

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Marion Atkinson	Overview & Scrutiny Cabinet Member Regeneration & Skills	November 2017

REGENERATION

Regeneration

The Regeneration Team is playing an active role in delivering and programme managing the authority's Growth Programme. Developing initiatives is a long term activity, highlights include:

Town Centres

Action Plans have been prepared for Bootle, Crosby and Southport following the publication of the associated Development or Investment Frameworks. The Action Plans are representative of the work streams/themes that will be progressed over the coming months and years. They are not Council centric and relate to all potential stakeholders and deliverers. The Authority's role will be to stimulate, facilitate and enable the regeneration of each of the Town Centre with developers and other agencies and stakeholders providing the direct investment.

Across each of the town centres discussions are ongoing with potential investors and developers to bring viable development sites to fruition. Data is being collated and project ideas are being scoped out and options reviewed for each of the thematic areas, such as:

Bootle: We are continuing to engage with stakeholders and developers regarding opportunities for repurposing the Town Hall complex.

We are exploring funding opportunities for a heritage centre in the former Museum and Library and have appointed heritage specialists Lloyd Evans Prichard to undertake building condition surveys work and produce a concept design. A consultation exercise is underway to gauge public appetite and interest. Bootle Stories a 'pop up' heritage exhibition will be held in the Strand shopping centre w/c 23rd October.

Crosby: Council consultant's WSP are preparing a report on options for improving access and connectivity in and around the Village Centre. This work will support future opportunities for new development. The regeneration team are also regularly meeting with St Modwens who are making significant investment in their property along both sides of Moor Lane.

The current phase of the S106 work will be completed by the end of October. Traders and Ward Councillors are discussing additional works for the remaining funding.

Southport: Major refurbishment of the Pier is underway, with the phased programme of works continuing until November 2018. Consultants Systra have been appointed to review eastern access to the town, the finding will inform future highway improvements. Consultation exercises and associated evaluations have been completed for both the Lord Street and Promenade conservation area appraisals.

We are also continuing to engage with stakeholders and developers regarding opportunities for investment within the town.

The team are exploring opportunities for funding to support regeneration initiatives.

Investment into the Atkinson, Kings Gardens, the Theatre and Convention Centre and the ongoing investment into the marketing of Southport continues.

Funding Opportunities

One Public Estate – The Council continue to work with all involved with OPE. OPE (Round 6): One Public Estate is initiative delivered in partnership by the Cabinet Office's Government Property Unit (GPU) and the Local Government Association (LGA). It is about local government working with central government and public sector partners locally on land and property initiatives to deliver the following core objectives:

- create economic growth (new jobs and homes)
- more integrated and customer-focused services
- generate efficiencies through capital receipts and reduced running costs

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): A funding bid with a total value of £7.9m has been prepared through Viridis (a collective of housing providers and local authorities) with Sefton Council acting as Accountable Body and submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Broadband – 'gain share'

The Regeneration Team has supported the delivery of the Merseyside Connected project in Sefton. The project was delivered through a gap funding model where state aid was used to provide top up funding without which the broadband services would not have been financially viable. As a result of this take up of those broadband services has exceeded agreed thresholds. Consequently, BT has agreed to repay an element of the funding known as 'gain share'. Gain share funding will be used to continue the Merseyside Connected Programme for one year to provide additional broadband services throughout the LCR. This project will run from July 2017 to June 2018, BT have commenced the upgrade programme with the first wave of upgrades due later this year.

Southport Business Park

The Site Investigation Report on the southern section of the Business Park has been reviewed favourably/positively by the Councils' Contaminated Land Officer. The Environment Agency (EA) has been consulted regarding the Site Investigation Report on the northern section and Council Officers are about to meet the EA to discuss their response. Following the meeting we will be in a position to move forward on finalising the Report.

Officers continue to have detailed discussions with businesses and developers interested in bringing forward detailed proposals for the site.

Work continues to enable the Council to commission a development marketing strategy that will assist in bringing forward the remaining parcels of land on the Business Park.

TOURISM

Business Tourism

- Following on from a strong first quarter that saw seven conferences moving over to confirmed, worth around £4.8m to the local economy the second quarter has been slightly quieter.
- The second quarter has seen a further confirmed conference along with a further 5 offered provisional dates that if move over to confirmed will be worth around £2 million to the local economy.

Southport Air Show 15th, 16th & 17th September 2017

- The Southport Air Show took place on the 15th, 16th and 17 September 2017.
- The Friday night flying was deemed a great success and has received favourable media coverage
- Despite the bad weather leading up to the event the final attendance was similar to 2016, despite having no Red Arrows
- The 2018 Air Show will take place on the 6th, 7th and 8th of July due to tide times.

British Musical Firework Championships 29th & 30th September, 1st October 2017

- This year was Champion of Champions Event with 7 previous winners from 1999 – 2016 returning to compete for the title.

- The event was a great success with record numbers on the Friday followed by a sell out on the Saturday. Despite the challenging weather conditions on the Sunday visitor numbers remained strong.

Southport Market

- Southport Indoor Market currently sitting at 74%, this corresponds with the retail fall in Southport. Work is continuing to advertise the empty units.
- In the last month a number of current traders have agreed new leases as well as a new trader agreeing to come into the Market.

EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING UPDATE

ESF Ways to Work

The latest quarterly claim for European Social Fund (ESF) grant for Ways to Work has been submitted to the Combined Authority. This is the first claim made relying upon the new MI system called Evolutive. This marks the end of the service's use of the previous system called CorePlus. More information will be available around the characteristics of the participants in future reports as Evolutive is developed internally to meet reporting needs of interest to the authority. The programme continues to progress well.

Youth Employment Gateway

YEG - aimed at 18-24 year olds - is now in its second phase and has largely been used as match finance to access the ESf grant to operate Ways to Work.

YEG is progressing well and Sefton has met its engagement profiles with over 400 young people registered on the programme. An innovative element of this initiative relates to Personalised budgets for young people. We are now looking to maximise the job outcomes for these clients.

Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)

Since the closedown of new starts onto YEG 2, we have been offering young people referred to us assistance using the YEI element of the ESf Ways to Work funding. This is currently supporting an additional **179** clients aged 16- 29 who may be claiming any benefit or are non-claimants. Personalised budgets have also made these available for YEI clients. The concept is about empowering young people to take control of their own personal development and journey towards employability by enabling them to draw down a budget to pay for a range of items they and their client adviser agree will help them move closer to work.

Further analysis will be undertaken on the use of the personalised budgets by these young people, and this option for accessing budgets for additional young people will continue for 2017/18.

Sefton@work NEET partnership working

A summer project identifying young people who are at risk of not taking up a learning place in September has been commenced by Sefton@work. In consultation with Career Connect, our NEET IAG contractor, funds have been earmarked from YEI personalized budgets to benefit eligible young people who register with Sefton@work to access financial support before the next academic term commences. It is expected this will boost the engagement of young people taking up IAG services, remove barriers and increase the chance of them taking up a place in September. Further arrangements are also in place to do a similar exercise in November and January as these are times when NEET rates spike.

L30's Million

Following the successful conclusion of the first round of the L30's Million employment support project, the steering group has requested a further proposal for funding Sefton@work for the 17/18 year. This has been prepared for their consideration and includes an option for customised ILM (Intermediate Labour Market) jobs for their residents/businesses. A decision is expected imminently, although we continue to deploy Sefton@work resources in the area at present.

LCR Combined Authority Household into Work Test

The announcement of the Government's confirmation of acceptance of the LCR proposal for the Household into Work Test was made on 1st August 2017.

The Combined Authority is finalising its delivery strategy, Seton are a consultee in that process, notification of the preferred option to deliver is imminent. The Test will target approximately 104 family groups across Sefton, with access to family problem-solving budgets of up to £1000 per family. Likely to commence in 2018.

DWP Work and Health Programme

The Procurement process for the DWP Work & Health Programme continues and the period of commercial dialogue with potential providers has been commenced. DWP has informed providers that the general election will not cause delays to the tender award timetable. Sefton@work is looking to maximise supply chain involvement with the final three shortlisted prime contractors.

Best and Final Offers for the Work and Health Programme were submitted to DWP in the first week of August, with a view to contract awards being in September/October. It is anticipated that delivery of the Programme will commence in April 2018.

Sefton@work working with employers

Signature Living is an employer currently working well with Sefton@Work on local recruitment and placements for clients. This has been led by the Employment Liaison team when there was contact made regarding the redevelopment of the former Daniel House site. Initial discussions were around sub-contractors and this yielded a small number of vacancies that were recruited through Sefton@work.

After this introductory phase, Sefton@work has since maintained regular contact and this has resulted in 14 jobs advertised and filled to date. The plans to open up the roof top restaurant in November are now under discussion and we aim to manage all the recruitment for the new restaurant and potentially set up some pre-employment training with local partners. All of the people placed to date with this company have been Sefton residents.

Sefton@work has a long standing arrangement with the Identity & Passport Service in Birkdale to provide placements for long term unemployed people and clients with multiple barriers from Sefton@work. Over the years, this has proven to be an invaluable arrangement for clients to gain real work experience. In the last month, IPS has interviewed and offered a start to another phase of clients for their next round of placements.

Collaboration between Sefton@work and Sefton Adult Community Learning

SACL Governors have now agreed the Curriculum plan for the coming year. This features a number of new additions to the course list and some new types of delivery as we look to further shape the programme to become more work-focused and this is a key driver of the offer for 17/18. The service has secured agreements to undertake some retail based training, in the Strand shopping centre and is also acquiring an allotment which will allow the service to offer introductory skills in horticulture. These courses will of course run alongside the continued focus on English, Maths and IT.

A decision has been taken to seek subcontracting partners for the coming year and this action has been commenced with the Sefton Procurement team.

Social Value – Targeted Recruitment & Training

Work continues with colleagues across the Council to identify opportunity to secure benefit for local residents through the inclusion of social value provisions into contracting and commissioning. In particular:

Domiciliary Care - Discussions are underway with adult social care colleagues to include provisions for local recruitment, employer engagement plans, career inspiration events and local supply chain gain into the next round of Domiciliary Care contracts. These Contracts are substantial for Sefton and for the next round they are due to be jointly commissioned with Knowsley MBC with an option for Liverpool CC to enter the arrangement at a later point.

INVESTSEFTON

Sefton Growth Hub/ ERDF Business Growth Programme

InvestSefton is one of the Liverpool City Region growth hubs working alongside the Local Enterprise Partnership, other local authorities, Chambers of Commerce and The Womens Organisation. This is part of current UK Government funded activities delivered locally by Local Enterprise partnerships. In Sefton this activity has been merged with the ERDF Business Growth Programme to help provide a more cohesive service to businesses.

As at 30 September 2017 InvestSefton has engaged with 1,421 businesses, carried out 1,034 diagnostics and brokered 1,215 businesses into other areas of support.

For the period July-September 2017 the team has provided direct 1:1 support for 17 businesses of which 15 have undergone a full diagnostic and action plan. Outputs are below the quarterly forecast as the team currently has two long term sickness absences but a remedial action plan is in place to bring back on track in future quarters.

The team also held two digital workshops between July and September 2017 – with businesses in attendance. Some of these will go on to receive 1:1 direct support through the Business Growth programme.

ERDF Programme outputs (subject to ratification) up to 30 September 2017 are:

Output	Total
Business receiving support	92.0
Jobs created	50.05
No of new enterprises supported	20.0

To meet identified demand for digital and IT support the team has also arranged three half day workshops entitled ‘The Future for Business is Digital’ which took place in July and September. The Programme was designed to introduce businesses to a number of free online tools, to improve productivity, reduce costs, and help them sell online. The workshops built on the May Sefton Economic Forum, which encouraged businesses to maximise their online presence.

The Programme consisted of:

- Introduction to online marketing
- Six free online applications to save time, and cost, including:
- Free geomapping tools for journey planning, save cost and reduce carbon
- infograms (professionally designed charts for you to add content about your business and use on web site, literature etc)
- A free website and SEO analyser – action plan for being seen, and getting more traffic
 - Taster session - social media for business
 - Free business support available via the Sefton Growth Hub and InvestSefton

A total of 38 delegates from 31 businesses from across the borough attended with all types of sectors represented

The feedback has been very positive with 100% of the respondents rating the course good/very good.

InvestSefton's Service Manager continues to lead the Business Growth Programme board and is currently engaged in the current evaluation of LCR business support programmes being undertaken by the LEP. This will help identify any gaps in services to help with future ERDF calls and succession planning for post March 2019. In terms of Growth Hub succession the LEP is waiting on the Autumn Statement in November by the Chancellor.

Sefton Economic Forum

The next Sefton Economic Forum takes place in the Ramada Hotel on Friday 19th November 2017. The theme is business and tourism diversification opportunities and will be a breakfast style format sponsored by Liverpool John Lennon Airport (LJLA). The title is 'Opportunities landing in Southport' and will include presentations on LJLA's new eastern European routes, the Ramada Hotel's aspirations for Southport, the city region's strategy to increase visitor numbers and help available from the Growth Hub (managed by InvestSefton) for local businesses.

Inward Investment update

InvestSefton is supporting ongoing work to bring about commencement of development of the Mersey Reach scheme. This is focussed on discharging Planning Conditions, including agreement of an Employment Charter and fully securing the SIF funding allocated by the CA to the project.

InvestSefton is also supporting Atlantic Park through the Strategic Investment Fund process, currently working on a revised and more detailed full business case. The developer is currently working towards submitting a planning application in November for a 100,000 sq ft B2/B8 building plus a decked car park. A consultation event was held on Thursday 19th October 2017 at Netherton Community Centre.

Atlantic Park is now nearing full occupancy in the existing buildings and InvestSefton is liaising with the developer to encourage further development on the frontage of the site, including the development of a further speculative office building.

InvestSefton is providing ongoing support to the Head of Regeneration and Housing with Bootle Town Centre, Crosby Town Centre, Southport Business Park and other regeneration opportunities. This included attendance at REVO (specialised retail conference) in September in conjunction with Ellandi, useful leads were generated.

InvestSefton continues to support activity and leads generated as a result of The Open Golf. There has also been some knock on effect with wider city region investment and while it would be unrealistic to directly attribute attendance at The Open for this, it provided an invaluable opportunity to build new and further existing relationships which enable dialogue and work to take place that supported the investment decisions.

As an example from Sefton's perspective it renewed and strengthened the council's relationship with Sefton's largest private sector employer, Santander, and has resulted in a number of ongoing conversations with the site leadership across areas

including business growth, skills development, supply opportunities, partnership work with Sefton and local communities and development of an active CSR programme locally for the benefit of Sefton residents.

The Business Development Manager has recently held meetings with a number of key local employers including Shop Direct, Santander and Allied Bakeries (shared services) to support investment and growth, focussing on developing local skills. Opportunities exist at all businesses for investor development work, with Santander being the focus of attention currently due to a range of significant opportunities for development.

Business Friendly Sefton workshop

A workshop, facilitated by InvestSefton, was held on 7th September in Bootle Town Hall and attended by 49 council staff from Business Rates, Building Control, Trading Standards, Tourism, Communications, Communities, Regulation and Compliance, Planning, Health and Wellbeing, Regeneration and Procurement. The aim of the event was to:

- Reflect on the work of the Business Friendly Sefton task and finish group
- Agree how we can work **collaboratively** across the council to help make our business customer a more **joined up offer** and develop a picture of how this would look
- Agree a set of '**Business Friendly**' standards to support the council's corporate objectives and growth/reform agendas
- Review the work of the LCR **Better Business for All** group and how this relates to Sefton
- Agree actions and recommendations to support the council's **Inclusive Growth** agenda and help **improve communication** between the council's business facing services

A steering group has met on three occasions over the past year and the workshop reflected on some of the already impressive activities and outcomes already ongoing in the Council.

4.3 The workshop also reflected on what business friendliness actually means for the council:

- A council that is **easy to do business with** e.g. applying for necessary permissions; tendering for contracts; Seeking financial & non-financial assistance; receiving advice & guidance on growth/expansion/employment; reporting problems to or to remedy wrongs
- A council that treats and values it's 8,000 plus businesses as **Corporate Customers**
- Intelligent use of customer insight to tell us **what businesses want** from the council

- To equip us with a **single view of the business** across all council functions and services
- A **One Council No wrong door approach** when a business needs help and managed referrals when first choice of support is not available
- **Relationship management** with both large and small businesses
- Using a Business Friendly reputation to help drive our **growth and investment** agenda while promoting **Corporate Social Responsibility** for **Sefton's well-being** and supporting **welfare reform**

InvestSefton will re-establish the Business Friendly Sefton sub-group to take forward this work and report back on further progress on this exciting and innovative area of work.