

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Marion Atkinson	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny</b> Cabinet Member Regeneration & Skills	November 2016

## Invest Sefton

### Liverpool City Region Integrated Business Support Project (LCRIBS) - The Business Growth Programme

The project provides eligible SME's, who would not typically engage with providers of business support, with the capacity and support they need to grow and prosper.

InvestSefton serves as a bridge between start-up and more bespoke, intensive or specialist support typically supplied by the private sector and provide participating SMEs with the following:

- A dedicated SFEDI accredited Business Growth Adviser
- A Business Diagnostic
- An Action Plan for growth
- Informed brokerage into specialist/commercial business support
- More intensive support, where appropriate, focusing upon the management of people, processes and resources
- Developing and supporting business networks, events and workshops
- Self-help solutions via website, newsletters, mail shots

InvestSefton has (as at 30 September 2016) assisted 35 businesses through diagnostic support.

InvestSefton plays a lead role in the LCR wide activities of the programme through chairing and facilitating its board and marketing activities. InvestSefton is currently developing joint working arrangements with other ERDF projects to help maximise the varied range of free and subsidised support available for Sefton businesses including:

- *The **Enterprise Hub** coordinates and simplifies the business start-up support available across the Liverpool City Region. Enterprise Hub works to support men and women in Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, Wirral, St Helens and Halton to explore their business ideas and prepares them to get started*
- ***Health Enterprise Hub** works to accelerate the rate at which SMEs develop and commercialise innovative products/services for the health and care industry*

- **Innovate to Succeed-** Tailored support helping SMEs enhance innovation management capability, maximising effectiveness in generating and commercially exploiting ideas
- **Low Carbon Eco-Innovatory (LCEI)** creates innovative low carbon goods, processes and services, developed through collaborative partnerships between local companies in the Liverpool City Region and University researchers, students and academic staff.
- **LCR Manufacturing service-**A service for SME Manufacturers in LCR which provides expert, local advice to support 48 manufacturers, lever £301k of SME investment in growth, and create 26 jobs. It will provide upfront, impartial, manufacturing expertise to assess business opportunities and barriers to growth, and support specification of a tailored improvement project, primarily revenue based, which will be procured from the private sector and subsidised by this service
- **New Markets-** This project enables productivity and employment growth in local SMEs by building their capacity for growth through the delivery of targeted support based on their specific needs and opportunities. It complements the LCR Integrated Business Support consortium by providing more specialised value added services in key sectors, to groups under-represented in business and to businesses with high growth potential.
- **LCR 4.0** is a knowledge transfer programme with an unbridled range of facilities and expertise which will work together to drive innovation. With Liverpool City Region (LCR) SMEs as beneficiaries, it provides a unified and transformational programme which will help them adopt industry 4.0 technologies and support the associated supply chain.
- **Sensor City** - The £15 million 'Sensor City' innovation centre, located in the Copperas Hill redevelopment is a University Enterprise Zone co-funded by BIS, ERDF, LJMU, UoL and industry co-investment. It is a joint venture between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University. BIS backed the project with a £5 million UEZ status capital investment award in 2014. In 2016, the England ERDF (part of ESIF Growth Programme 2014-2020), awarded £5m in capital investment to support the development of the hi-tech sensor hub. The two Universities have committed £1.5m each and £2m of co-investment from corporate users is to be secured.

### Business Friendly Sefton

I continue to work toward and give full support to promote Sefton “ being open for business”, and “business friendly”. This followed a survey of business facing teams and services within the council and the broad agreement for business-friendliness to be a theme within both Reform and Growth agendas of the Council. A task and finish group has been established and meets for the first time in late October. The group will help develop our thinking on business friendly practices and benchmark standards, and take forward any early action.

## Access to Finance

InvestSefton provides access to finance for businesses via events and one to one advice from a dedicated Business Growth Adviser. Support takes many forms and includes advice to businesses struggling with business rates with an automatic referral system in place via the Council's Business Rates team. InvestSefton has dealt with three Rate Relief applications, all either registered charities or social enterprises. Since January InvestSefton's Business Adviser has dealt with 13 specific financial guidance projects for small businesses including loans/equity finance and grant support.

InvestSefton is also advising and helping firms to complete applications for the Merseyside Business Growth Fund. This is a Government Regional Growth Fund programme delivered by St Helens Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the city region.

At present InvestSefton has supported 13 applications of which 6 have so far been approved.

## Business case studies

**Just Bathrooms-** A new start up bathroom supply and fitting business in Waterloo. InvestSefton provided advice on available business premises before the family owners located to a retail unit in St John's Road. The business is open to trade and public and is aiming to provide a one stop service from design to fit out. The business was also the subject of a Channel Four documentary and was officially opened by Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Skills.

**A Bootle based business** provides motor repairs and servicing service, specialising in fleets and prestige makes e.g. Mercedes and Bentley. They began trading in July 2016, when they purchased the goodwill from an existing business as a 'going concern', when the owner retired. The business took on larger premises in Bootle, re-branded and invested in equipment and ramps. Some of the staff from the previous business were taken on, and the company is currently recruiting more staff. The business was assisted with a review of customer data and work delivered over last 5 years, to provide an understanding of the customer base purchased and inform marketing and customer relationship activities. This includes business customers, fleets, retail customers; year-on-year sales data; and a breakdown of the type of services utilised, e.g. servicing/MOT/maintenance.

**Bootle Based Business** is a car, van and large commercial repair centre. The business was established in 2013, and provides a one-stop service for insurance companies and business fleets, including a national recovery service, vehicle hire and ancillary services. Customers include the AA, LV and United Utilities. C&CRC UK Ltd has experienced year-on-year growth, with an increase in turnover of 500% in year three. The business has outgrown their site, and needs to relocate to

another site in Bootle, or purchase land and build new premises. Assistance was provided with developing a business plan to raise finance, grant finder search, and sites and premises searches.

## Investment Marketing

InvestSefton continues to work to attract and retain investment in the borough. In addition to work commencing on site for the new 175,000 sq ft Manufacturing Facility for Domino Printing, further projects that will see a £19m development at the former Peerless Refinery Site on Dunning's Bridge Road being brought forward by Chancerygate. InvestSefton, along with support from the Director of Regeneration and Housing and Executive Director have been key enablers of the Domino development. A ground breaking launch is planned for early November.

In addition on Atlantic Park there are two office lettings pending that will take just short of 40,000 sq ft, resulting in significant job creation. This will mean that over 90% of the offices available on Atlantic Park will now be let. Talks are being held about bringing forward the next phase of development with further advances expected over the next quarter.

InvestSefton is also supporting Sefton Council's attendance at MIPIM UK in London.. The intention is to raise Sefton's profile and announce that it is open and ready for business, as well as promoting some key live investment opportunities focussed on Crosby Village Centre, but also including wider opportunities such Bootle, Southport and Southport Business Park.

## **Tourism**

### Open Golf Championship 2017

Operational planning for the event at Royal Birkdale Golf Club is progressing and Sefton is working with the R&A and multi-agency partners on Safety & Security, Transportation, Media and Contingency planning to ensure we deliver a safe and successful event.

In addition to operational planning, we are developing plans to ensure we maximise the benefits to our local economy. The Open Championship provides an opportunity to showcase our many assets on a global stage, bringing in international and national visitors to sample our visitor destination of Southport, our beautiful coastline, our internationally renowned sporting and cultural offer, and to engage with the people of Sefton. Sefton will enhance destination presentation, identify employment and skills development opportunities and attract inward investment to ensure a lasting economic legacy is achieved from hosting the event.

## Events

### *Southport Festival 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> May 2017*

Planning is underway for next year with the intention of expanding the festival and enhancing the Sunday activity. The comedy element will be extended over the

weekend to include a children's element with a workshop. The Atkinson will host a Vintage Festival and there will be themed venues for the different music elements.

This inaugural event combines Arts, Jazz, Folk, Literature, Poetry, Comedy and Visual Arts. Venues across the town – The Atkinson, Princes Park, Kings Gardens, Town Hall Gardens, Bars & Restaurants

#### *Southport Food and Drink Festival 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> June 2017*

2017 event will run under the same format as 2016. Planning will begin in November with participants booking forms sent early 2017.

#### *Southport Air Show 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> September*

The 2016 Friday Night Flying event unfortunately had to be cancelled due to bad weather at Blackpool Airport which meant the aircraft couldn't get to the event. The weather on Saturday & Sunday was much better and the event ran successfully. Planning has started for 2017 event to include the Friday Night Flying.

#### *British Musical Firework Championships 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1<sup>st</sup> November*

The 2016 event was well attended and we have received positive feedback from customers. Plans for the 2017 event have started and this will be the Champion of Champions year where the past 7 winners will compete against each other.

Other events coming up are:-

Spookport Halloween Festival – 22<sup>nd</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October, parade along Lord Street – 18<sup>th</sup> Oct

Southport Christmas Lights Switch On – 19<sup>th</sup> November

Roundtable Bonfire Event – Victoria Park, 5<sup>th</sup> November

Pleasureland Bonfire – Pleasureland, 5<sup>th</sup> November

#### Destination Marketing

The current quarter (July – September 2016) has seen substantial activity across all visitor markets including leisure, business, travel trade and golf.

- All 2016 Visitor Guides (50,000 copies) distributed by the end of July and 20,000 digital downloads achieved by the end of September. Design and advertising sales for the 2017 guide are underway
- The Southport Brand review is nearing its conclusion and initial proposals, logos etc. have been presented. Further work is ongoing with a view to finalising this by early November.
- Southport Restaurateurs Association (SRA) autumn advertising campaign is underway and design on the 2017 Eating out Guide has commenced.
- Delegate News (business tourism publication) has been distributed to delegates arriving in town since March. Targeted ad campaign ongoing (trade press where

relevant features are included e.g. coastal destinations, conferencing in the northwest etc.).

- E-database now stands at around 42,000 subscribers, newsletter sent 8 - 10 times per annum. The target of 40,000 subscribers by the end of 2016 has already been achieved.
- Travel Trade PR work underway via Stuart Render Tourism. The town's coach friendly credentials have been relaunched as the 'Southport Welcome' this tied in nicely in with travel trade familiarisation visits in September and October and our attendance at The Group Leisure and Travel Show in October.
- Summer radio campaign (airtime, online competition etc.) on Smooth Radio (July and August). A full campaign report has been received. The pilot campaign on Gaydio which ran July and early August was very successful, with 458 entries received for the competition. A Christmas campaign is currently being planned.
- Autumn Radio campaigns currently running via Bauer Media (Rock fm, City fm & Key fm)). This gives excellent northwest coverage and promotes Southport as a place to visit in the autumn.
- Preparation is underway for the twice-yearly STBN Alliance board Meeting (November 17<sup>th</sup> with reports requested from sub group Chairs. The new Southport destination branding will be unveiled to members at this meeting.
- The redesign / rebuild of visitsouthport.com is being planned in line with the new branding. The new site should go live early February 2017 and will feature the latest New Mind functionality.

## Employment

### European Social Fund - Ways to Work Project

Following the Council's acceptance of the offer of ESF grant from the LCR Combined Authority in March 2016, all aspects of delivery in Sefton are now underway.

Sefton@work has now submitted three grant claims to the Combined Authority. Performance in the first quarter has been very positive with achievement of the required number of new starts onto the project as forecasted. This includes access to the service through our high street premises in Bootle, our Southport co-location and the broad outreach offer we maintain in partnership with Children's' centres, libraries, voluntary sector partners and community centres.

The Ways to Work project reports in two strands, related to:

- Young people aged 16 – 29 years who are NEET. This is the part of the Programme that incorporates the Youth Employment Initiative, which needs to be fully expended by July 2018
- Workless Adults aged over 18 . This part of the programme operates at a different grant intervention rate from the young people strand and activity on this element continues until end December 2018.

On the young people strand, Sefton@work has engaged **380** participants who are engaging with professional advisory support to enhance their employability. On the adult strand, **247** participants are engaged on the programme.

Referral agreements have been made between Sefton@work and Sefton JobcentrePlus centres and this has proven effective in ensuring that claimants are made aware of the ESF support available through the Council. Negotiations are ongoing with a range of other projects in receipt of ESF support to identify those that can supply a complimentary range of support activity to ensure that local residents have access to as comprehensive a service offer as possible. The complimentary activity supplied by partners organisations includes therapeutic treatments such as speech and language help for young people affected by anxiety and distress, self-employment support and internships for graduates who are workless.

### ILM placements

An innovative element of Ways to Work is the inclusion of paid employment placements ( otherwise known as ILMs or intermediate labour market opportunities).

The main objective with the ILMs is to identify a range of smaller employers who can provide high quality working experiences where the individual can gain experience whilst also developing the longer term skills of being in a workplace with the important advantage of having a recent employer reference.

To be eligible, the employers also need to be able to demonstrate they operate in a sector where employment growth is expected or an area where community benefit can be demonstrated.

We have made significant progress in this last quarter on moving forward the ILM offer for Sefton residents with local employers, and the following achievement can now be reported:

- ILM expressions of interest have been received from 71 employers
- 32 applications have progressed to formal approval for 57 places
- Recruitment has commenced for 37 places
- 19 participants have already started with their employer with the remainder due to start next quarter.

Discussion have taken place with the supplier of the Council's 14-19 Information, Advice and Guidance provision for NEET young people to determine the best referral pathways to enable these clients to access the ILM opportunities.

Sefton's part of the Ways to Work project also includes provision for paid placements for older people, outside the Youth Employment Initiative. This is intended to target opportunities for older adults with a range of complex and multiple barriers. The resource for this is much smaller than for young people and as a result

An ongoing challenge on the current Ways to Work project has the interpretation of the guidance on evidence requirements to establish the eligibility of participants to receive ESF support. For certain groups of people, ( including young people who may be sofa surfing, those living with parents or others unable to supply proof of benefit status, residency or legal right to work ) this places a much more stringent requirement than any previous ESF programme. It also places increased time pressures upon members of staff to help participants evidence their entitlement to support, before supporting them to improve their employability can commence.

#### **Case Study : ILM Host Employer - Warwick Developments**

Warwick Development (North West) Ltd is a Bootle based company, established in 1998. They are a trade frame supplier of UPVC windows and doors and have enjoyed ongoing growth over the last four years, increasing from 66 staff to the current 85. They have previously engaged with SMBC on a variety of initiatives, through Sefton@work for staff recruitment, with Stepclever for access to a grant, and through InvestSefton and REECH for business support.

Following the launch of our ILM programme under Ways to Work, whereby jobs are funded for a 6-12 month period for local workless Sefton residents struggling to secure employment in open recruitment, they successfully applied for funding for a number of ILM positions. These were 2 Bead Saw Operatives and 1 Warehouse Operative.

After progressing their application for ILMs and accessing support to recruit local workless residents through Sefton@work, they have now started their three placements. The positions have been offered to three male clients aged 16, 19 and



21, the latter of whom has been seeking work for more than two years. The Company has expressed real enthusiasm for the support they have received through our Employer Engagement team and the preparation the young people have had prior to recruitment about workplace behaviours, team-working and attendance has made a real difference. In fact, the Manager commented “ the calibre of staff who attended for interview was excellent and I could easily have placed more!” The Company is confident that upon satisfactory completion of the ILM phase, they will be in a position to retain the 3 staff at the end of the 6 months if they achieve their planned growth forecast.

Following the ILM recruitment, the Manager was impressed enough with the performance and attitude to work demonstrated by the young people, that he made further contact with Sefton@work to launch an additional mainstream vacancy. This was for a Driver / Loader with an immediate start and required a rapid and co-ordinated response from the Sefton@work employer engagement and advisory teams to work to the company’s deadlines. Sefton@work was able to select a shortlist of people for immediate interview and the company have now offered a start to a client from Bootle who is 45 years old, who has been long term unemployed.

### Youth Employment Gateway

New starts on Phase 1 of the Youth Employment Gateway have now closed but Sefton@work will continue to report on outcomes for this phase until December 2016.

We have engaged 226 young Sefton people against a target of 177, and we are on track to meet all the targets related to entry to jobs and sustainment in employment which is measured at six months for this programme. The young people on Phase 1 are attached to a trained and experienced employment adviser within Sefton@work who helps them navigate a range of personalised support to overcome barriers in gaining and sustaining work. The concept of personalised budgets forms part of the Gateway in both phases.

The average cost incurred through Personalised Budgets across this phase for all LA areas is approximately £146 per person, with the majority of this expenditure by far being incurred to support travel costs. This includes travel to advice, for interviews, for training and assistance with the first weeks of travel upon starting a new job.

Phase 2 YEG commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 and this differs from Phase 1 in that the young people are able to access the service through an interactive website. They are allocated a proscribed Personalised Budget allocation of £500 with which they can purchase goods or services agreed with their adviser that are deemed necessary to achieve their job goals over an 18 month period.

To date, **336** young people have commenced on Phase 2 between October 15 and May 16. Our revised target for the whole of Phase 2 (i.e. from October 2015 – September 2017) is for **404** young people.

Experience from Phase 1 is that the average draw down of funding is in practice much lower than £500 per person. There remains the risk therefore that unused funds will become locked into these personalised accounts which we are obliged to

leave unspent until the end of the programme in 2017. This is the focus of attention within the City Region Employment & Skills team programme managing the YEG at the wider level and a number of options are being considered to allow this pot of money to be optimised for the benefit of a more young people, perhaps those coming onto the programme after the £500 allocations have been committed.

### Carers in the Workplace Pilot

Sefton Council is delivering an innovation pilot to develop and test good practice in Promoting Carers in the Workplace. The pilot operates for one year, funded through the Department of Health, Department for Work and Pensions and the Government Equalities unit. Sefton's pilot will be delivered by Sefton@Work in partnership with Sefton Carers Centre. The outcomes of the nine national pilots are expected to influence the development of government policy on supporting Carers going forward.

The Employers Guide for Carers in the Workforce was launched at an event in July 16. Although the majority of the direct delivery on the Pilot has now been concluded, the funding agreement with Sefton Carers Centre to operate an out of hours support group for working carers will continue until 2017.

### Mental Health and Employment Task Group.

Cllr Cummins has convened a cross-sectoral group to look at the current system to support people experiencing mental health problems to enter employment or to retain their employment .

This work has progressed rapidly and the Task Group has accepted an action plan which will see the development of a number of interventions to improve the connectedness between services operating within the health, social care and employment support arena. These actions include the transfer of the contract for Individual Placement Service from social care to Investment & Employment, Process Mapping between IPs and the wider employment support model, construction of improved referral pathways for employment and the better control and use of available data to understand the customer journey between services once a client is able to seek employment.

### Collaborations with Sefton Adult Community Learning

Plans are underway to optimise the targeting of community learning provision towards the needs of workless residents and potential employers. A number of options are under consideration including the adoption of sector based approaches working with particular employers in the distribution/logistics and social care arenas. This would allow clients accessing support from Sefton@work to progress their learning in a structured way, being supported by their personal advisor for individual assistance throughout the process.

## Benefit Cap Mitigation and Support

The government's second round of the benefit cap will commence implementation in November 2016. Analysis provided by Arvato indicates this round will affect more than 300 household in Sefton, particularly those with three or more children. A corporate implementation group has been established and Sefton@work will provide specific employability support to parents affected by the cap through a referral process from DWP and the one stop- shops and other partner agencies and colleagues across the Council. This arrangement has been put in place for six months and the objective is to help affected claimants mitigate their loss of income through accessing work wherever possible. The key challenge on this agenda will be to help affected people gain employment rapidly that will mean they earn to a sufficient level or are engaged in work for a sufficient number of hours per week ( depending on the type of benefit they claim) to put themselves outside the scope of the cap.

## Regeneration

During November 2016 I will be working with officers to look at and agree the regeneration programme priorities for this year, next and beyond, to progress and implement a range of projects that will enable priority employment and regeneration sites to be delivered. This will ultimately create jobs and opportunity for our residents and businesses.

## Investment Master Plan

Work continues with Sefton's Master Plan which will go beyond the Local Plan to identify priorities throughout the borough, this work is aligned to the ongoing 2030 visioning exercise.

## Investment Frameworks

### *Bootle*

The Bootle Town Centre Investment Framework prepared by Lambert Smith Hampton was presented to Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Work is underway to explore how we can bring aspects of the Framework forward.

### *Southport*

The Southport Development Framework prepared by Nexus/Broadway Malyan was presented to Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Work is underway to explore how we can bring aspects of the Framework forward.

## *Crosby*

The Crosby Investment Strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2015. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being developed and will go out to public consultation in the new- year (along with the other area SPD's) to link with the Local Plan.

Discussions are ongoing with St Modwen's and representatives of other property owners, to understand the options for investment.

A programme of environmental works within the town centre funded by s106 contributions has been prepared. Phase 1 has been completed and comprised Christmas lighting, tree planting and new power points. Phase 2 will be completed at the end of Nov and will comprise lighting, paving and CCT provision. The installation of new street furniture (Phase 3) will commence in the New Year.

Officers will continue to work on bringing viable development sites to fruition. A mini prospectus has been drawn up and Crosby will be highlighted as a key development opportunity at MIPIM UK in London.

### Funding Opportunities

The team are actively engaged in exploring external funding opportunities and are currently focusing on:

#### *Coastal Communities Fund (CCF)*

A Stage 1 (outline) application for Coastal Communities Funding (CCF) was submitted to the Big Lottery on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 for Southport Pier. This was successful and we have been invited to submit a detailed stage 2 application. The submission deadline is 5<sup>th</sup> December with a decision expected before the end of the financial year.

The team are working with colleagues in Tourism (Investment & Employment) and Asset and Property Management to bring this proposal forward.

Officers are continuing to work with partners to explore potential capital and revenue projects along the Sefton Coast for future funding rounds.

#### *Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)*

This funding is aimed at supporting projects that have the potential to regenerate and transform those conservation areas in need of investment and areas where there is a mixture of buildings and uses; including residential, retail and other business uses.

A consultation exercise took place from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to ascertain demand for a Townscape Heritage Lottery Funding Stage 1 submission. A Stage 1 application was prepared by Planning and Regeneration officers and submitted on 31<sup>st</sup> August. A decision as to whether the proposal will progress to a full bid is expected early in the new-year.

If approved the Southport Heritage Scheme proposed would seek to help address, in part, the reported decline of some of Southport's historic features by; providing grant funds to owners of buildings to facilitate building repairs, reinstate lost or damaged features, bring vacant floor space back into use, and by upgrading public realm.

### *One Public Estate (Round 5)*

The aim of One Public Estate (OPE) is to encourage, local government, central government and public sector partners to work together at a local level on land and property initiatives to deliver four core objectives:

- create economic growth
- more integrated and customer-focused services
- generate capital receipts
- reduce running costs.

Sefton has submitted three requests for feasibility funding (Bootle, Crosby and Place Making) which will form part of an LCR OPE submission due on 28<sup>th</sup> October. The outcome of the LCR submission will be known on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

### Single Investment Fund

The LCR Combined Authority is finalising The Single Investment Fund Prospectus in the early autumn. The prospectus will inform applicants of the criteria and necessary processes in order to access the Single Investment Fund (SIF). The fund has been established to deliver the LCR Growth Strategy, with potentially £250m available for investment over the next 5 years.

It is envisaged that funding will be allocated by way of commissioned projects and Open Calls (with the expected submission date of 9<sup>th</sup> December). We are currently in the process of developing a 'pipeline' of potential projects that could access this and other forms of funding in the future.