trade unions) to achieve a £3m saving over the 2 year period:
- (i) There would be no incremental progression for any employees of the Council (with the exception of any employees who are employed on statutory contracts, i.e. teachers who are centrally employed). All NJC, JNC – HAY, Red Book, Youth Workers - JNC and Soulbury would therefore not have any form of incremental progression in 2013/2014 or 2014/15. This measure would deliver a projected saving of £1.69m in 2013/14 and a further £1.5m in 2014/15. This measure would not apply in schools whose Governing Body controls such matters.
 - (ii) The 4 day shutdown over the Christmas period continues on the current basis, i.e. deductions would continue to apply to employees and management reserves the right for the employee not to work over a shutdown period. This would become a permanent feature within employee contracts; however, the Council retains a discretion to make employees work over the period if needed. The concessionary day no longer applies in any form;
- (10) that authority be given to the Head of Corporate Personnel in consultation with the Trade Unions to utilise the sum of £190k, raised from the freeze in increments, to try and mitigate some of the effect of continuing incremental freezes on the lower paid workers;

Option F1.1 - Non Cancelling PCN for Incorrect Display, D1.31 Parking – Car Parking – On and Off street parking charge increases and the introduction of new on street parking charges

- (11) that a strategic review of parking services be undertaken and the outcome reported to the Cabinet by September 2013;
- (12) it be recommended to the Council that the working assumption associated with the strategic review for budget planning would have a positive impact on the budget gap of £300k and this would not be effective until 2014/15;

Voluntary, Community, Faith Options

- (13) the approach outlined in paragraph 3.5 of the report be approved and it be noted that the working assumption for budget planning would have a positive impact on the budget gap of £940k over the two year period;

Double Rating

- (14) approval be given to the commencement of consultation, as outlined in paragraph 3.6 of the report and it be recommended to the Council that the budget plan includes a working assumption associated with this third option of £180k in 2014/15 i.e. the saving option’s original assumptions have been reduced;

Annex C

- (15) the Council be recommended to give approval to the following actions being taken on the following Options set out in Annex C of the report and Officers be authorised to prepare for the implementation immediately pending final decisions:

Service Area	Ref	Option	Recommended Action
Early Intervention and Prevention	D1.16	Healthy Schools – transfer the function of co-ordination and consultant role to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £60.2k
Children’s Social Care	D1.17	Social Care – Central Management & Support Costs – A restructure and a re-alignment of duties to remaining posts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £100k

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Learning & Support	D1.18	Reduce the School Targeted Intervention team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £260k
Street Scene	D1.19	Building Cleaning – change of frequency in office cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £100k
Environment	D1.20	Trading Standards – staffing restructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £50k
Investment & Infrastructure	C3.1	Re-integration, recommission and restructuring of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £500k
Communications	D1.21	Communications – staffing restructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £40k
Home Improvements	C3.2	Housing Improvement Agency service brought in house	Budget reduction of £37k
Grounds Maintenance	F1.2	Recharging grounds maintenance/utility costs for adult football/sports users/bowlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •to note and agree the contents of the Equality Analysis report • approve that all users of paid-for facilities

			(except juniors) fund the full actual costs of grounds maintenance and utilities associated with their use of the facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note that formal facilities would be withdrawn if costs are not met • Budget reduction of £85k
Cemeteries and Crematoria	F1.4	Increase burial and cremation charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note and agree the contents of the Equality Analysis report • approve the increase in the charge for burials, cremations and associated services as described in the report • Budget re-alignment of £400k
Commissioning	F4.3	Double Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note and agree the contents of the Equality Analysis report • Budget reduction of £33k
Built Environment	D1.30	Pest Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the consultation feedback • approve the introduction of a charge as set out in the report • Budget adjustment of £30k

Annex D - Options previously approved for consultation - Adult Social Care

(16) the Council be recommended to give approval to the following action being taken on the following Adult Social Care Options set out in Annex D of the report and Officers be authorised to prepare for implementation immediately pending final decisions:

Ref	Option	Recommended Budget Saving
D1.14	Assessment & Care Management Teams - Reconfigure teams / skill mix	£208k
D1.15	Reconfiguration of the Supporting People commissioning team.	£186k

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F1.6	Community Meals Subsidy	£200k
F3.2	Remodel day care opportunities	£5.99m
D1.39	Remodel all current day care and transport	
D1.41	Review of Respite Provision	
D1.35	Section 117 After Care Funding	£200k
D1.36	Community Health - Prioritise and undertake reviews of service users to ensure appropriate support	£400k
D1.37	Assistive Technology - Increase use of equipment to ensure users are able to remain in their homes with minimal outside support	£200k
D1.38	Increase charges for a range of services	£564k
D1.40	Recover surplus / unspent direct payment funds at regular and earlier intervals and cease the first year one-off workplace insurance payment	£752k
D1.42	Revise Re-enablement model. Investment of one-off payment of £900,000 from Health will enable more users to go through a re-enablement process, thereby reducing levels of admission to short & long term care	£1.2m
D1.43	Further incremental reductions in housing related support	£500k

Part 4 - New Options for Consideration

Financing Options

- (17) approval be given to the use of the Learning Disabilities and Health Reform and the Small Business Rate Relief Grant to support the financing of the budget;
- (18) approval be given to the use of capital resources to fund the Disabled Facilities Grant contribution of £1m for each of the two years. This use to be the first call on available capital resources in both years;
- (19) that officers continue to identify ways of reducing the expenditure relating to integrated transport and recycling and waste management, including a review of the levy mechanisms for the joint bodies;
- (20) approval in principle be given to the introduction of an opt-in charge for Green Waste collections in 2014, based on the changes in the levy mechanism, referred to in resolution (19) above;
- (21) the Council be recommended to approve an income assumption of £1m in respect of Green Waste collections be made;

Other Adjustments

- (22) the Council be recommended to make a budget planning adjustment of £70k to cover membership of the Local Government Association and

the North West Employers Organisation in 2013/14 and subsequent years;

Service Options

(23) the Council be recommended to give approval to the following actions being taken on the options set out in Annex E of the report and officers be authorised to prepare for the implementation immediately following final decisions:

Service Area	Option	Recommended Action
Learning & Support	To effect a further saving from the retained element of the Connexions Grant. This will include redefining the service provided in terms of information, advice and guidance to young people in context of required legislation.	Budget reduction of £400k
Children’s Services	To review the pathway of support for children with additional needs to ensure that it is more effective and efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mandate officers to commence consultation and engagement processes with service users, families, carers, employees and Trade Unions • Budget reduction of £400k in 2014/15 • note that should further related opportunities and/or significant issues arise they will be reported back to Cabinet
Health & Wellbeing	Management fee reduction - Formby Pool Contract	Total budget reduction of £50k
Public Health Substance Misuse	Reduced service specification	Total budget reduction of £500k
Investment & Infrastructure	Increase income coming from Network Management	Total budget re-alignment of £50k
Economy & Tourism	Southport Theatre Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the intention to invite tenders • note the intention to explore an in-house management option • Budget reduction of £100k in 2014/15

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Economy & Tourism	Withdraw financial support from Southport's Christmas Lights and Christmas trees across the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mandate officers to commence engagement processes with the community Budget reduction of £30.2k
Corporate Support	Further savings from Learning and Development (including departmental budgets)	Total budget reduction of £50k
	Further savings from public health integration	Total budget reduction of £100k
Democratic Services	Reduce the number of Area Committees from 7 to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mandate officers to commence consultation and engagement processes with the employees, Trade Unions and the community representatives Total budget reduction of £20k
	Stop servicing all non-member meetings and those non-standing committees without decision-making powers. Reduce frequency of meetings and review of Overview and Scrutiny Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mandate officers to commence consultation and engagement processes with the employees and Trade Unions Total budget reduction of £51k
Council Tax	Charge 100% on empty properties from month 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> note that extensive consultation has taken place as part of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme Total budget adjustment of £400k

- (24) approval be given to the introduction of a Community "Transition Fund" and to the use of "Invest to Save" initiatives initially for £1m;
- (25) approval be given to the commencement of consultation with the community, partners, employees and Trade Unions with regard to the provision of the Local History service and the volunteer co-ordination activity in parks;
- (26) approval be given to the commencement of a conversation with schools regarding the School Crossing Service;

Part 6 - Robustness and Risk

- (27) that the risks and mitigating actions outlined in the Annexes of the report be noted and taken into account;
- (28) the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT in consultation with the Head of Corporate Legal Services be given delegated authority in appropriate cases to negotiate a settlement within the existing provision held within the accounts; and
- (29) the budget proposals and the two year plan be incorporated into the budget to be recommended to the Council on 28 February 2013.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The recommendations in this report are a significant step in agreeing the 2013/14 budget and a two year budget plan. Despite the increase in the forecast budget gap there are sufficient options and assumptions to meet the forecast budget gap.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Any new options identified by Members, Officers, public or partners would be assessed for feasibility and financial implications and be reported to future meetings as appropriate.

95. COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2013/14 AND NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1 2013-14

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which sought approval to the submission of the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 for 2013/14 to the Department for Communities and Local Government. The report also sought approval of the Council Tax Base for the authority for 2013/14 which would be used to calculate the level of Council Tax in Sefton once the Council's budget for 2013/14 had been determined by the Council on 28 February 2013.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) approval be given to the submission of the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 2013-14 as set out in Annex B of the report to the Department for Communities and Local Government;
- (2) that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 1992 as amended, the amount calculated by Sefton Council as the Council Tax Base for Sefton and for each Parish Area for 2013-14 shall be as follows:

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In the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton	76,516.20
In the Parish of Aintree Village	1,953.05
In the Parish of Formby	8,756.63
In the Parish of Hightown	832.29
In the Parish of Ince Blundell	158.05
In the Parish of Little Altcar	262.31
In the Parish of Lydiate	1,951.38
In the Parish of Maghull	6,256.29
In the Parish of Melling	942.90
In the Parish of Sefton	220.73
In the Parish of Thornton	725.13

- (3) approval be given to the following payments being made to Parish Councils in 2013/14 to compensate them for the cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme:

Parish	£
Aintree Village	12,972
Formby	3,070
Hightown	246
Ince Blundell	311
Little Altcar	226
Lydiate	19,959
Maghull	77,638
Melling	2,470
Sefton	721
Thornton	505
	118,118

- (4) It be noted that the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Performance and Corporate Services) had given their consent under Rule 46 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, for the decision to be taken by the Cabinet at its meeting on 31 January 2013 on the Council Tax Base, to be treated as urgent and not subject to “call in”, because legislation requires local authorities to notify the Department for Communities and Local Government and precepting bodies of the Council Tax Base by no later than 31st January 2013.

Reasons for Decision:

The Council is required to set its Council Tax Bases for 2013/14 and approve its National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 for submission to the Government by 31 January 2013.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

96. WELFARE REFORM

The Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director – People which provided details of the implications of the Welfare Reform Act 2012; how Sefton Council working with key partners can develop a response to Welfare Reform to mitigate where possible any impacts on our communities; and an update on progress so far on looking at the impacts of Welfare Reform.

Members of the Cabinet expressed their concern at the impact of the Welfare Reform changes upon the local community and thanked officers of the Council and partner organisations for their endeavours in mitigating the impact within the limited budgetary resources available.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) the partnership Action Plan approach be endorsed;
- (2) the progress to date on the themes in the Action Plan be noted;
- (3) that further specific workshops on themes and neighbourhoods be held with partners;
- (4) progress reports be submitted to the Cabinet every six months;
- (5) the real energy and commitment from partners and within the Council to mitigate impact where possible be noted and encouraged; and
- (6) a small reference group comprising of the Cabinet Members – Children, Schools, Families and Leisure; Older People and Health and Communities and Environment be established to oversee the direction of Welfare Reform mitigation.

Reasons for the Recommendation:

- (i) To ensure that the Cabinet is fully aware of the potential impacts of Welfare Reform;
- (ii) To enable the Council to set a clear direction and focus for efforts to mitigate impacts of Welfare Reform; and

- (iii) To put in place any mitigating actions if possible and work with partners to do so.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The proposed mitigation measures have been developed in partnership with key organisations such as JobCentre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau, One Vision Housing and the community, voluntary and faith sector. Various options were suggested through the vibrant and well attended partner workshops and these have been considered for both deliverability and viability. The options put forward in the Action Plan are considered to be those that can be progressed with a practical outcome.

97. SOCIAL FUND

The Cabinet considered the report of the Strategic Director – People which indicated that the Government had introduced major changes to the welfare environment through the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and that from April 2013, elements of the discretionary Social Fund budget – Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans would be devolved to upper tier authorities who would then be able to determine how the funding was spent.

The report also set out proposals for the utilisation of the two year funding in Sefton.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) the contents of the report and the options for delivering a Crisis Fund in Sefton, be noted;
- (2) the available grant and the associated expenditure be included in the 2013/14 budget;
- (3) a local scheme be established in accordance with the principles set out in Section 6 of the report;
- (4) approval be given to the utilisation of a proportion of the grant available to establish a number of posts to deal with additional administration and to develop the Voluntary, Community, Faith (VCF) Sector in respect of alternative support; and
- (5) that a reference group comprising of the Strategic Director – People, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools, Families and Leisure, Cabinet Member – Older People and Health and Cabinet Member – Communities and Environment be given delegated authority to allocate £200,000 of the Social Fund to enable resilience and capacity in our communities.

Reasons for Decisions:

To enable the utilisation of the discretionary Social Fund budget – Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Council does not have to produce a Crisis Scheme.

98. SECTION 75 PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN SEFTON COUNCIL AND MERSEY CARE NHS TRUST

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Older People on proposals for the Council to enter into a new Section 75 Agreement with Mersey Care NHS Trust for the provision of mental health services in the Borough and continue the partnership arrangement that already exists and was well established for the joint delivery of these services locally. Re-entering into the agreement would continue to formalise this within legal agreements under the National Health Services Act 2006. The draft agreement was appended to the report as Appendix 1.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) approval be given to the dissolving of the current agreement; and
- (2) the Director of Older People be authorised in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Older People and Health and subject to the final approval of relevant senior officers within Mersey Care NHS Trust, to enter into a new formal agreement for the joint delivery of Mental Health Services as outlined in the report.

Reasons for Decision:

A new Section 75 Agreement between the Council and Mersey Care NHS Trust would provide an updated agreement that would continue to contribute to the Council's Vision of partnership working, most particularly through assisting the Council in achieving its Community Priorities.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

99. PUBLIC HEALTH TRANSITION

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Public Health which provided an update on the public health allocation and the transition process being undertaken to prepare the Council for taking on its new statutory duties for public health from April 2013. It sought approval for the extension of contracts that would be included in the statutory transfer scheme from NHS Sefton, subject to approval by the North West Strategic Health Authority, and for the establishment of the public health structure and transfer of staff in substantive posts through the statutory transfer scheme.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) approval be given to the inclusion of the ring-fenced public health allocation into the 2013/14 and 2014/15 budget;
- (2) the proposed budget profile for 2013/14 be approved;
- (3) approval be given to the submission of a proposal to extend a range of current PCT contracts as outlined in the report and the Head of Corporate Legal Services be authorised to confirm the same to the Strategic Health Authority;
- (4) approval be given to the establishment of the public health structure as outlined in Appendix D of the report;
- (5) approval be given to an application being made for recognition as a training location for the specialist public health training scheme;
- (6) the Head of Corporate Personnel and Director of Corporate Support Services be given delegated authority to make any appropriate arrangements for the transfer of public health employees as required in accordance with the transfer of the public health function which includes, but is not limited to, confirming the Director of Public Health's appointment and all other employees, at a time deemed appropriate by the Head of Corporate Personnel; and
- (7) the final sign-off of the transfer scheme be delegated to the Cabinet Member - Older People and Health.

Reasons for Decisions:

To enable the Council to take on its new statutory duties for public health from April 2013.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

100. SEFTON HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA) PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the provisions of the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) which require all local authorities with a housing obligation to prepare a baseline HECA Plan by 31 March 2013.

The HECA Plan must set out the energy conservation measures and ambitious priorities that the Department for Energy and Climate Change considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in a significant reduction in the energy consumption of all tenures of residential accommodation in our communities.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

That approval be given to the submission of the Sefton HECA Plan to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change.

Reasons for Decision:

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) presents a statutory duty upon the Council to reduce energy consumptions, carbon emissions and reduce fuel poverty. The first period of HECA reporting ended in 2010. The Secretary of State issued revised guidance to Energy Conservation Authorities in July 2012 using powers under section 5(1)(b) of the Act, requiring further plans to be drawn up by March 2013. The further Sefton HECA Plan (2010-2027) meets the requisite policy framework response by setting out long term priorities for Sefton and requires Member Approval.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

101. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the economic, financial and legal feasibility of establishing Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Sefton and proposals for further development work being focussed on Southport, as the first tourism/retail Business Improvement District in the Borough.

Decisions Made:

- (1) the appraisal of potential Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) set out in paragraphs 11-13 of the report be accepted;
- (2) that further BID development work be focussed on the Southport Town Centre/Seafront area, as defined in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (3) that in-principle support be given for the development of a BID in Southport;
- (4) the private sector-led Southport BID Development Group be invited to prepare a Business Plan and submit it to the Council in due course;
- (5) approval in-principle be given to the use of part of Sefton's allocation of £100,000 High Street Innovation Fund for (a) local authority BID start-up costs that cannot be absorbed in any other way by the Council or its contractors, (b) approved development costs of the BID Development Group, and (c) the fixed-term salary and on-costs of a BID Development Officer within the Economy and Tourism Division of the Built Environment Department;
- (6) the Director of the Built Environment be authorised to co-ordinate further research and preparations into a BID for Southport, and a further report with a refined statement of costs to the Cabinet, including a request for High Street Innovation Fund;
- (7) the need for a wider vision and investment prospectus to guide the broader development of Southport be noted; and
- (8) it be noted that the proposal was a Key Decision but had not been included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions. Consequently, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) had been consulted under Rule 26 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution, to the decision been made as a matter of urgency on the basis that it was impracticable to defer the decision until the commencement of the next Forward Plan, because in February 2013, the Cabinet would be receiving a Business Plan for a Business Improvement District in Southport, and Members must have made a prior assessment of the value and importance of BIDs to Sefton in order to determine the application. This assessment had just been completed and is now available for Members to consider.

Reasons for Decision:

To allow preparations for a Business Improvement District Campaign and ballot to commence.

CABINET- THURSDAY 31ST JANUARY, 2013

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not to proceed with a Business Improvement District.