

Agenda Item 5.

Sefton Public Engagement and Consultation Panel.

Date: Friday 16th January 2026.

Title: Annual Report 2025.

Report of: Jayne Vincent, Consultation and Engagement Lead.

1. Purpose of the Report.

1.1 To receive information about the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel's 2025 Annual Report.

2. Background.

2.1 The main purpose of the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel is to coordinate and ensure the quality of public engagement and consultation, in accordance with the standards for engagement and consultation.

3. Annual Report.

3.1 During 2025, there has been six meetings of the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel, where the Panel has appraised the following:

- 14 proposals for consultation
- 7 Feedback and Evaluation Reports
- 6 updates from the Strategic Youth Voice Steering Group

In addition, 2 proposals for consultation have been shared virtually for feedback during the year.

3.2 The table on the following page provides details of the reports and presentations to the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel in 2025. Please note that these are in the order of being presented to the Panel in 2025 and are consultation proposals unless it mentions feedback and evaluation report.

Activity	Status as of December 2025.
Revision of the Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Policy	Activity completed.
Wrap-a-round Childcare expansion Survey Feedback and Evaluation	Activity completed.
Early Years Childcare Survey for Parents/Carers	Activity completed.
Coproduction for the Adult Social Care Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy	Activity completed.
SEND Parent and Carer Annual Survey Feedback and Evaluation Report	Activity completed.
Digital Strategy Feedback and Evaluation Report	Activity completed.
Supported Living consultation/coproduction	Ongoing.
Travel Support Consultation	Activity completed.
Improving Information Group Update	Ongoing
Air Quality Action Plan	Activity completed.
School Readiness Survey	Activity completed.
Sefton Visitor Economy Strategy Consultation	Activity completed.
Southport Town Hall Gardens Phase 1 consultation	Activity completed.
Everton Stadium and Bootle Business Survey Feedback and Evaluation report	Activity completed.
Bootle Area Action Plan	Activity ongoing.
Infant Feeding Feedback and Evaluation Report	Activity completed.
Direct Payments Feedback and Evaluation Report	Activity completed. Service area considering coproduction activity to respond to the feedback.
Sefton Care Home Commissioning Consultation	Activity not yet started.

Activity	Status as of December 2025.
Families First Partnership Consultation	Activity ongoing. Service area starting coproduction activity to respond to the feedback.
Access controls and barriers Policy	Activity ongoing.
Your Day, Your Say Day Opportunities consultation.	Consultation activity completed. Service area considering coproduction activity to respond to the feedback.
Public Space Protection Order Town Centres	Activity completed.
Oral Health Improvement Plan	Activity ongoing.
Nature Conservation Strategy Feedback and Evaluation Report	Activity ongoing.

3.3 An assessment of each report presented to the Panel during 2025, finds the following:

- Reports that have included an (Interim) EIA or analysis. 5
- Activity that collected equality monitoring data. 13
- Information in accessible formats/web accessible. 12
- Evidence of involving people with lived experience 7
- Worked with partners to plan and deliver activity. 14

3.4 There were several consultations that part met the standards. This was mainly due to not having an Equality Impact Assessment and/or information in accessible formats.

3.5 The feedback and evaluation reports don't have an equality impact report (these would have been provided at the consultation phase). Many of the feedback and evaluation reports referred to the collection of equality monitoring data and reported on this but may not have fully analysed the equality data against the other feedback received.

In addition, the feedback and evaluation reports were checked against the following areas:

- Evidence that changes have been made. 6
- Feedback and shared results. 7

3.6 This may reflect the limited number of feedback and evaluation reports the Panel has seen during 2025. In some cases, it is too early to know of the changes or to feedback.

3.7 When comparing against the past two years, there has been a 36% decrease in proposals for consultation being presented to the Panel from 2024 – 2025 and a slight 12% decrease in Feedback and Evaluation reports being presented.

3.8 In recent years we have seen a decrease in consultation reports having an equality impact analysis, but contact has recently been made with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to help raise awareness of carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and analysing the monitoring data once collected.

3.9 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team will also be monitoring actions from each equality impact assessment and will provide a quarterly report to the Corporate Equalities Group.

3.9 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team is also providing support to help refresh the equality monitoring questions used for consultations, so that there is a standard set of questions used across the Council.

3.10 The collection of data from our customers/service users is a statutory duty. We should be collecting, analysing and publishing the data with an explanation of how we have used the data to improve access to services and data that can be used in the design and delivery of our services. Without that data, we cannot say that we are providing inclusive services. It makes good business sense to start with adequate data and more importantly it enables us to see who isn't accessing our services.

3.11 Where we have feedback and evaluation reports, officers are asked to provide a You Said, We Did summary for the Your Sefton Your Say Consultation Hub. Some of the activity and changes that has happened because of the consultation and engagement are.

Feedback:

That we should not remove non digital methods of contacting the council. Inclusion activity is important, and we need to consider carers and those residents who are housebound or disabled

We Did/Are Doing:

Sefton is not a digital only authority and will continue to maintain other forms of contact via its One Stop Shops and Telephone Service.

Our library team is working closely with those residents receive home visits from our libraries service, with a view to understanding the digital services that these residents may find helpful, this could then be extended to carers.

Feedback:

That people who live in Supported Living Accommodation should be known as Tenants and not service users.

We Did/Are Doing:

Teams in Adult Social Care will now refer to people as Tenants and this will also be included in commissioning specifications.

Feedback:

People who received a direct payment said that they would have liked to have videos explaining more about direct payments.

We Did:

Sefton Carers Centre have [dedicated web pages](#) about Direct Payments and created You Tube videos to explain what Direct Payments are.

4. Citizen Space Your Sefton Your Say Consultation Hub.

4.1 In 2025 (1st January – 4th December) there were 52 activities (26 ‘private’ or ‘targeted’ and 26 ‘public’) with a total of 3990 responses.

The consultations with the most responses were:

- Southport and Bootle Town Centres PSPO – 625 responses.
- Families First Partnership 5 – 12-year-olds survey – 397 responses
- Sefton Visitor Economy Residents Survey – 392 responses
- Sefton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan – 347 responses

4.2 Some of the ‘private’ activities were not consultations – they were evaluation or feedback forms.

4.3 The online consultation hub also allows to signpost to other consultations and during 2025, Sefton residents and stakeholders were directed to the following local consultation:

- Proposed changes to gluten free prescribing (external consultation)

4.4 There is now a total of 101 people who are users of the system, either to design a survey or as an analyst or both.

5. Your Sefton Your Say User Feedback.

5.1 Between 20th October – 21st November 2025, users of the Your Sefton Your Say Consultation Hub were asked to complete a User Evaluation form.

5.2 The evaluation of the Your Sefton Your Say (YSYS) Consultation Hub shows strong engagement and satisfaction among users, with clear priorities for future improvements. The Hub is widely used for public and private surveys, and respondents value its functionality and support. The key findings of the user evaluation is as follows:

High Usage & Satisfaction.

- 79% have used YSYS in the past two years.
- 100% satisfaction: 62% Satisfied, 38% Very Satisfied.

Common Uses.

- Public surveys (66%) and private surveys (55%) are the most frequent activities.
- Analysis of responses (38%) and uploading reports are less common.

Training & Support.

- 79% trained on creating surveys.
- 69% trained on exporting reports.
- 52% trained on inputting hard copy surveys.

Feature Awareness.

- Strong awareness of core features (public/closed surveys, reports, attachments).
- Lower awareness of advanced features (skip logic, event promotion, support centre).

Future Needs.

- Secure data storage and Knowledge Hub (100%).
- Export to spreadsheet (97%), real-time feedback (93%).
- Multi-collaborator survey creation and media inclusion (90%).
- Accessibility compliance (WCAG) (83%).
- Interest in AI analysis (69%) and Geospatial features (41% Yes, 52% need more info).

Coproduction Hub.

- 59% would use it to promote coproduction activities.
- 34% are unsure, indicating need for awareness and training.

Other tools that have been used.

- SurveyMonkey (59%), Google Forms (38%), Microsoft Forms (31%) are commonly used.
- MS Forms praised for ease of use and integration, but YSYS seen as more professional and supported.

5.3 Training and Awareness Plan.

A plan for 2026 has been developed to:

- Increase awareness and training on advanced features, multi-collaboration, media integration, skip logic, real-time feedback and the knowledge hub.
- Increase awareness of the Coproduction Hub and Geospatial.

5.4 Delib User Group.

Delib Ltd., the provider of the online consultation tool, organised a user group meeting in November, where customers (Councils and Government departments) who use Citizen Space are invited to network and share ideas. At the event Sefton were guest speakers to share information about how Sefton:

- Uses the Consultation Hub.
- Has developed a dedicated page for Co-production.
- How Sefton provides information in different formats, including easy read.

In 2026, Sefton will be hosting a dedicated session for Citizen Space Users from Local Authorities and Government Departments on Accessible Information and Web Accessibility.

6. Coproduction Hub.

6.1 In 2025, Your Sefton Your Say also became an engagement tool, as well as a consultation tool. With the support of the provider and the Improving Information Group, we have developed an additional [Coproduction Hub page](#) that showcases some of the coproduction activity that is taking place in the borough and provides interested parties with the opportunity to register their interest in finding out more/joining a local coproduction project. A demonstration of this page will be shared with the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel in January 2026.

6.2 The Coproduction Groups that have been supported this year are:

- Sefton's Coproduction Group for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism.
- Get Involved Group.
- Autism Subgroup.
- Sefton's Improving Information Group.
- Willow View Short Term Assessment Project.
- Your Home, Your Say Supported Living Coproduction Group.
- Inclusive and Accessible Streets Forum
- Learning Disabilities and Autism Social Work Team.

6.3 The Consultation, Engagement and Accessibility Officer has also recently started providing advice and support to Adult Social Care for coproduction activity for:

- Refresh of the Preparation for Adulthood Guide.
- Adult Social Care – Care Quality Commission Action Plan

7. Accessible Information and Web Accessibility.

7.1 In 2025, the team delivered two Accessible Information Awareness sessions for Elected Members, attended by 14 Members. These sessions showcased examples of Easy Read materials developed by our team for use across the Council. Members recognised the significant benefits of providing clear, accessible information to the public.

7.2 The team supported officers across the Council with consultation materials, the redesign of the Welfare Rights public leaflet and website, and the development of the Winter Service Policy and Action Plan.

7.3 Sefton Council was one of only four local authorities nationally to participate in research led by the Disability Policy Centre on Accessible Voting. Working closely with the Elections Team and the Getting Involved Group, local feedback informed the [Creating a Democracy that Works for Us All](#) report, launched at Westminster in November 2025. The Consultation, Engagement and Accessibility Officer attended the launch and contributed as a panel member.

7.4 Following the research, the “Accessibility at Polling Stations” webpage will be updated to “Accessible Voting,” with simplified content to improve readability. Follow-up meetings with the Elections Team and the Getting Involved Group have taken place to develop an Action Plan for further improvements.

8. Youth Voice.

8.1 The Children and Young People Plan 2025 – 2030 has been launched following significant consultation. The Consultation and Engagement Lead is part of the Sefton Youth Voice Strategic Steering Group and they have developed a [Youth Voice Call for Evidence](#) form on Your Sefton Your Say, to help capture evidence of the consultation and engagement that takes place with young people and any changes as a result of this engagement.

8.2 This evidence is mapped against the Children and Young People Plan's priorities and will be reported to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board at regular intervals.

9. Recommendations.

5.1 The Public Engagement and Consultation Panel is recommended to:

- a) Note the 2025 Annual Report and thank all the dedicated staff from the Council and partners for all their hard work on the consultation and engagement activity during 2025.
- b) Continue to ask officers about how they intend to consult and engage with children and young people.
- c) Request officers to return to the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel to present their feedback and evaluation reports, that includes an analysis of the equality monitoring questions.

Appendix 1 – Public Engagement and Consultation Panel Comparison Table.

Activity	2023	2024	2025
Proposals for consultation and engagement	17	25	16
Feedback and Evaluation reports	4	8	7
Information presentations/updates	1	7^	6
Reports that had an Equality Impact Assessment	14	9	5
Equality Monitoring data collected	20	22	13
Information in accessible formats	15	20	12
Involving people with lived experience	10	13	7
Working with partners	11	17	14
Evidence that changes have been made	7	7	6
Feedback and results shared	7	9	7
Public consultations on Your Sefton Your Say Consultation Hub	34**	23	26
Private or 'targeted' consultations on Your Sefton Your Say Consultation Hub	34	20	26
Total number of responses	3191	2601	3990

[^] includes updates from the Strategic Youth Voice Steering group, introduced in 2023.

^{**} also included signposting to several external consultations hosted by other organisations or Central Government.