

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills)	Date of Meeting:	Tuesday 3 July 2018
Subject:	Sefton Economic Strategy Framework		
Report of:	Executive Director	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Regeneration & Skills		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

To update on the Sefton Economic Strategy consultation exercise which concluded on 4 May 2018.

Recommendation(s):

(1) That the report is noted.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To keep members updated on progress with the Sefton Economic Strategy Framework; the consultation process and the next steps

None

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

None

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

£70,000 revenue was approved to fund the development of both the Economic Assessment and Strategy Framework for Sefton. Following invitation to tender process the work was awarded to Regeneris Consulting.

(B) Capital Costs

N/a

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets): Consultation co-ordination activities will be undertaken by existing staff within existing budgets
Legal Implications: None
Equality Implications: None

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable: Inclusive growth is the core objective of the strategy framework to set a direction for action so that the impacts of economic growth reach many more of Sefton's residents including the most vulnerable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: Inclusive Growth is the core objective of the strategy framework including a focus on 'People' to better connect economic opportunity to the lived experience of residents; Investing in education, skills and employability is also one of 7 key objectives
Commission, broker and provide core services: Reconfiguring public services and community led delivery and generating new sources of finance to support growth are two of the 7 key objectives for the strategy
Place – leadership and influencer: Repositioning and reprofiling Sefton is one of the 7 key objectives for the strategy
Drivers of change and reform: Reconfiguring public services and community led delivery and generating new sources of finance to support growth are two of the 7 key objectives for the strategy
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: Delivering new development and infrastructure, Creating and growing local, private and social enterprise and securing new inward investment are three of the 7 key objectives for the strategy
Greater income for social investment: Creating and growing local, private and social enterprise is one of the 7 key objectives for the strategy
Cleaner Greener

Under Delivering new development and infrastructure reference is made to the mitigation of any adverse environmental impacts as a result of economic regeneration growth; the strategy also focuses on attracting new cleaner greener investment for Digital, particularly the roll-out of ultrafast broadband.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD.5060/18) and Head of Regulation and Compliance (LD.4344/18) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Businesses

Developers

Investors

Professional Intermediaries & Networks e.g. Chambers of Commerce; Federation of Small Businesses; Professional Sefton

Other Liverpool City Region Local Authorities/Chief Executives

Combined Authority

Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership & Sector Boards

Liverpool City Region Employment & Skills Board

Prime Contractors & Supply Chains

Members of Sefton Leadership Collaborative, including Further Education, CCGs,

Sefton Council for Voluntary Services

The ten Parishes

Organisations with insight into residents of Working Age especially Jobseekers, People on Low Incomes, and Equality Groups

Transport Providers/Commissioners

Any other relevant groups/organisations

Internal consultees:

Elected Members

All members of SLB & Programme Board

Yammer (Sefton Council)

Sefton Business Friendly Group

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1.0 Background

1.1 Cabinet Member – Regeneration authorised the preparation of an Economic Assessment and Economic Strategy for Sefton at her meeting of 1st September 2016 and consultants Regeneris were appointed by open competitive tender on 10th October 2016.

1.2 In 2016 the council carried out a borough wide consultation and asked people what they thought was important for Sefton now and in for the future. Over 5,000 people took part and the information helped to develop the Vision for Sefton 2030. People told us what was important and this included:

- Looking after our town centres
- Having houses that people can afford to buy or rent
- There needs to be more jobs for people

1.3 The Sefton Economic Assessment, a factual statement of the borough's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, was approved by Cabinet Member – Regeneration at her meeting of 9th March 2017. The Cabinet Member also approved at the same meeting the preparation of a draft Strategic Framework for Action, or the building blocks of the Strategy.

2.0 Consultation exercise

2.1 Business and Public consultation started on 8 March and ended 4 May 2018; an extra week was added to allow for known late responses and letters of representation. The purpose of the consultation was to inform stakeholders of the Council's Economic Assessment, and to consult (seek views) on the draft Framework for Action, the building blocks of the Sefton Economic Strategy. The focus for the consultation was the actions arising from the findings of the Assessment:

- Creating more higher quality and better paid local jobs
- More people in work and in more productive jobs
- Strengthening the skills base to deliver economic growth and benefit communities
- Deliver new housing and employment land to enable growth
- Improve the digital infrastructure and extend its benefits

- Improve transport infrastructure for growth and sustainability
- Tackle health and well-being challenges experienced by some of Sefton's communities
- Make more of Sefton as a place to live, visit and invest in.

2.2 A stakeholder analysis was completed, which guided priorities for the consultation. The consultation methods were matched to the stakeholder analysis, and to the level of consultation. Focus groups in the north and south of the Borough were proposed to capture the views and input of job seekers and adults with learning disabilities on the key themes. The consultation plans were presented to the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel on the 17th November, 2017.

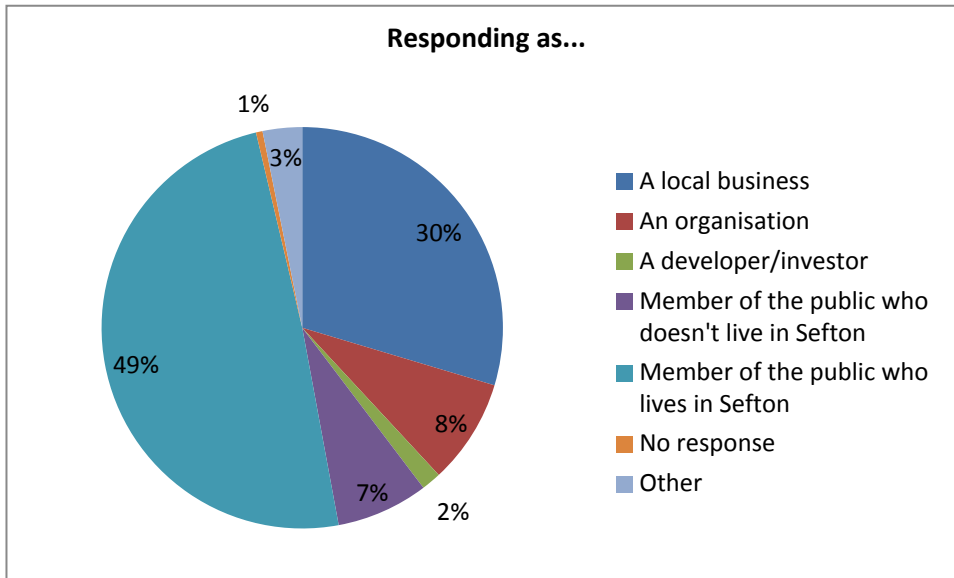
2.3 The following methodology was used:

- The draft Sefton Economic Strategy document
- A standard version questionnaire (on eConsult, hard copy and distributed to libraries)
- An Easy Read version of the questionnaire
- Information to the InvestSefton Business Mailing List (c.3,700), directing them to the on-line questionnaire
- A Business Focus Group
- Focus groups in the north and south with Sefton@Work clients
- A Focus group with StrandbyMe attendees
- A Focus group with People First (Adults with learning disabilities)
- Information on the Sefton Council website and intranet
- Information on social media

3.0 Results

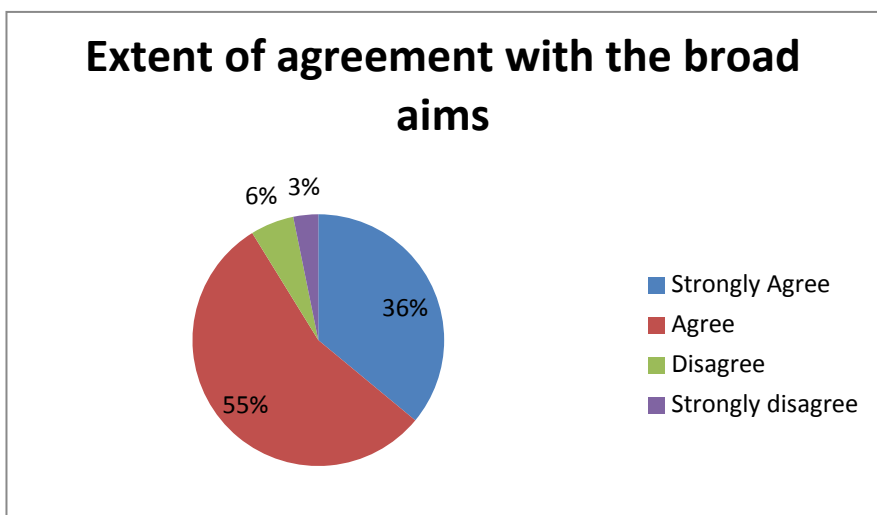
3.1 Between 8 March and 4 May 2018, 189 questionnaires were completed (164 on line; 24 of these were ER and 1 standard hard copy). It should be noted that whilst 189 people started to complete the questionnaires, some were only partly completed. To comply with Data Protection, all questionnaires, whether on-line or hard copy and whether a standard version or Easy Read, had a Privacy notice outlining the reasons the data was being asked for and what would be done with it afterwards..

Breakdown of responses by type



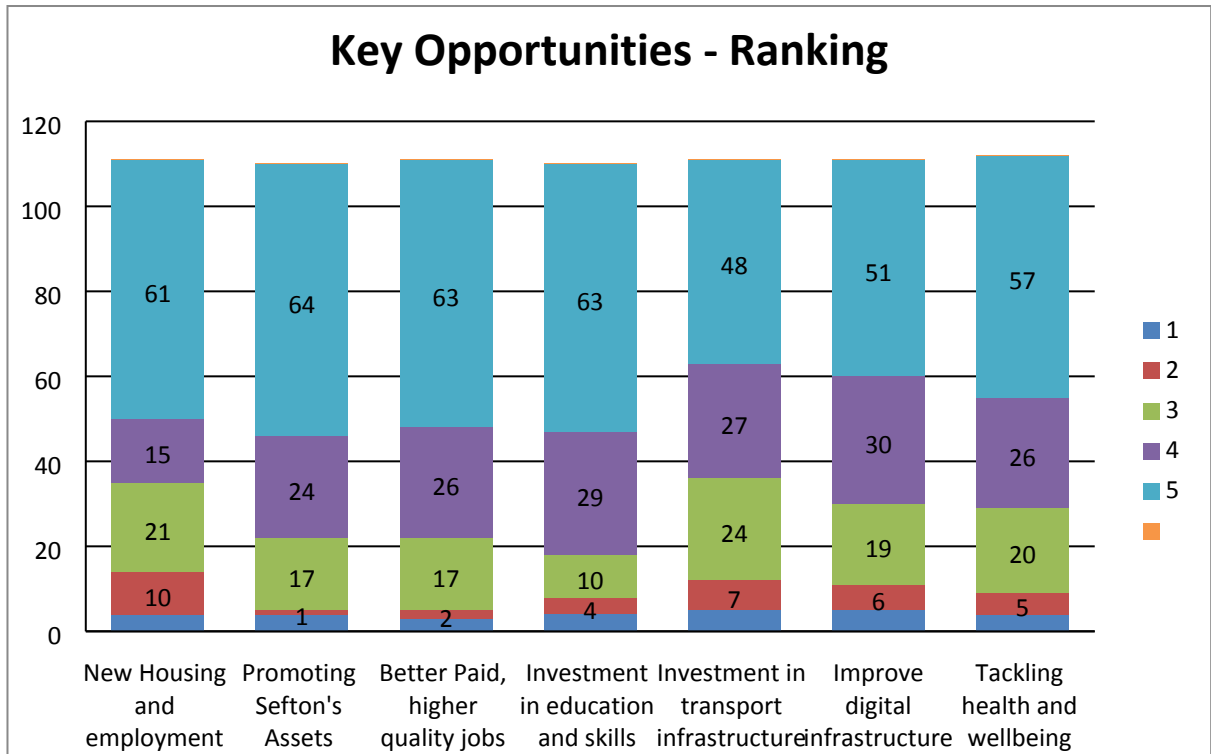
3.2 The above graph shows that the two main groups of people who responded were members of the public who live in **Sefton (49%)** and **local businesses (30%)**. It should be noted that this is actually an increase of **65% on the 2014 Sefton Economic Strategy consultation**. Strategy consultations are not renowned for attracting large responses particularly at a time when there are other competing consultation exercises across the city-region. However InvestSefton, Sefton@work and the Consultation and Engagement lead undertook a range of follow up activities and focused events to help capture more qualitative data.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the three main priority areas (People, Places and Productivity)?



3.3 The above graph shows that of the 125 people who completed this question, **91% either agreed or strongly agreed with the three broad aims of the draft Sefton Economic Strategy.**

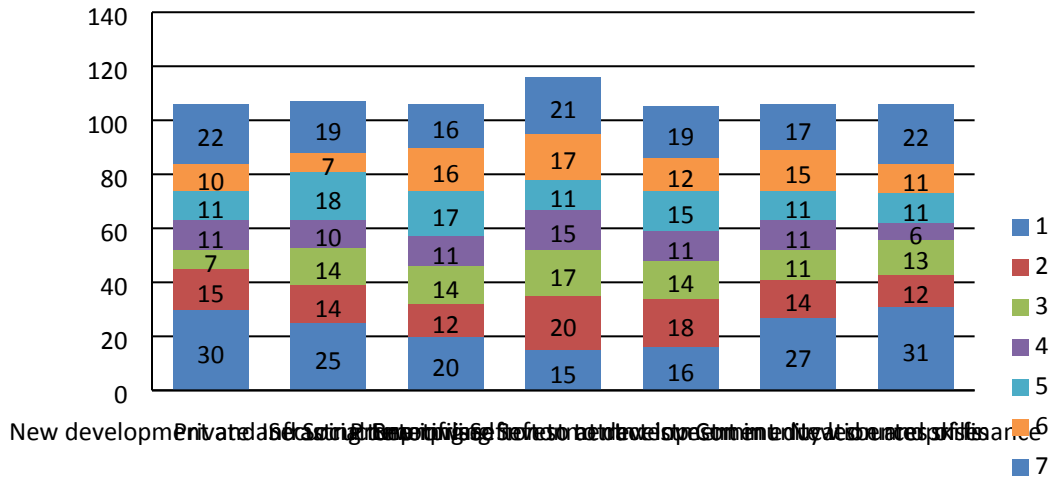
How important are the Key Opportunity areas? (1 not important – 5 is very important).



3.4 Respondents had the opportunity to rank 7 areas that had been identified as key Opportunity areas, with 1 being not important to 5 being very important. Of the people who responded to this question, it seems that all seven areas are deemed very important (rating score of 5), however if you add up the 4 and 5 ranking scores, then **Investment in Education and Skills** is the top priority with a ranking score of 93, followed closely by **better paid, better quality jobs** (89 responses) and **Promoting Sefton's Assets** (88 responses).

How important are the Action Areas? (1 being the most important – 7 being the least important)

Priority Action Areas - Ranking



3.5 Respondents had the opportunity to rank in order of priority seven Priority Action Areas and were asked to rank from **1 being the most important to 7 being the least important**. On review of the responses, the people who completed this question either ranked the priority action areas as instructed or chose to complete using multiple responses, for example giving a priority action area two of the same number. It has been agreed to use all the information provided as in completing the question, either method indicates where the priority areas the respondents wish to focus on.

3.6 From the responses in the graph above, the priority action areas that are the most important to the respondents (rating number 1) are **new sources of finance** and **new development and employment**. Adding up the ranking scores for 1 and 2, then new sources of finance is still the top Priority Action Area, followed closely by **Investing in education and skills**.

4.0 Next steps

4.1 Officers are currently in the process of analysing the final data including an equalities assessment, postcode breakdown of respondents and summarising comments and letters of representation received. Those respondents who have requested to be kept advised of the final version and action plan will also be placed onto a database in line with GDPR. The report will also include summaries of each focus group, conclusion and outline recommendations and next steps.

4.2 The Strategy is intended to provide a clear framework for action to assist the Council with its ambitions for:

- Business Growth & Investment

- Business Generation & Enterprise Culture
- Sector Development
- Nurturing new Growth Clusters
- Place Marketing and Inward Investment
- Town Centre Investment Strategies and Frameworks
- Post-Inspection Revision of the Local Plan (2017), including Land Availability for Housing and Employment
- Infrastructure Planning
- Strategic Transport Planning and Scheme Identification
- Workforce Development
- Employability and Inclusive Growth
- Public Sector Reform and the Council's Transformation Programme
- Social Value in Commissioning and Procurement

4.3 Regeneris Consultants has completed the first two phases of the contract (Assessment and draft strategy). Officers are currently determining the level of Regeneris' involvement in completing the strategy. The key next steps are:

- Present final consultation and key findings report to O&S Scrutiny (Regeneration & Skills) -3 July and Cabinet 26 July
- Present final consultation report to Public Engagement & Consultation Panel- 14 September 2018
- Produce final Sefton Economic Strategy including a set of more detailed Strategic Action Plans that detail the actions required to give effect to the Strategy, key milestones, delivery choices and/or partners, and forecast phased costs and outputs (as appropriate).