

COUNCIL – 1 MARCH 2018

QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. **Question submitted by Councillor Dawson to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Maher)**

"A press release was widely-reported in various local media on 6th September 2017 saying that. . . ***"following intervention by local Labour campaigners . . .", . . . " . . . Council Leader Ian Maher, has agreed to put in the extra money (£30,000) to save the (Ovington Drive) playground if the Kew Ward funds also contributed to the project."*** - and further stated that this decision of the Leader's came as a result of ***" . . . discussions between Liz Savage and Sefton's Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Ian Moncur."***

Can the Leader of the Council inform the Council . . .

- (a) whether this press story as is quoted directly above in this question, was true?
- (b) If this story was true, on what information basis and authority did the Leader of the Council make this commitment at that time in respect of the then known availability of funds to provide such new replacement facilities; published policies of the Council, and council officers' advice about priorities for expenditure within parks within the Borough?
- (c) where and on what date is any decision of the Leader in this matter recorded within the Council?
- (d) how and on what date the Leader conveyed any conditional decision and offer on this expenditure to commence a dialog with Kew Ward councillors?
- (e) to whom other than Kew Ward councillors did the Leader convey his decision in this matter when he made it, how and on what date?"

Response:

- a) "I did agree to find the extra money as quoted above.
- b) In August the Cabinet Member was advised by officers that the equipment at Ovington Drive was dangerous and they recommended closure. The Cabinet Member agreed the officer recommendation on safety grounds. A copy of the briefing note was provided to ward councillors and a process of community engagement was signalled. A Council press release was issued on 31st August announcing this decision.

There was an immediate community reaction and a verbal request was received from the Cabinet Member to see if it was possible to avoid the permanent decommissioning of Ovington Drive Playground. An options note was produced on 4th September 2017.

Council officers identified an overall underspend on the current parks capital programme and the Leader and Cabinet member accepted this option and officers made the decision to vire £30,000 to fund the Ovington Drive Project.

- c) The value of £30k is within the delegated limits of officers. The ability to undertake the work is also within the policy framework of the Council. There is a requirement to report to the Head of Corporate Resources any proposed variations to the capital programme during the year and this has been done. There is no requirement for a Council Minute.
- d) To-date I have had no contact or dialogue from or with Kew ward councillors.
- e) Via the above press release.”

2. **Question submitted by Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Moncur)**

“It has been widely-reported that a decision was made within Sefton Council to vire approximately £30,000 of available capital monies from other parts of the Parks budget into the purchase of new play equipment for the Kew Ovington Drive play area.

- (a) On what day was that decision made; by whom and in consideration of what documented advice from officers as to spending priorities for the Local Authority for spending such funds as became available within the Parks budget and otherwise?
- (b) Where is that decision recorded and will the Cabinet Member provide a copy of that record to councillors who request it?
- (c) On what day was that decision first communicated on behalf of the Council to Kew Ward councillors, how and by whom?
- (d) On what date was any provisional decision made within the Parks department to spend £50,000 on play equipment in the Ovington Drive play area, provided that Kew Ward councillors agreed to allocate approximately £20,000 towards this project transmitted to the Kew Ward councillors, how and by whom?
- (e) What information as to the nature of the equipment which might be procured for this sum of money and the cost of each type of equipment was provided by your department to the Kew Ward councillors to inform their decision as to allocating of funds?”

Response:

“Councillor Dawson has previously asked these and many other questions on this issue to officers and received the following reply in December 2017. (As the reply is lengthy the Appendices are not included but if any other member wishes to see them then that will be arranged.)”

Ovington Drive Play Ground

A decision was made to allocate £30,000 to Ovington Drive Playground to avoid the facility having to be decommissioned permanently. The approval was within delegated limits for officers and was undertaken in line with all constitutional requirements. The questions below are a summary of the many questions Council Officers have received from members on this matter.

1. Is the decision within the approved Policy of the Council?

This decision is within the approved policy framework of the Council. Councillors have queried why the decision did not comply with “The Better Places Greener Spaces - the Future of Parks and Greenspaces” document. This document was presented for consultation and there is an O&S Working party currently looking at this issue. The O&S working party has yet to report its findings. This consultation draft is not therefore an adopted policy of the Council.

2. How much will the new playground cost?

A Council capital budget of £30000 has been identified and in addition a further £10k has been suggested from the local school and community fundraising.

Council officers had estimated the scheme costs of between £30k to £50k on 5th September 2017. Ward councillors had been asked to consider if they were willing to make a contribution of £20k which would at that time met the total estimate of £50,000.

At this stage a scheme is currently being developed that will have to be contained within the £40k budget unless further funds are identified. The scheme will be developed by Council officers in line with existing operational policy on playground equipment. The views of local residents and children will be taken into account. Ward Councillors will be informed and consulted as appropriate.

3. Where is the funding coming from?

There is an overall underspend on the Parks Capital programme created by scheme costs coming in below the estimate. Funding for the Ovington Drive Play ground has been vired from this overall underspend in accordance with the council’s constitution. Given that schemes are being tendered and completed continually throughout the year, the overall budget position is constantly changing. The money is not coming from a single budget line.

4. Can Cabinet Members or the Council Leader direct how ward budgets are used?

Ward budgets are the responsibility of ward councillors. Anyone including a Cabinet Member can request ward councillors to consider an allocation from their ward budgets for a specific project. The requests from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member and relevant officers for a £20,000 contribution for the Ovington Drive Playground is therefore not outside the constitution. However the final decision lies with Ward Councillors.

5. Who Approved the Funding?

In August the Cabinet Member was advised by officers that the equipment at Ovington Drive was dangerous and they recommended closure. The Cabinet Member agreed the officer recommendation on safety grounds. A copy of the briefing note was provided to ward councillors and a process of community engagement was signalled. A Council press release was issued on 31st August announcing this decision.

There was an immediate community reaction and a verbal request was received from the Cabinet Member to see if it was possible to avoid the permanent decommissioning of Ovington Drive Playground. An options note was produced on 5th September 2017.

Council officers identified an overall underspend on the current parks capital programme and the Leader and Cabinet member accepted this option and officers made the decision to vire £30,000 to fund the Ovington Drive Project.

The value of £30k is within the delegated limits of officers. The ability to undertake the work is also within the policy framework of the Council. There is a requirement to report to the Head of Corporate Resources any proposed variations to the capital programme during the year and this has been done. There is no requirement for a Council Minute.

6. What documentation is available?

There is no constitutional requirement to document a decision of this value that is within the Budget and Policy Framework of the Council. The constitution requires the Director of Corporate Resources to be notified of the virement and this has been done. The Capital Programme will be updated and reported through Cabinet and eventually Council as part of the regular monitoring report updates. This report is not for approval but for noting. The decision to fund the £30000 has also been discussed within the Southport Area Committee, Full Council and in correspondence with a number of Councillors. The following documentation is attached at the appendices:-

1. Briefing Paper – Closure of Ovington Drive Playground 14 August 2017
2. Ovington Drive Playground: update Options and Issues 4 September 2017

7. Is Smithy Green Play Ground receiving funding?

The Cabinet Member has agreed to allocate £25k of under spent capital allocation to the Smithy Green Play Ground. Ward Councillors have also agreed to contribute a significant sum from their ward budgets. In addition discussions are ongoing with other interested parties in order to assemble sufficient resources to enable this playground to be retained.

8. How many other playgrounds have closed or are at threat of closure?

The Council has closed or proposed closure of 4 playground sites:

- Ovington Drive, Southport
- Smithy Green, Formby
- Parkdale, Aintree

Potters Barn, Waterloo

There are no plans for removing any other playgrounds. Routine inspections will continue to be carried out and any changes in standards will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

3. **Question submitted by Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Moncur)**

Will the Cabinet Member provide the Council with his view as to what prospects there are presently, in the light of continuing Sustainability and Transformation Reviews, within the NHS for the maintenance of the present range of hospital services presently provided by:

(a) Fazakerley Hospital

(b) Southport and Ormskirk Hospital

Response:

"I would refer Councillor Dawson to the previous Council Motion as debated, agreed and recorded in November 2016."

FOR THE REVISED MOTION:

Councillors Atkinson, Jo Barton, Bennett, Booth, Bradshaw, Burns, Byrom, Carr, Carragher, Kevin Cluskey, Linda Cluskey, Cummins, Dams, Dodd, Fairclough, Friel, Gannon, Grace, Hands, Hardy, Keith, John Kelly, Joseph Kelly, Lappin, Daniel Lewis, Dan T. Lewis, Maher, McCann, McGinnity, McGuire, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, Brenda O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, O'Hanlon, Owens, Page, Pullin, Robinson, Roche, Roscoe, Sayers, Shaw, Spencer, Thomas, Lynne Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Weavers, Webster, Bill Welsh, Marianne Welsh and The Mayor.

AGAINST THE REVISED MOTION

Councillors Bliss, Dutton, Jamieson and Pitt.

ABSTENTION:

Councillor David Barton.

The Mayor declared that the Revised Motion was carried by 54 votes to 4 with 1 abstention and it was

RESOLVED:

That this Council deplores:

1. the severe threat, including the unacceptable spectre of privatisation to local NHS Services created by the draft 'Merseyside and Cheshire Sustainability and Transformation Programme' (STP) which has been developed in secret to cope with the effects of cutbacks in real terms NHS spending imposed by the government;

2. in particular threats posed in the published plans to NHS services presently provided within Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust, especially its A&E service; within the Aintree Hospital Trust and in respect of Mental Health Services across the Borough; and

3. the fact that this STP plan, addressing a £900 million 'black hole' in NHS finance across Merseyside and Cheshire over the next five years, has been 'worked up' in private with no input into the process from any democratic representatives, the public, NHS staff, GPs or trade unions.

This Council notes:

1. that these proposals come at a time when the cash available for Local Authority-delivered care has been massively cut, initially by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government and subsequently by this Conservative Government. It will therefore be placed under unacceptable pressure by further cuts in NHS services.

2. recent denials which have been issued following the public 'leaking' of these plans but also that these denials have not included any explanation of where else the money would come from; and

3. the all-Party NHS Parliamentary Committee, chaired by Dr Sarah Woolaston, has drawn attention to the factual deficiencies in government statements about future funding of the NHS.

This Council resolves:

1. to publicise the Cheshire and Merseyside Sustainability and Transformation Programme Plan and to inform the people of the Borough of Sefton of the effects which the changes proposed therein are likely to have on the health and social services provision provided to the local population which is a direct result of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Health and Social Care Act 2012 Reforms; and

2. to notify the Merseyside and Cheshire NHS Sustainability and Transformation Programme lead and the Secretary of State for Health of its opposition to any programme of cutbacks or privatisation locally and nationally in the NHS created to meet underfunding by the Conservative Government.

4. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills (Councillor Atkinson)**

“What incentives and provisions are being made for both the short and long- term to support both incumbent and prospective Stall Holders at the Southport Indoor Market?”

Response:

“A number of rent incentives are in place for the food stalls towards the rear of the market, these incentives give incoming traders a free rental period from between 1-3 months depending on length of lease. This incentive has seen two new businesses established and set up by young female entrepreneurs that continue to grow and thrive.

Sefton have also reduced the amount of deposit required to two weeks rent to enable traders to establish their businesses.

The Market also continues to be marketed effectively by way of print and digital throughout the year, throughout the summer months the Coach Hosts also continually direct the thousands of coach visitors to the Market once their coach arrives resulting in a large uplift of visitor numbers to the market.

Retail support is also given to all traders via The Market manager who has considerable retail experience.”

5. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services (Councillor Lappin)**

“What are the full measures being pursued to ensure the maximum potential for free Car Parking across Southport and the Sefton Borough for both local residents wishing to park their vehicles outside or adjacent to their homes and for prospective visitors and businesses alike that frequent particular shopping precincts on a regular basis?”

Response:

“Free car parking is not being pursued in areas/car parks where charges are currently being made. Parking for residents, visitors and businesses is made available wherever possible whilst also ensuring that the free flow of traffic is maintained.”

6. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

“Can Identifiable Sticker Labels be incorporated onto all outstanding Street Lighting Columns across Southport and the Sefton borough to ease with reporting and maintaining street lighting throughout the year for both local residents, Council Officers and Councillors alike?”

Response:

“As part of the new street lighting Contract, when the Contractor attends a lighting column whether as part of a demand or planned maintenance visit, they are required to apply a new number if there is not already one applied to the column.

In addition, if the Council are made aware of specific column locations without numbers they are collated and when adequate financial resources are available an instruction can be given to the Contractor to specifically attend site to just apply numbers when required. All of the street lighting assets are digitally mapped so in the instance that a resident reports a defective column, as long as they can provide an address (E.g. outside of No 1 Duke Street) the Council will still be able to locate the column even without the column number”

7. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Skills (Councillor Atkinson)**

“What is the full provision of Coastal Community Funding, if any, for members of the private Sector located across the Lord Street and Promenade Conservation Areas that previously featured in both the Southport Development Framework and Southport Development Strategy Prospectus Literature?”

Response:

“The Current CCF (Round 4) was secured for the Pier Project, funds cannot be diverted away from the current project. CCF Round 5 is open for EOI and Private Sector companies can apply.”

8. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Moncur)**

“What plans are there to fulfil residents’ numerous requests and the vast potential for Sefton Council to generate much welcomed revenue for the provision of all services such as Social Care Borough wide through the clearance and reutilisation of Birkdale Beach?”

Response:

“Sefton Coast Plan adopted in 2017 sets out a new vision for Sefton’s Coast which maximises all opportunities for leisure and recreation, health and wellbeing as well as access, conservation and community engagement. The Delivery Plan endeavours to find the right balance between developing the visitor economy and the needs of people and coastal communities, with protecting and conserving our natural assets and environment.

The Coast Plan sets out an intention to create visitor gateways at Crosby, Formby, Ainsdale and Marshside which provide high quality visitor infrastructure, sufficiency of amenity and access for all.

Councillor Barton will be aware through his personal briefing by the Executive Director, that the decision has already been approved by the Council to release land to National Trust at Formby in order to achieve this aspiration. National Trust and Sefton Council arrived at this agreement based upon shared values of access, community engagement and conservation and an intent to invest very sizeable sums of money into this location.

Projects at other coast gateways are all underway and will be subject to public consultation at an appropriate time.”

9. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing (Councillor Hardy)**

“What Plans do Sefton Council have to support the Homeless, especially those members of Society who may be former Armed Forces Personnel that have bravely defended our country against the global and national evils of conflict and warfare?”

Response:

“The Council provides a range of services to help homeless people. As well as our own Housing Options team, we commission a number of VCF organisations to provide services to help homeless people.

We are currently conducting a formal Homelessness Review, in advance of producing a new Homelessness Strategy later this year. This will consider current and future projected levels of homelessness and the types of homelessness we most need to address. It will then allow us to consider the types of services we need to consider providing.

We already recognise the particular needs of ex-armed services personnel. We have recently agreed to award funding from our Homeless Support Grant to Veterans in Sefton to deliver services to support ex-armed service veterans to secure accommodation and to provide support services for these clients to sustain their accommodation.

We have also worked with and supported a homeless charity, Emmaus, who opened a new accommodation scheme in Seaforth in September 2017. Emmaus provides accommodation for 28 people, training, work opportunities and personal support to enable homeless people rebuild their lives. They have operated a number of schemes nationally, and state that a high proportion of their clients are ex-services people”.

10. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing (Councillor Hardy)**

“Can District Funding be capped for utilisation within that said District only, in particular instances whereby a secondary district may already have sufficient District Funding in the first place?”

Response:

“I make the presumption, having perused Cllr Barton’s rather confusing question, that he actually refers in the said question to Ward funds.

If this is the case, notwithstanding the difference between Cllr Barton’s question regarding District Funding of which I have no knowledge and ward funds which are made available to be utilised by the relevant ward councillors; the distribution of ward funds are at the discretion of the said ward councillors. As to the second part of Cllr Barton’s question appertaining to secondary districts, I am afraid I do not quite understand what he means.”

11. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services (Councillor Lappin)**

“Why were Car Parking Meters and time-limited restrictions introduced across the Sefton Borough, especially Southport Town Centre:-

*Which Councillors approved this?

*Which year did this occur?

*Can any of these car parking restrictions now be reversed in light of present challenges faced by all members of society in accessing the many parts of our local Communities?"

Response:

"Parking charges and limited waiting have been introduced in the Borough at various times over the last decades in order to control the use of the available parking space. Specifically for Southport Town Centre I believe charges were first introduced in 1993. Details of the Councillors involved would be available in the Council minutes. There are no proposals to amend any restrictions at this time. Consideration will be given to viable suggestions made by Councillors."

12. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

"What subsidies if any can be allocated to Central Government to provide additional uptake of preferred more discreet Car Parking away from private residential streets and commuter roads such as Trafalgar road, Birkdale, Southport, and could this be even part-matched through district expenditure to provide better peace and goodwill between neighbours and respect Government Offices such as the Smedley Hydropathic Centre (Her Majesty's Royal Passport Office)?"

Response

"This Council does subsidise Central Government. I understand that Ward Councillors have met with representatives of Smedley Hydro to discuss the particular parking issues in this area and will progress the issues through officers."

13. **Question submitted by Councillor David Barton to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Building Control (Councillor Veidman)**

"What are the full range of protections, guidance and funding subsidies that are either being presently or may yet be used by Sefton Council to support and ultimately ensure the protection of buildings of great religious and civic importance such as the Arnside Road Synagogue in Southport?"

Response:

"Quite a wide ranging question without much specific detail so can only give a wide ranging generic answer.

Protections, guidance and funding/subsidies can depend on a number of factors, however, purely relating to its Heritage status they are as follows.

Listed Building

All Listing Buildings still in use as a place of worship have ecclesiastical exemption from the need to apply for Listed building Consent.

For Grade I and II* listed building Historic England funding may be available.

For facilities that are no longer in use as a place of worship and have been made redundant, ecclesiastical exemption does not apply and normal Listed Building controls and policy would apply.

Detailed information can be found on Historic England and Heritage Lottery fund websites for protection, guidance and subsidies/funding

Conservation Area

Any building within a Conservation Area of more than 115 cubic metres would require planning permission for its demolition.

Planning permission may be required for development depends on its specific use and permitted development rights.

Detailed information can be found on Sefton's website for protection and guidance, the Council does not have any specific subsidies/funding available.

Non designated Heritage Assets

These are for buildings that are not Listed nor in a Conservation Area such as Arnside Road Synagogue in Southport.

Planning permission may be required for development dependant on its specific use and permitted development rights. If permission is required and it is classed as a non-designated Heritage Asset then this will be a material consideration in the determination of the application.

Detailed information can be found on Sefton's website within Sefton Local Plan for protection and guidance, the Council does not have any specific subsidies/funding available."

14. **Question submitted by Councillor Dr Pugh to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

"Can the Cabinet member please explain why remedial work to Lord Street was necessary last week given that it has recently been re-surfaced"?

Response:

"Thank you for your enquiry regarding Lord Street. Since its completion a number of localised defects have been identified by Engineers within the Highway Maintenance team which have been shared with the Contractor. The condition of those defects are being regularly monitored by planned priority inspections of Lord Street which take place each month.

Unless any particular defect becomes dangerous in the interim, which would temporarily be repaired as occurred last week, officers are continuing to monitor the whole carriageway until the spring, following which a final defects correction (snagging) list will be formally issued to the contractor for rectification. This is standard operating practice on all such highway maintenance works.

Should you require any further information then please contact the Highway Maintenance Manager, Andrew Sawyer on Tel No 0151 934 3314."

15. **Question submitted by Councillor John Kelly to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing (Councillor Hardy)**

“Can you explain the Council's role in the supply of knife wands to assist with safeguarding our night time economy?”

Response

“As Sefton Council’s nominated representative and Chair of Sefton Safer Communities Partnership (SSCP) I keep a strong focus on Sefton’s vibrant night time economy. On the 16 March 2017 Ian Willman (Service Manager) gave a presentation to the SSCP on alcohol and drug related crime/anti-social behaviour and the night time economy. This provided information, gathered from Sefton’s Strategic Intelligence Assessment, on:-

- The night time economies in the following areas, namely, Southport, Formby, Crosby, South Road Waterloo, Bootle and Maghull
- Domestic Incidents/Offences associated with the night time economy.

On the 16 June 2017 that SSCP received a report from Public Health which provided an update on:-

- Commissioned services for substance misuse
- **the Cheshire and Merseyside approach to reducing alcohol harm through licensing**
- an audit against best practice relating to street drinking.

The report concluded that Sefton was taking action against the best practice guidance in all three elements of the multi-component approach.

During this time as Chair of the SSCP I have requested information from Merseyside Police and subsequently held meetings to discuss ways in which we could further improve the safety of our residents and visitors to our night time economy venues. A proposal from Merseyside Police asked the SSCP to fund a number of Knife Wands given the rise in related crime/incidents across the region on Friday 12 January 2018 and a synopsis was provided on why this would be an effective deterrent and positive action especially after the tragic incident in Liverpool City Centre of Sam Cook.

The Chair of the SSCP is given delegated authority by the SSCP to make funding decisions outside of formal meetings. This was agreed and provided on 9 June 2016. This continued in 2017 with the agreement of the SSCP. As the Council is a member of the Partnership the wands were approved and supported by the Council.”

16. **Question submitted by Councillor Dan Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services (Councillor Lappin)**

“A number of Councils have published gender pay gap data on the Government’s official website. Can the Leader of the Council please inform me of:

- a) The mean and median hourly difference in wages between men and women
- b) The proportion of men and women in each quartile of the payroll
- c) The percentage of men and women who receive a bonus
- d) The mean and median difference in bonus payments between men and women.”

Response

“The Gender Pay Gap information will shortly be published and the following is in response to the questions raised:

a) *The mean and median hourly difference in wages between men and women:*

Male Mean Hourly Rate = £13.71

Female Mean Hourly Rate = £12.63

Overall differential = £ 1.08

The Mean gender pay gap is the overall differential represented as a percentage of the male mean hourly rate which equates to 7.88%.

Male Median Hourly Rate = £11.58

Female Median Hourly Rate = £10.29

Overall differential = £ 1.29

The Median gender pay gap is the overall differential represented as a percentage of the male median hourly rate which equates to 11.14%.

b) *The proportion of men and women in each quartile of the payroll:*

Quartile	Upper Pay range from Highest paid officer (chief Executive) to £16.67 per hour	Upper Middle Pay range from £16.67 to £10.71 per hour	Lower Middle Pay range from £10.70 to £8.43 per hour	Lower Pay range from £8.43 to £7.73 per hour plus apprentice pay rates	Total employees
Total No Employees	794	795	794	795	3178
Female	478	516	450	631	2075
Male	316	279	344	164	1103
Female %	60.20	64.91	56.68	79.37	65%
Male %	39.80	35.09	43.32	20.63	35%

- ***The pay rates relate to the pay applicable as at 31.3.2017 therefore before the 1.4.2017 pay rise.***

Sefton Quartile Figures

- “Of the top 50 highest earners in the Council as at 31.3.2017 26 were male and 24 were female.

- There is a higher percentage of females than males in the Upper, Upper middle and Lower middle pay ranges.
- There is a higher percentage of females than males in the lower pay range.”

c) *The percentage of men and women who receive a bonus*

We do not pay a bonus

d) *The mean and median difference in bonus payments between men and women.*

Not applicable”.

17. **Question submitted by Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Safeguarding (Councillor John Joseph Kelly)**

“On December 7th 2017 at Sefton MBC Cabinet it was agreed to not determine specific changes to the Borough’s Children and Family Centres, however, it was agreed (Minute 93[4]) that:

“The funding for the Family, Children centres and School Readiness will be contained within a new funding methodology identified in paragraph 7.4 to the report which will in many cases reduce budgets, which will in turn potentially impact on activity delivery and opening hours” - with implementation of the changes, details of which were delegated to the Cabinet Member scheduled to commence (Minute 93[11]) in July 2018.

Given that the proposed level of revenue cutbacks (identified in the Report to Cabinet as being £996,550 per annum across the Borough) proposed to be experienced by the Southport facilities appear to be roughly 20 per cent of present annual budget for the Children’s Centres and 30 per cent for the Family Centre in my ward I must presume that there will already have been measures taken and plans made to achieve these savings. I would therefore be grateful to receive information addressing both (i) effects already created in these centres, and (ii) the intended/planned effects of such measures in the coming year, in fulfilment of the decision of Cabinet in December in each of the three Children and Family facilities which are now proposed to cover the Southport & Formby area, in terms of variation from the position at 1st April 2017 to the position at either 1st April 2017 or 1st July 2017 and to the position anticipated at 1st April 2019 for any/all of the measure (a) to (e) below:

- (a) staff employed (total and fte)
- (b) total staff hours
- (c) non-staff recurrent budgets
- (d) significant process/staff output measures i.e. units of activity in main areas of work
- (e) significant outcome measures

. . . for both Family Centres and Children’s Centres”

Response:

“We have already confirmed at the Cabinet meeting on 7 December 2017 that when these details become available we will be able to provide this information to the Children Services and Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Currently Council Managers are liaising with the centres to further develop the offer in a wider integrated way, including with health, voluntary partners and the Councils services for children and families. It should be stressed that the majority of the children's centres are based in schools with their own governance arrangements. Therefore I would suggest that you contact the individual centres as they may be able to assist with the detailed questions.”