

<b>CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT</b>		
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Period of Report</b>
ClIr Paul Tweed	Corporate Services and Performance	June 2013

## **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT**

### **A. Operational Issues**

1. A full case load of disciplinary, grievance and dignity at work issues are being progressed and this includes those that are related to school employees.
2. Weekly meetings with the trade unions are continuing on all employee related matters including the impact of budget reductions and restructuring exercises.
3. Implementation of Auto Enrolment pension changes took place as planned on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. On the same date 23 Public Health employees TUPE transferred to the Council from the NHS. Preparation for the next TUPE transfer of 80 Capita staff is in progress and will take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

### **B. Pay & Grading Review/Equal Pay**

4. Approximately 170 JE appeals remain to be processed. Progress on driving these numbers down has been restricted by the need respond to several important restructuring exercises.
5. The last report showed that there were 252 outstanding equal pay claims lodged at the tribunal. Since that time 15 cases have been settled and 3 new claims have been received. This leaves a balance of 234 cases to be resolved.

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

6. Regular Client meetings are continuing with the objective of improving processes and data quality. The Council and arvato are currently mapping all the recruitment processes to ensure consistency.
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 now implemented Auto Enrolment on their staging date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. The Council and arvato worked closely together to ensure a smooth implementation and agree ongoing processes and best practice.
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 has now been completed for all employees with a Sefton Outlook email address and they now receive electronic payslips and P60s and also claim their expenses via MyView.
11. The Council has to implement Real Time Information (RTI), in June 2013, to comply with HM Revenue & Customs.
12. Public Health employees, who transferred into the Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 have now been set up on ResourceLink.

**D. Health Unit**

13. The Health Unit is due to relocate to Magdalen House on 16 May 2013. Its new location will be on the second floor, along the corridor from Personnel Department.
14. The philosophy for the move is that it will be easier for Personnel Department to provide administration cover if the Unit is nearer than at present. This should therefore ensure there is little disruption to the service if staffing issues arise. This is especially relevant at present as the Unit has recently lost one member of staff and another is due to commence adoption leave on 20 May 2013.
15. The first contract meeting with the new provider of the Occupational Health Physician service (Healthwork Ltd) took place on 23 April 2013. Both the Council and Healthwork Ltd agreed that they are happy with the current arrangements and no problems have been encountered by either party.

**E. PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE**

16. A range of learning and development continues to be delivered across the Council, Partners and the wider social care sector. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 a total of 8,849 places have been provided.
17. Of this figure, 4,407 places went to Adult and Children's Social Care Providers (including VCF, Partner Organisations and Foster Carers). 119 places went to Sefton Schools staff, predominately accessing Health and Safety training. 4,323 places were taken up by Council staff on a variety of events.

18. IAS Training Programme continued in preparation for the system being implemented, during February and March 2013. 154 staff attended a range of events including Refresher Workshops, Team Manager training and training for staff working in the Emergency Duty Teams
19. In addition to staff previously trained on the ICS system, during February and March training events were held for staff working in the Emergency Duty Teams.
20. Managing Sickness Absence sessions have been delivered to 23 managers to support them in the process.
21. The final cohort of the CMI Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership have now completed and passed their qualification.
22. Welfare Reform Training continues to be offered to support the workforce in Sefton. Bespoke sessions continue to be offered to suit the needs of individual groups of staff and services.
23. Four sessions of Think Family Safeguarding Foundation took place in March. In total 195 delegates attended the majority from the adult care provider sector. This training raises awareness and understanding of safeguarding children and adults and what action we have to take if we have a concern relating to vulnerable children, young people or adults. This is ongoing training and will run again in the new training year of April 2013 to March 2014.
24. In October 2012 two new one day medication courses were introduced, the first being "Assessor's Workshop – Safe Handling of Medicines" and the second "Practical Competencies in Administering Medication". The target audience for the assessor's workshop is managers, supervisors from the adult care sector and for the practical competencies course adult social care staff who administer medication but are not in a supervisory role. Both courses include practical and written assessment that must be passed before a certificate of attendance / achievement to be issued. 61 delegates have attended the Assessors Workshop and 152 delegates have attended the Practical Competencies. After completion of the assessors course delegates are sent additional information / checklists to help them assess the competence of their staff back at their work bases.

#### Workforce Planning and Organisational Development

25. Work continues with the support of the redesign in both Children's and Adult's Social Care. The Learning and Development needs of managers within Children's Social Care have been identified and a plan produced. Team planning sessions are also being developed for the newly configured teams. Adults Social Care is being supported with the development of its new structure and accompanying Job Descriptions. The Early Intervention and Prevention service is also being supported with redesign and the roll out of CAF/eCAF training.

26. The multi-agency training for the Graded Care Profile has been completed and sessions are booked for the Signs of Safety training. This will enable a consistent approach to evidence based-assessment across partner agencies in Sefton.
27. The induction process for public health staff continues to be supported
28. To support Response to Redundancy, a Planning for the Future session was attended by 17 Council staff that may be potentially at risk of redundancy or are considering retirement. Application and Interview Skills sessions have been delivered to 19 Council staff who are at risk of redundancy.
29. **Apprenticeships:** Work has been undertaken with Maghull Town Council to recruit a Horticulture apprentice and with the recruitment of an apprentice at Springwell Park Children's Centre.
30. Workforce Questionnaire: Responses to the questionnaire which was sent out to staff across the Council continue to be collated and acted on. Eligible staff will continue to be signed up to Apprenticeships until August 2013 when the implementation of loans to support learning for anyone over the age of 25 comes in. The Skills Funding Agency will continue to support Apprenticeships at Level 2 for staff over the age of 25 and Level 2 and 3 for those under the age of 25.
31. Preparation to Work programme: This programme supports young people Leaving Care and Looked after Children in gaining employability experience, skills and knowledge. One young person from the current Group 3 has progressed to stage 2 and one progresses to stage 3 this month. Opportunities will be offered to a further 3 young people out of the current funding.
32. Digital Inclusion: Following discussions with Unionlearn and Sefton Adult Learning Service, sessions will be offered in June, to raise awareness of Welfare Reform, these will be open to all staff and the wider community. The focus of the sessions will be to make individuals aware of the IT support that they can access through Unionlearn and Sefton's Adult Learning.

## **CORPORATE FINANCE & ICT**

### **Accountancy**

33. The Division is spending a considerable amount of effort on the closure of the Accounts process in order to have a draft Statement available for audit by 30 June. This is an involved and time consuming exercise which requires the co-ordination with spending departments, Arvato and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

34. The Council's current Financial Management Information system has to be upgraded, as the system provider (Oracle) is de-supporting the current version in October 2014. Initial work has been undertaken to identify the options for the upgrade / replacement of the system. This process will include assessments of current ways of working (in both Arvato and Sefton) to ascertain what improvements (and consequently ongoing savings) can be achieved. However, this will be a long term project involving external system providers, Arvato and spending departments. Once the initial work has been completed, and a way forward has been determined, a report will be presented to Cabinet for consideration.
35. The re-structuring of Financial Management has provided complex issues to resolve and difficult decisions to make. As part of the Revenue Budget saving exercise in 2012/13 Corporate Financial Support Services were required to make a 25% budget reduction. The new structure has been in place for almost one year now and the feedback from service departments is very positive. The Management Team feel that we are winning over of hearts and minds of service staff in supporting new ways of working. There is a positive cultural change to the way services are provided and a recognition of the longer term benefits of improved services for our customers.
36. Finance staff are also working closely with service departments in the monitoring, and providing quality assurance of, the achievement of saving targets approved as part of the budget setting process.
37. The Department continues to be heavily involved in assisting Adult Social Care with the implementation of the new Integrated Adult System (IAS) / liquid logic. Phase 1 of the new care management system has now gone live and will be used to identify the needs and support of all Adult Social Care clients and any financial commitments to the Council. The implementation of Phase 2 will include facilities for direct billing of clients and payments to contractors.
38. The liquid logic system is also being used to support for care management data for all Children's Social Care clients (Integrated Children's System - ICS) although implementation of finance modules for ICS has yet to be approved by ICT Strategy Steering Group.

#### **Client Unit (Management of arvato contract)**

##### **Customer Contact:**

39. Front line staff are dealing with increases in demand due to impact on customers from the Welfare Reform changes and the implementation of the Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme. Calls for April are up by 23% and One Stop Shop enquires are up by 53%. Complaints overall specifically relate to increased wait times for customers enquiring about the welfare reform and council tax reduction issues.

40. Charging for bulky items in the Call centre went live April 03. Work is currently being undertaken relating to pest control and co - mingled recycling.
41. Southport OSS will be closed each Wednesday for the period 6<sup>th</sup> February to 27<sup>th</sup> February for all front line staff to be trained on the Welfare Reform Changes.

#### **Benefit Service:**

42. The Benefit Service received 300 applications in April for discretionary housing payments compared to 34 in April 2012. The Government have allocated £547K to help manage the impact of housing benefit reforms namely the social rented size criteria, benefit cap and local housing allowance reforms.
43. Since 2011 the service has received over 93,000 automated claimant changes from the DWP and HMRC. This has had a significant impact on the service dealing with high level changes and volume increase for benefit claimants. Average time to process new claims is 18 days and 26 days for change of circumstances.

#### **Revenues Service**

44. Reminders have been issued to residents who have not paid their instalments for council tax. In addition there has been a press release advising residents to contact the Council and make arrangements regarding outstanding arrears. Claimant's on council tax reduction scheme are being monitored for payments against small balances and a letter will be issued shortly advising them to contact the Council to avoid court summons and additional costs. 6,000 claimants who may have never previously received a council tax bill have not paid their first instalment.

#### **ICT:**

45. arvato's new head of ICT Mark Graham is now in post. Mark has met with both Margaret Rawding and client unit managers and will be introduced to other senior council managers during the coming weeks.
46. With the assistance of arvato ICT staff, 50 social care workers have successfully been moved to St Peters House as part of the new Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) which will incorporate council, NHS and police staff under one roof. Work is due to start shortly on moving police staff into this location followed by NHS staff.
47. Work on the secondary data centre continues, a report is still to be submitted to seek Cabinet Member approval. If approval is given, implementation will take place by the end of 2013.
48. Work is continuing with regard to the ICT elements of the insourcing of Technical Services from Capita Symonds. This work (ICT) is progressing well.

49. arvato continue to work on the final phase of the Microsoft migration programme. The work is still expected to be completed by the end of September 2013.

### General

50. All 6 work streams have had their KPI's reviewed, a number of changes were made and all were successfully signed off at FISOB on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

### Risk and Audit Service

#### 51. **Internal Audit**

The Audit Plan for 2013/14 has been compiled following consultation with all Departmental Management Teams. The plan has been presented to and agreed by the Audit & Governance meeting at its meeting of March 27<sup>th</sup> 2013.

The Internal Audit Service currently operates to the requirements within the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government 2006, as part of this the service is required to undertake an annual self assessment in order to demonstrate compliance with the Code, any actions arising are compiled into an action plan for the coming year, the assessment is currently being undertaken and will be reported to the meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee in June.

As at April 1<sup>st</sup> 2013, the Code of Practice will be replaced with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). There are a number of requirements within the Standards that the service is required to comply with and the service will be working towards attainment of compliance by the end of the financial year 2013/14.

#### 52. **Risk & Resilience**

##### ***Insurance***

The independent review of insurance has been completed and a report produced, an action plan is to be compiled from that report in order to outline the developments for the team over the next 12 months. A revised structure will now be developed and consultation undertaken.

The tender process for all Insurances, e.g. liabilities, non injury damage, claims handling etc. is in progress, the renewal date for the Contracts are 29<sup>th</sup> September 2013, the intention is to have a long term agreement and the tender will stipulate 3 years plus an option to extend for 2 further years.

##### ***Health & Safety***

A Health & Safety Audit Plan for 2013/14 has been developed after consultation with all Departmental Management Teams, the plan has been presented to the Corporate Health & Safety Committee / Forum and approved, it will now be presented to the Audit & Governance Committee at its meeting in June.

Departments will now establish Departmental Committees, the Health & Safety team will provide support for these meetings.

### ***Emergency Planning***

The Merseyside Resilience Forum is a strategic, multi agency group providing a framework for the effective delivery of statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. Local authorities are key partners and Seftons Chief Executive leads for the Merseyside local authorities.

Changes have been made to the structure to support the work undertaken by partners. Previous subgroups have been disbanded and four thematic groups have been developed, in the form of the following:

- Hazards and Risk Group – Chaired by MFRS
- Capabilities Group – Chaired by LA (Sefton Council) and Merseyside Police
- Training, Exercising and Validation Group – Chaired by MFRS
- Warning and Informing Group - Chaired by LA (Knowsley)

Sefton officers have been intrinsic in developing the new structure and aims for the work plan, which has been ratified by the MRF

Funding was applied for from the Home Office on behalf of the Merseyside Local Resilience Forum (LRF) for body storage units, this application was successful and storage units procured, this will enable increased resilience in the management of any mass fatality incident.

## **CORPORATE LEGAL DEPARTMENT**

### **53. Legal Services**

- Legal Services recently issued an emergency application in the Court of Protection and obtained an interim order to ensure a vulnerable adult was placed in an appropriate placement following her discharge from hospital to ensure her health and wellbeing was maintained.
- The Government will legislate soon to ensure that care proceedings cases take a maximum of 26 weeks from commencement to final order. This is a very ambitious target and the Cheshire and Merseyside Family Justice Board, of which Sefton is a member, is working hard on local initiatives to ensure we achieve the target. The latest data for local authorities in Cheshire and Merseyside show that Sefton is the best performing local authority with cases concluding on average in 27 weeks against an average for all local authorities of 42 weeks.

- Legal Services recently conducted a successful food hygiene prosecution in respect of a fish and chip shop in Litherland. The proprietor was fined £1,500 and ordered to pay £880 in costs.
- The Department for Transport has recently confirmed that the Thornton to Switch Island Link Road Side Roads Order has been confirmed without modification and the Thornton to Switch Island Link Road Compulsory Purchase Order has been confirmed with minor modifications.
- Legal Services has recently dealt with five Employment Tribunal Claims. Of these, one was settled, two were withdrawn by the Claimants, one was struck out and one was dismissed at trial.

## **GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC SERVICES**

### **54. Democratic Services**

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 13 applications for 7 High Schools and 20 applications for 17 Primary schools; and 1 exclusion appeal in respect of a High School during the period from 13 February to 13 May 2013. In addition, arrangements were made for a further 8 appeals to be heard during this period, which were subsequently withdrawn.

The Section liaised with the three Political Group Leaders on the proposed membership of the Cabinet and Committees etc for 2013/14 prior to the Adjourned Council Meeting on 14 May 2013. The details of the nominations for the Council's representation on Outside Bodies were compiled and submitted to the Cabinet on 23 May 2013. The revised membership of the Cabinet and Committees, and the representation on Outside Bodies have been updated on the 'Modern.gov' Committee Management System and published on the Council website / Intranet.

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The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services) and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) established a joint Working Group to investigate NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in the Borough. The Working Group completed its review and the final report was considered by Cabinet in April 2013. The report was well received.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) established a Working Group to investigate Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies. The Group agreed to investigate the topic in two parts, they have made good progress and various key witnesses have been interviewed for the

first part of the review relating to Employment Development. It is anticipated that the final report should be completed by September 2013.

**55. Electoral Services**

The Electoral Services Team has completed the 2013 postal vote refresh programme and is now preparing for the transition to Individual Electoral Registration. The Electoral Registration (Postponement of 2013 Annual Canvass) Order 2013 changes the date of the 2013 canvass and provides for the revised register to be published by 17 February 2014 as opposed to the current publication date of the 1 December. A Polling District review will take place between September and December 2013 and subject to final consultation, the 2014 Local Government and European Parliamentary Elections will be combined on Thursday 22 May 2014.

**56. Civic and Mayoral Services**

Councillor Maureen Fearn has now taken up her position in office as Mayor of Sefton for 2013/14 following her installation ceremony at Southport Town Hall on 9 May 2013 and her Civic Dinner at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, Southport which was attended by various elected members, and friends and family of Councillor Fearn. The Mayor's Office has been working closely with the Ramada Plaza over the past four weeks to ensure the event was a success and enjoyed by all who attend and through the hard work between ourselves and the Ramada, the event received extremely positive feedback.

**CORPORATE COMMISSIONING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
CO-ORDINATION**

**57. Commissioning**

The Corporate Commissioning training session, which will form part of the Leadership Development Programme (LDP) is to be delivered in May and September of this year. However, as yet, no decision has been made regarding learning lunch sessions or other ways of communicating the issue.

A first draft of the Commissioning Toolkit is complete and is currently being reviewed.

**58. Community Right to Challenge**

The Community Right to Challenge forms part of the Localism Act and came into force on 27 June 2012. At that time, it was agreed to accept challenges for a period of 30 days each year starting on 1 March 2013. A decision was taken in December 2012 to leave all services open to challenge but to have a robust system in place for dealing with potential challenges.

The time period for accepting expressions of interest closed on 30 March 2013 and two challenges were received. One challenge is in respect of Highways Development Control & Traffic Management Services and the other relates to the management of Sefton's Surestart Centres.

An initial review of the bids is currently being undertaken to determine whether they meet the criteria stipulated in the Government's guidance document and the two challengers have been informed of the dates when they will be told if their bids are accepted or not.

The dates set by the relevant Heads of Service are as follows:-

Highways DC & Traffic Management Services	– June 2013
Surestart Centres	– July 2013

Acceptance by the Council of either of these bids will trigger a procurement exercise, the scale of which will be dictated by the nature and value of the service concerned. The Authority is required to adopt and publish minimum and maximum periods between the acceptance of the expression of interest and the start of the procurement exercise, but may set different periods for different cases.

#### 59. **Welfare Reform**

A leaflet outlining the changes to welfare benefits reform has been produced and can be found on the Council's website using the links: [Advice & Benefits \\_ Benefits](#). This leaflet is accompanied by location maps with links to our various partners offering advice in the area. The maps can be found using the links: [Advice & Benefits \\_ Where to get help in Sefton](#).