

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Cllr Fairclough	Overview & Scrutiny (Regeneration and Skills)	June 2017

Strategic Transport

Port Access

- The City Region Port Access Steering Group continues to meet every two months, being chaired by Sefton Chief Executive. The most recent meeting was on the 20th March.
- The programme of interventions is continuing including rail infrastructure requirements, promotion of coastal and inland shipping, short term highway improvement measures and detailed studies into the options for long term major highway improvement. Work on the doubling of the rail line into the Port has been delayed and is now expected to take place in 2018.
- The Highways England report on the consultation on two options for a major road improvement to the Port of Liverpool has not yet been published and was delayed due to the general election purdah. Highways England is expected to seek further discussions with the Council regarding the Council's response to the consultation. A decision on a preferred option is expected later in 2017.

LTP & Growth Plan

- Sefton is continuing to work with Merseytravel and the other Merseyside authorities on the delivery of the transport capital programme.
- Work has started on developing the sustainable transport intervention proposals for Years 3-6 as part of the City Region programme. Sefton has three schemes approved as part of the programme, amounting to almost £3m of allocated funding. This consists of three phases of improvements on the A565, in Seaforth, Waterloo and Thornton, as well as a cycle route between Maghull and Kirkby and East-West cycle improvements in Southport. The proposals for the first phase of the A565 improvements, in Seaforth, were approved by Area Committee and will be going out to tender once the capital programme has been approved.
- Work is continuing on the land acquisition process for the A565 North Liverpool Key Corridor Improvements (led by Liverpool City Council). A Statement of Case has been prepared in advance of a CPO Public Inquiry in August. Negotiations have been undertaken with the two objectors in Sefton to enable them to withdraw their objections before the Inquiry. The consultation strategy for local businesses and residents is being implemented to ensure that people are kept informed of the progress of the scheme. Discussions are ongoing with the Port and other businesses fronting Regent Road in order to agree details of how cyclists using the proposed cycle route can interface safely with the HGV's accessing and egressing the main port entrances.

- The contractor appointed for the delivery of M58 J1 scheme has been proceeding with the design of the scheme and the commissioning of essential survey work. The planning application for the scheme was submitted at the end of May. The appointment of an Employer's Agent to support the Council has been finalised, subject to satisfactory references. With the land requirements now fully defined, the Council's appointed agent is conducting negotiations with each owner and tenant so that Heads of Terms can be agreed. Cabinet approved a report on 6th April giving authority to make a Compulsory Purchase Order.
- Maghull North Railway station is progressing. Merseytravel and Network Rail are proceeding with the scheme design process. Now that the planning application has been approved, there is only limited involvement for Sefton. The scheme as a whole remains on programme with work due to commence on-site in August 2017 and opening to passengers with the start of the Summer 2018 timetable in May 2018.
- The Council has been awarded £180,000 of City Region Feasibility Fund towards the project development work on the Southport Eastern Access and the Maritime Corridor projects. The funding will be used for option development and testing and development of a strategic outline case for Southport Eastern Access and for traffic modelling and option testing for the Maritime Corridor.

Local Transport Schemes

- The delivery of the LTP Capital Programme for 2016/17 has been completed and the out-turns are being reviewed. An initial Transportation Capital Programme for 2017/18 has been developed and discussed with Cabinet Member. Approval of the programme will be completed once Council has approved amendments to the Council's Capital Programme.

Sustainable Transport

- The Sefton Circular Cycle Route was launched on 21st May with more than 400 people taking part.

Permit Scheme

- The second annual review of the permit scheme has been undertaken and is available to view on the website. The review can confirm the positive effect of the permit scheme once again and shows a benefit to society of £3.4million.

Winter Service

- Cabinet Member has once again asked officers to write to all elected members as part of the annual consultation and review of the winter service policy and operational plan. Letters will be going to members very shortly.
- Revised guidance from the Department for Transport is imminent.

FCERM

- Work continues on the investigations on the Pool and Nile watercourses in Southport. Opportunities are being explored to work in partnership with the Healthy Rivers Trust to restore some of the piped watercourse to an open watercourse.

- Coastal protection schemes at Crosby continue to be developed and Environment Agency Grant in Aid Funding has been approved to support the project development. Discussions are also underway with United Utilities regarding contributions to part of the scheme.
- Sefton Council are moving away from maintaining watercourses not in its ownership and are supporting the riparian owners in undertaking their responsibilities.

Key Route Network

- Work continues across the region on KRN issues.
- Benchmarking of service levels and standards is continuing to establish levels of consistency and allow gap analysis to be undertaken. An update report has been prepared for TAG on 20th June 2017
- A further draft of the section 111 agreement has been shared with district lawyers for comment

Road Safety

- The LCR road safety strategy has been finalised and is awaiting sign off by the Mayor

Street Lighting

- As part of the budget savings proposals approved at Council in March, the current street lighting 'night scouting' service is due to cease. It is currently anticipated that the service will continue to operate until September following which the Council will become predominantly reliant on fault reports from the public.
- Also as part of the budget savings proposals the in-house street lighting maintenance service is to be outsourced to an external contractor. Work is progressing well on the preparation of the tenders. It is currently anticipated that it could be January 2018 before the new service will become operational.

Traffic Signals

- Work continues on the LCR joint Traffic Signal maintenance contract. Tenders are expected to go out in July 17 with a go live date for the Contract being 1st April 2018.
- Consideration continues to being given to upgrading the existing video wall in the traffic signals control room. The current equipment has now exceeded its operational life and is causing some regular maintenance issues with associated costs. Outline costings have now been received. Subject to available resources a procurement exercise will be undertaken later this year to renew the equipment.
- Initial discussions have now commenced on beginning to migrate some of the traffic signal communication circuits from analogue to digital technology. This

work will need to be developed and delivered over the next few years as the current analogue circuits provided by BT are to be withdrawn after March 2020. Without the communication circuits the Council will be unable to monitor and coordinate the traffic signals remotely.

Highway Maintenance

- Remedial works to the defective surface dressing that was laid last year have been put back and are now due to commence in late July. The costs associated with the remedial works are being underwritten by the Contractor.
- The grass cutting and weed spray programme have now recommenced and will be ongoing until the autumn.

Catering Services:

Holly Charnock, the Cook in Charge at Woodlands Primary School has won the 'Locality & Community Award' at the recent STAR Awards ceremony held at The Atkinson.

Catering Services are providing a 'mini diner' during the event for children attending the festival. This will replicate the school meal 'experience' and is designed to provide a positive experience as to what school meals entail, and also to promote the service and encourage more children to take up the offer of a warm nutritious meal each day as opposed to packed lunches and snacks.

Work is underway to provide meals for Sefton's 'Access to Food' Programme during the forthcoming summer school holidays. Working with colleagues from the Communities Department and our Children's Centres, we will be providing meals for children that might otherwise go without a nutritious hot meal when schools are closed. Last year's programme was a great success but was centred in South Sefton. It is hoped that this year the programme will be expanded to include all areas of the Borough.

Transport & Vehicle Maintenance:

Inspections have been undertaken and the necessary authorisations have been granted by VOSA for the installation of the tachograph equipment at Hawthorne Road Depot. It is envisaged that the service will be fully operational by mid-July. This will not only provide a saving for our own fleet but also generate additional income from private external contractors utilising the services offered by the Council.

MOT service has shown a marked increase in customers over the first two months of the financial year. Plans have been developed to further promote and market the services on offer to the wider public.

Transport & Vehicle Maintenance:

Initial investigations and work has begun on setting up the HGV MOT Testing Station at Hawthorne Road Depot. There will be some minor changes required to the existing MOT set-up to create an additional escape route from under the vehicles, as we will likely need to lengthen the pit lane.

The service is also implementing the plan to offer a tachograph repair and calibration service. Consultations and expressions of interest have been sought from local

businesses of road haulage, which is a requirement of VOSA. So far over 140 letters of support have been received from local hauliers and businesses as there is currently no provision within Sefton for either HGV testing or Tachograph calibration/repair.

Burial and Cremation Service

Fee changes

The service now offers two new fees designed to expand the service offer, increase value for money for the mourner/family, and also mitigating/reduce income loss due to new private sector competition. The new fees are a 'direct cremation' fee and 'early morning midweek fee' (Southport Crematorium only). A 'Direct Cremation' is a cremation without a chapel service. By offering this service at a reduced fee, the high-demand time slots at the crematorium are protected. It also enables local funeral directors to increase their offer, and it will mitigate losses of direct cremations to the new private sector facility at West Lancashire Crematorium. The early morning midweek time slots at Southport Crematorium were generally used for 'basic' funeral services. These have decreased since the opening of the private sector West Lancashire Crematorium (which offers lower price cremations for funerals before 10:00am). The early morning midweek fee will offer a more competitive low cost funeral option for customers using funeral directors based within the Southport and West Lancashire Crematoria catchment.

Grounds maintenance and cleansing

Since April 2017, the emptying of the litter bins has been undertaken by the in-house Cleansing Services team. The transition from the previous private sector contractor has been both smooth and efficient, and has resulted in additional capacity being released for the wider grounds maintenance contract at no extra cost.

Bootle Cemetery – Section 106 works

Improvements have now been completed including boundary painting, baby garden painting, and tree-planting across the site. Feedback received so far from visitors is very complimentary.

Duke Street Cemetery

A meeting was held in January 2017 with Kew Ward elected members to investigate opportunities to improve the aesthetics of the entrance area. A number of relatively small-scale schemes are now being developed, and following consultation with the Cabinet Member Locality Services, will be presented for funding from the relevant ward budget.

Liverpool Road Cemetery

In order to generate additional revenues within the service, following the opening of the new private sector facility in Burscough, a new 'Natural Meadow Burial' area has been completed. Finishing works are still required and graves will be available in late 2017.

Southport Crematorium

The Crematorium is now connected to the network via fibre optic cable. This will enable new software procurement, streamlining of ICT, and will enable opportunities for greater staff efficiency/joint working with Thornton Garden of Rest. Quotes are also being sought to replace the existing chapel windows at Southport which have reached the end of their operational life.

Cleansing Services:

Waste & Recycling Operations

Access issues as a result of inconsiderate parking by car owners have caused considerable issues for the Cleansing (waste) operation of late. A 'mobilisation programme' is being developed in conjunction with colleagues in Traffic Management and once potential sites for additional/enhanced road markings are identified, the report will be presented to the Cabinet Member for consideration.

The water main burst on the northward carriageway of the Formby by-pass has added considerable time to collection crews in Ainsdale/ Birkdale & Southport during the first week in June. Some collections were missed on the scheduled day and have necessitated a collection the following day, due to the re-routing of traffic through Formby Village. Updates have been provided daily to the contact centre and where appropriate, to the Ward Members.

Street Cleansing

The Aintree Grand National meeting was a huge success in terms of attendees (some 160,000 over the 3 day festival). Liaison took place with colleagues in Liverpool Council and Highways England over litter removal over the four day festival. During this period the two Councils collected some 40 tonnes of waste, with the largest clear up being on Sunday after the Grand National, when some 10 tonnes of rubbish was collected in Sefton alone.

The major review of cleansing standards, frequencies and tasks has been undertaken in order to meet the financial targets associated with the service following a number and range of saving options over recent years. This is also obviously coupled with also trying to meet the expectations of stakeholders, including residents, elected members, businesses and visitors. This report to Cabinet Member will be available and presented in July 2017.