Strategic Transport

Port Access

- The programme of multi-modal interventions is continuing including rail infrastructure requirements. Work on the doubling of the rail line into the Port has been delayed several times and should now be delivered in 2020. Subsequent improvements to signals at Earlestown West have also been delayed but are also expected to be delivered by the end of 2020.

- Highways England has indicated that a newsletter update and public information sessions would be provided in October. The information sessions are scheduled for 22nd and 24th October. It is now expected that the formal consultation will not take place until early 2020, which will affect the potential date for Highways England to submit their application to the Planning Inspectorate. Highways England has indicated a possible start of construction in late 2022.

LTP and Growth Plan

- Sefton is continuing to work with the LCR Combined Authority, Merseytravel and the other local authorities on the delivery of the transport capital programme.

- Works have continued on the construction of the new slip roads at junction 1 of the M58 motorway with works focussing on the earthworks and drainage operations as well as the installation of part of the Maghull – Kirkby cycle track. Traffic management has been introduced on the M58 during night time closures. If the scheme remains on programme then the slip roads should be operational in spring 2020. The slip roads and associated land will then be transferred to Highways England. The Contractor, John Sisk and Sons, are committed to leaving a positive legacy and have agreed to undertake projects at a local school and in Lunt Meadows wildlife reserve. They are also committed to improving on their ‘good’ score under the Considerate Constructors scheme.

- Works are progressing on the North Liverpool Key Corridor scheme. The new signals at the junction of Millers Bridge/Derby Road junction have been commissioned and the junction is fully operational. Accommodation works have been completed on the sites to the east of Derby Road, stats diversion works have been undertaken and new kerbs and highway drainage installed. The carriageway is currently being widened. Much of Regent Road has been resurfaced within the Sefton section.
Liverpool City Council have experienced some delay in securing the land currently occupied by Wildthang and Lookers. The new Wildthang facility is being constructed and once completed will be occupied, allowing the relevant section of the existing building to be demolished and carriageway widening to be undertaken. The City Council have confirmed that the highway works in this area will be completed under a separate arrangement to avoid delaying the main contract.

Work continues on the sustainable transport intervention proposals for Years 3-6 as part of the City Region programme. Sefton has three schemes in 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 various licenses and land agreements necessary to facilitate the cycle improvements are still progressing. The scheme on Buckley Hill Lane (to relieve Edge Lane) is currently being delivered, although delays have been encountered as a result of stats diversions. Planning approval for the Maghull to Kirkby cycle route has been granted and part of the works delivered (see above), and the plans have been completed for the Southport scheme. The junction works at the 5 lamps junction will be delivered in conjunction with a cycle improvement scheme on Great Georges Road, for which a consultation exercise is being planned.

Grant funding for the development of Outline Business Cases for the Southport Eastern Access and the Maritime Corridor projects was approved by the CA in June and Offer Letters have now been received and signed. Atkins have been appointed under the Council’s TTSS framework to undertake the Maritime Corridor scheme. Some further traffic count survey has been commissioned to support the modelling work.

The major junction improvement at the Dover Road junction on the A59 Northway started in July, initially with the stats diversions. A contractor, AE Yates, has been appointed for the main works and these are due to start on site in late October with a view to completing the works by spring 2020.

Local Transport Schemes

The Transportation Capital Programme for 2019/20 was agreed with Cabinet Member in June 2019 and an update report will be presented in November 2019.

Sustainable Transport

The European Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) funding for two major cycling schemes was approved in December 2018. The design of a new, inland pedestrian and cycle route at Crosby Coastal Park, which will avoid the issue of wind-blown sand on the promenade, has largely been completed with works programmed to be delivered together with the Great George’s Road scheme. Similarly design work is progressing on the Coastal Road cycle route with a view to starting delivery in Autumn 2019.
Highway Development and Design

Planning Applications

- In July, August and September 2019, the team has processed 264 planning applications despite ongoing challenges associated with availability of staff. This includes applications for sites identified in the Council’s adopted Local Plan. This continues to involve close liaison with case officers from the planning department.

Section 38 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements

- There has been a consistently high level of submissions and the subsequent processing of these at times, lengthy and complex applications, particularly following the approval of planning applications for Local Plan sites.

- The report is as follows:
  - No of live s38 and current developments subject to a s38 application - 33
  - No of stalled or no activity (on the part of a developer) – 8 but developers continue to be followed up on these matters
  - Number of development sites adopted within the last 3 months - 0
  - No of submissions awaiting technical approval - 8
  - Number of new and recent submissions awaiting administrative set up - 5

Section 278 Highways Act 1980 legal agreements

- The numbers of this type of applications remains high, generally due to the approval of planning applications for Local Plan sites. The team are currently managing 58 live s278 HA 1980 highway works schemes in various stages of development on behalf of the Council and with values exceeding £1.5m. The successful delivery of these schemes is dependent on close liaison with the Legal, Finance and Planning Departments.

- In terms of Minor Works agreements, a revised Minor Works process has been approved by Cabinet Member. One Minor Works scheme has been completed, with a further two scheduled for delivery and a third awaiting payment from the developer before it can be delivered.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

- English Coastal Path – Liaison with Natural England and Green Sefton is continuing and on-site route feasibility reviews are almost completed. Green Sefton are closely involved in this project with available time charging to cover staffing resources and overheads. Natural England’s programme is to publish the report identifying the route and the margin in early 2020.

- We are advising on the preparation of one Schedule 14 Application for up to eight additional PROWs associated with the St Luke’s Church Road scheme. The St Luke’s Church Road application is ongoing with contract negotiations with landowners. One landowner has signed the agreement and negotiations are continuing with the other three. The Planning Inspectorate has imposed a 12 month deadline to consider this application.
Seven Definitive Map Modification Orders have been made to update the Definitive Map and these are currently being consulted on.

Legal Event Modification Orders for Southport and Bootle have been made. The Definitive Map and Statements for these areas have been updated and given a new Relevant Date.

Strategic Highways Development and Future Planning

- The team is continuing to work closely with the Planning Department to provide a ‘One Council’ strategic approach to development to ensure that the necessary new transport infrastructure is in place to support new developments coming forward in future years.

- The team is continuing to request construction traffic management plans for new developments so that we can manage the highway network efficiently and effectively with minimum disruption to users of the highway and with the important benefit of highway safety. Once plans have been agreed, the team is working closely with colleagues in network management and planning to ensure that the plans are being adhered to.

Highway Design

- This part of the team continues to support the development control function and the delivery of strategic transport investment schemes, such as potential major schemes and the STEP programme.

- Current schemes include:
  - A59 Northway/Dover Road junction improvements – design, procurement and supervision of a scheme to improve capacity and improve accessibility along the A59 through Maghull, at the Dover Road/Liverpool Road South junction. Stats diversion works started in July 2019 and the main works are scheduled to start in October.
  - Various cycle improvement schemes to link the eastern side of Southport (Kew area) to the town centre and seafront and the Maghull to Kirkby cycle route, all funded through the STEP programme.
  - Site supervision of the A565 Buckley Hill junction improvements is ongoing with an anticipated completion in early 2020 following delays associated with stats diversions.

Permit Scheme

- Income remains on target for this year.

- Training has been arranged on the new national permitting system (Street Manager). Discussions are still on-going with existing and new suppliers to ensure a smooth transition takes place on 1st April 2020.

Winter Service

- The winter service policy & operational plan for this year was approved by overview & scrutiny committee on 17th September.
Salt deliveries have been completed and the gritting vehicles have been serviced and calibrated in preparation for the forthcoming season.

Halton & Warrington have now joined the LCR winter Group. We are now able to view their forecasting data and share decision making information across the whole region.

**Street Lighting**

- New faults are still being received daily from the public which continue to be recorded and processed accordingly. The Contractor is currently performing well against their target KPI’s.

- The Lighting team are continuing to review different types of LED lantern in terms of their price, warranty and optical performance which may lead to some on street trials.

**Traffic Signals**

- The LCR joint Traffic Signal Maintenance Contract continues to function well across the city region.

- Works on Northway to upgrade the existing Pelican Crossing at the junction of Dodds Lane have been delayed however are now anticipated to be on site in November.

- The LCRCA UTC Communications upgrade project remains ongoing with a current forecast completion date of February 2019. A number of new controllers have now been installed and BT are completing new connections daily.

**Highway Maintenance**

- The delivery of the Highway Maintenance programme remains ongoing with carriageway resurfacing projects continuing.

- Weeds - Spray 3 of the annual weed spray programme is now completed. Spray 4 has now been suspended with a view to completing additional manual grubbing up works if required.

- Cut 8 of 8 of the planned grass cutting programme is ongoing and is likely to be completed by the end of October subject to the weather.

- Officers from the Highways Team are currently working with the LCR Authorities and the CA in preparing Bids and Expressions of Interest for the DfT Challenge Fund. The Bids must be submitted by the 31\textsuperscript{st} October.

**Cleansing Services**

**Food Waste / Garden Waste – DEFRA Response**
The Government has now published its responses to the consultation on Food and “free” green waste collections. It has determined to press ahead with legislation to make food waste collections on a weekly basis compulsory by 2023.

The 6 Councils plus the MRWA (Merseyside Waste & Recycling Authority) that make up the City Region convened a meeting in early October to progress the matter with DEFRA. The MRWA has been charged by its board of Directors to progress with the 6 consistent City Region Councils to operate a LCR approach to the collection of food waste post 2023, initial discussions with DEFRA will hopefully commence in November 2020.

Government through the national press has indicated strongly that it supports fortnightly ‘free’ garden waste collections, and whilst no formal decision has been made by Government it would appear that the Conservative Party will include ‘free’ garden waste collections as part of its manifesto in a future general election. Sefton is currently ‘free’ (i.e. via the Council tax payment) however it is currently 3 weekly. If this was to become a statutory function (fortnightly) then additional resources would have to be made available from DEFRA to the Council.

A quick reminder that the green waste service is suspended from December until March 2020, details of last / first collections next year are available on the Council website.

Leaf Clearance
The street cleansing operation has begun its annual removal of leaves from highways. It is expected that we will collect approximately 600 tonnes of leaves which will be sent for composting. Members are asked to be patient during leaf fall as the large volumes of leaves generated means that at times the removal service can be overwhelmed during the three month removal period by the sheer volume of leaves which can fall following a storm or a series of windy nights.

Staff will work at weekends to assist in the collection of leaves.

Sefton is the only City Region Council that composts its leaves for soil conditioning.

Remembrance Sunday.
Cleansing Services will be very much involved with this series of important events across the Borough on Remembrance Sunday. Every memorial and surrounding areas will be visited, cleansed and jet washed prior to, and on the Sunday itself, to ensure that all services can be delivered with the required levels of solemnity and dignity.

Events.
Cleansing Services has now completed its 2019 events calendar, apart from Bonfire Night and Christmas lights switch-on events throughout the Borough. Cleansing activity at all events has been delivered to a very high standard with many compliments received from organisers and visitors alike. Cleansing Services now also looks forward to participating in the “Borough of Culture” events in 2020.

Burials & Cremations

New Software – ‘Plotbox’
The Burial & Cremation service is currently testing data which was migrated from ‘Epilog’ (the current IT system) to a new bespoke IT system, called ‘Plotbox’. This is a critical step in the service area’s ICT transformation and enables the statutory duty
to register burials, cremations and graves. Data sign-off is due the end of October 2019, training will be delivered November and the system is due to go live at the end of 2019.

Grants of Burial
The complexities of rights to a grave were reported in June 2019. The immediate need to ensure GDPR compliance with grave assignments was delivered. Otherwise there is no change or progress to report and recommendations will be delivered as part of the service review.

Southport Crematorium
The pick-up point for mourners after a service at Southport Crematorium was improved to create level access. The works were managed by the Highways Design team and their term contractor, Graysons. Due to the need for the Crematorium to stay operational the works needed to stick to agreed time scales. The result allows for mourners to access funeral cars without having to step off a pavement and whilst also being under cover in the event of inclement weather. Additional improvements are being developed to further improve the services on offer at Southport Crematorium, and these will be reported via future updates as works progress.