

THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON MONDAY 7 JANUARY 2013. MINUTE NO'S 82, 83 AND 89 ARE NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN".

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE ON THURSDAY 13TH DECEMBER, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor P. Dowd (in the Chair)
Councillors Cummins, Fairclough, Maher, Moncur
and Tweed

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hardy.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made by Members of the Cabinet. Margaret Carney, Chief Executive, declared a personal interest in Minute 90 as she is a Non-Executive Director of Sefton New Directions.

80. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 8 November 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

81. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME - 2012/13 BUDGET UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT on the current position in respect of the achievement of the approved budget savings for 2012/13.

Decision Made:

The progress to date on the achievement of the approved savings for 2012/13 be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure Cabinet are informed of the latest position on the achievement of savings for the current financial year and to facilitate the achievement of the savings targets for 2012/13.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

**82. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME AND REVENUE BUDGET
2012 - 2015**

Further to Minute No. 72 of the meeting held on 8 November 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Transformation Services and Head of Finance and ICT which set out a further package of budget savings proposals, as the next stage in achieving a balanced budget for 2013/14 and 2014/15. The report indicated that many of the additional savings options were presented to seek approval for appropriate consultation to be undertaken at this stage.

The report contained the following annexes:

Annex A - Work Programme Timetable

Annex B - Review of Street Lighting

Annex C - Option to be redefined

Annex D - Further information on options previously considered

Annex E - External Funding – Funding ceasing or reducing

Annex F – Ways of Working – Options on which various approvals are sought

Annex G – Subsidies and Charges – Options on which various approvals are sought

Annex H – Standards of Service – Options on which various approvals are sought

Annex I – Vulnerable People – Options on which various approvals are sought

The Chief Executive referred to the current budget savings of £43.7m which had to be achieved for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15 and indicated that the Government was due to announce the Local Government Settlement for 2013/14 in the next few days and the confirmation of the external revenue support from the Government would provide greater clarity of the Council's saving requirement for 2013/14.

Members of the Cabinet raised questions on the following issues referred to in the report and Officers responded to the issues as referred to below:

Page/Paragraph in the Report	Question/Response
<p>Page 297 (Councillor Tweed)</p>	<p>Day Care - There is a further option D1.39 on day care opportunities which is detailed on pages 297 – 298. How do you intend to take this option forward?”</p> <p>Response: There is currently a £1.79m Option approved by Cabinet on 13 September 2012 which includes transport element. This is a further option of £1.4m. The total spend on Day Care provision in the Borough is currently £5.1m, supporting a range of Day Care facilities.</p> <p>At present the bulk of Day Centres are provided from Sefton New Directions (13 in total).</p> <p>There are also specialist providers of Day Centres and other provision of which there are 18 in total. Within the nature of Day Care provision there are also inter-dependencies with the Specialist Transport Unit. Some of the saving identified relates to anticipated savings on transportation costs.</p> <p>Given the very challenging budget position we need to look at mobilizing and maximizing Universal and Targeted Services, Council, partners and the VCF Sector.</p> <p>It is very clear that there will continue to be particular specialist needs for the most vulnerable and complex cases and this is expected to form part of a recommissioning process, e.g. acquired brain injury, mental health issues, severe dementia.</p>
<p>Page 205 (Councillor Maher)</p>	<p>Terms and Conditions – The current working assumptions include £6m in relation to terms and conditions. Cabinet recognises that employees have made a significant contribution to the budget over the last few years. Can I ask that Officers continue the consultation with Trade Unions and employees to see if an agreement can be reached.</p> <p>Response: The Director of Corporate Support Services indicated that regular meetings were being held with the Trade Unions to discuss the terms and conditions for Council employees</p>

Page/Paragraph in the Report	Question/Response
Option D1.22 – Page 261 (Councillor Cummins)	<p>Annex F – Crosby Civic Hall. Can you explain the linkage referred to between this option and the Library Review?</p> <p>Response: The Strategic Director (Place) reported that there is a dependency on the Library Review, as there may be a linkage with the possible use of the Crosby Civic Hall. Further details would be reported back to the Cabinet and local Members would be kept informed of any possible developments and the interim arrangements.</p>
Option D1.30 Page 277 (Councillor Cummins)	<p>Annex G – Pest Control. What will the impacts of introducing a charge for pest control be and will any concessions to a charge be given?</p> <p>Response: The Director of Built Environment indicated that the proposed charge was £20 per treatment and that the service would continue to be free of charge for people on means-tested benefits. The impact of such a change, if approved, will be monitored.</p>
Option 1.42 Page 303 (Councillor Moncur)	<p>Re-enablement. My question relates to option E1.42 on re-enablement set out in more detail on pages 302 – 303. This seems to me, on paper, an excellent invest to save proposal. Can you describe what this will mean in practice – in particular how the proposal will maintain the independence of adults.</p> <p>Response: National research (Longitudinal Study Final Report Summary November 2010) from the Care Services Efficiency Delivery Programme has shown that a targeted re-ablement model of care found that 58% of people who took part in re-ablement do not continue with ongoing domiciliary care or have had a reduced package of care.</p> <p>For example, this will mean that somebody who comes out of hospital with a targeted care plan can be supported to relearn and regain the confidence and skills of daily living in their own home and then will be assessed at the end of that period if they require any ongoing care needs. The model is based on facilitating people to manage day to day tasks and through targeted intervention to work with the individual to help them reach their full potential.</p>

Page/Paragraph in the Report	Question/Response
	In order to take this forward we will work with colleagues in the NHS who are funding this service development and resource will be utilized to pump prime the development of re-ablement services through a programme of commissioning and we will work with a range of providers to set up pilots which will run for the next year.
Option F1.5 Page 238 (Councillor P. Dowd)	<p>Annex D – Allotments Fees and Charges. Have we received any further correspondence other than that included in the background documents for Option F1.5 in Annex D and are there any legal implications?</p> <p>Response: The Director of Street Scene indicated that no further correspondence had been received and that the legal advice received as set out in the report indicate that the proposed action to be taken is considered to be reasonable.</p>

The Chair referred to the need to undertake consultations to ascertain the views of the public on whether a rise in the level of Council Tax for 2013/14 would be acceptable. He also referred to the proposals relating to Option 1.26 in Annex F (Mayoral Services – Reduce Function of Mayor) and indicated that the Council would still continue to take the lead in the organisation of Remembrance Day events and other civic events.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council’s Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) it be noted that figures set out in the annexes to the report are working assumptions of options to be considered and the figures should not be seen as predetermining any decisions. Many of these options remain subject to consultation and engagement, and any figures indicated were being used to facilitate outline budgetary forecasting only;
- (2) the work programme timetable contained in Annex A of the report be noted;

Annex B – Review of Street Lighting

- (3) the Council at its meeting on 24 January 2013, be recommended to approve the proposals relating to the Review of Street Lighting, set out in Annex B of the report and authorise Officers to prepare for implementation immediately, pending final decisions;

Terms and Conditions

- (4) approval be given to the continuation of consultations with Trade Unions and employees, as required, given the need for budget savings, with a view to the implementation of potential changes in terms and conditions. These potential changes would focus on but not be limited to the changes described in paragraph 4.2 of the report;
- (5) that should it be appropriate, the Chief Executive be authorised to dismiss and re-engage those employees of the Local Authority, not including schools, who are employed on Local Authority terms and conditions in order to enable a change to those terms and conditions and achieve necessary savings;
- (6) it be noted that any action taken in respect of the delegation, set out in resolution (5) above, would be reported back to Cabinet during the required notice period and before the termination and re-engagement was actioned;

Options still subject to consultation

- (7) it be noted that the options identified in paragraph 4.7 of the report were still subject to consultation and further reports would be presented before any final decision is considered;

Annex C - Community Meals Option to be redefined

- (8) approval be given to the introduction of a more cost effective, streamlined model for Community Meals (revised Option F1.6), as set out in Annex C of the report which will enable Sefton residents to access a range of meal options;
- (9) Officers be authorised to commence a consultation and engagement process with partners, employees and Trade Unions;
- (10) Officers prepare for implementation at the earliest opportunity including the issuing of required notices;
- (11) Officers be authorised to commence the conversation with current service users as to how the service would change including support for the transition period between the subsidised to the non-subsidised model;

Annex D - Further information on options previously considered

- (12) following consideration of the additional information provided in Annex D of the report, approval be given to the outcomes of the

review of the commissioning of all residential care beds for Option E2.1;

- (13) it be noted that Officers would continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions on Option E2.1 in Annex D of the report;
- (14) approval be given to the creation of 3 additional Social Worker posts from within the existing budget;
- (15) the Council is recommended at its meeting to approve a budget reduction of £1million over a two year period for Option E2.1 in Annex D of the report;
- (16) following consideration of the additional information provided in Annex D of the report, including the background documents, approval be given to the completion of actions required to achieve change in respect of Option F1.5 (subsidies to Allotment Users' fees and charges) including the issue of relevant statutory and contractual notifications;
- (17) the Council be recommended to approve a reduction of the subsidy by £40k for Option F1.5 in Annex D of the report;

Annex E - External Funding

- (18) the Chief Executive and appropriate Officers be authorised to take the necessary steps to adjust staffing levels in light of the circumstances set out in paragraph 5 of the report;
- (19) the Strategic Director (Place) in conjunction with the Head of Corporate Legal Services be authorised to negotiate and conclude a commercial settlement with the main contractor for the Southport Cultural Centre (the Atkinson) if it can be shown to be in the Council's best interests, subject to final consultation with the Cabinet Member (Children, Schools, Families and Leisure). The details of any such settlement to be reported back to a further meeting of Cabinet;

Annex F – Ways of Working

- (20) the Council be recommended to give approval to the following action being taken on the following Options set out in Annex F of the report:

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<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Recommended Action</u>
Early Intervention & Prevention	D1.1	Integrated Youth Support & Targeted Youth Support – Budget re-alignment following the cessation of a contract with one provider. Plus the deletion of a vacant post.	The total budget re-alignment of £92k
	D1.2	Offset Substance Misuse work from Drug Action Team Public Health budget	The budget re-alignment of £124k to Public Health
Learning & Support	D1.3	Budget re-alignment – supplies and services – Complementary Education	Budget reduction of £9k
	D1.4	Welfare Officers – Pupil Attendance (Employment, Attendance and Enforcement) Teaching element to DSG	Budget reduction of £25k
	D1.5	School Admission, Appeals and Student Support – Reduction in administration costs	Budget reduction of £19k
	D1.6	Connexions – make use of Council accommodation	Budget reduction of £60k
Children's Social Care	D1.7	Social Care Commissioned Services – travel, supplies and services. To re-commission Council Children's Social Care travel (vehicle hire, leasing and taxis)	Budget reduction of £100k
Economy	D1.8	Relocate Economic Development staff from the Investment Centre, to Magdalen House	Budget reduction of £48k
Economy	D1.9	Budget re-alignment of salaries to be funded from grants, contracts and reserves	Budget reduction of £116k
Democracy	D1.10	Budget re-alignment – Members Allowances as agreed by July 2012 Council	The budget re-alignment be noted
Corporate Support Services	D1.11	Risk Management (insurance)	Budget reduction of £50k
	D1.12	Procurement, ICT and Financial Support	Budget reduction of £50k

Service Area	Ref	Option	Recommended Action
Council	D1.13	Public Health Integration Efficiencies	The approval of business efficiencies to the value of £1.137m from within Council resources

(21) approval be given to the following action being taken on the following options set out in Annex F of the report where internal consultation is required:

Service Area	Ref	Option	Action
Vulnerable People	D1.14	Assessment Teams – Reconfiguring of teams and skill mix. Care Management teams consist of social work and occupational therapy assessment, review and organise care and support for vulnerable adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers be recommended to continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions • the intention to move away from a specialism model of delivery to a multi-disciplinary model be noted • it be noted that changes to working practices would seek to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the service

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Vulnerable People	D1.15	Reconfiguration of the Supporting People Commissioning Team	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions
Early Intervention and Prevention	D1.16	Healthy Schools – transfer the function of co-ordination and consultant role to schools	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with partners, employees and Trade Unions
Children's Social Care	D1.17	Social Care – Central Management and Support Costs – A restructure and a re-alignment of duties to remaining posts	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions
Learning & Support	D1.18	Reduce the School Targeted Intervention team	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions
Street Scene	D1.19	Building Cleaning – change of frequency in office cleaning	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Environment	D1.20	Trading Standards – staffing restructure	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions
Communications	D1.21	Communications – staffing restructure	Officers be mandated to continue with consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions

(22) approval be given to the following actions being taken on the following options set out in Annex F of the report, where external consultation is required:

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Health and Wellbeing	D1.22	Pilot external management arrangements for Crosby Civic Hall with the option of closure if unsuccessful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed approach be approved • Officers to work in conjunction with the appropriate Cabinet Member to evaluate the pilot • Should the pilot prove successful, Officers be authorised to enter into an appropriate longer term arrangement

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the pilot prove unsuccessful Officers be authorised to take the necessary steps to close Crosby Civic Hall • The Council at its meeting on 24 January 2013 be recommended to approve a budget reduction of £46k
Early Intervention and Prevention	D1.23	Aiming High – Review of Integrated Short Breaks	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with employees and Trade Unions
Street Scene	D1.24	Cleansing – cease provision of free plastic sacks excluding those premises which are currently identified as ‘difficult to access’	Officers be mandated to continue with consultation and engagement processes (inform) with the community
	D1.25	Cease subscription arrangement to Mersey Forest Voluntary - reduction of working hours	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with partners, employees and Trade Unions

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<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Corporate Commissioning	D1.26	Governance & Civic Services – Mayoral services – reduce the function of Mayor to the statutory minimum (that is to Chair the Council meeting)	The option be deferred
	D1.27	Corporate Commissioning and Neighbourhood Co-ordination (CCNC) Service – rationalize service	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with partners, employees and Trade Unions
	D1.28	Voluntary, Community, Faith – reduction in resources	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with the community and partners
	D1.29	Double Rating	Officers be mandated to commence consultation and engagement processes with the community and partners

(23) approval be given to the following action being taken on the following options set out in Annex G of the report:

Annex G – Subsidies and Charges

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Built Environment	D1.30	Pest Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ongoing community consultation be noted • The Council be recommended to approve the introduction of a service charge of £20 per treatment
Built Environment	D1.31	Car Parking – Car Parking – On and Off street parking charge increases and the introduction of new on street parking charges	The option be deferred and Officers requested to undertake a targeted consultation with local businesses and interested parties on car parking across the Borough and report back the consultation responses to a future Cabinet meeting

Annex H – Standards of Service

(24) approval be given to the following action being taken on the following options set out in Annex H of the report:

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Street Scene	D1.32	Closure of all public conveniences across the Borough	Officers be mandated to commence consultation with the community and partners as appropriate to effect this change

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
	D1.33	Cleansing – reorganisation of the workload and work patterns of the Rapid response teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers be mandated to commence consultation with the employees and Trade Unions as appropriate to effect this change • The reduced standards of service that would occur should this budget reduction be agreed, be noted
Built Environment	D1.34	Further deferment of the re-instatement of highway management funding	Approve the further deferment of £800k

Annex I – Vulnerable People

(25) approval be given to the following action being taken on the following options set out in Annex I of the report:

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Health and Wellbeing	D1.35	Section 117 After Care funding – the Council will pursue, with our Health colleagues, the identification of service users who receive Section 117 funding and request reviews to see if they still require this provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach be approved • It be noted that consultation would take place as part of ongoing care package reviews which would be conducted by Health colleagues • The content of the impact assessment be noted • It be noted that reviews would be undertaken of all people in receipt of Section 117 funding to ensure that needs still fall within the Council's eligibility criteria

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
	D1.36	NHS continuing healthcare – prioritise and undertake reviews of service users currently in nursing care to ensure that they are supported appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach be approved • It be noted that consultation would take place as part of ongoing care package reviews which would be conducted by Health colleagues
Health and Wellbeing	D1.37	Use of Assistive Technology equipment that enables service users (vulnerable people) to remain in their own homes with minimal outside support for e.g. Lifeline pendants that are connected to the Careline service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach be approved • It be noted that consultation would take place as part of ongoing care package reviews
	D1.38	<p>Increase charges for a range of services, these are an increase of charges to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of disposable income (currently 80%) – Currently Service users will contribute 80% of their disposable income toward their care or service costs and this option will mean a change in Council policy so that 100% of disposable income is considered in the financial assessment process • Reduce disability related expenditure (DRE) which presently stands at £16.00 per user per week to £11.00 per week. This option will mean a change in Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The changes in policy be approved • It be noted that consultation about this approach would take place as part of ongoing care package assessments and reviews • It be noted that the Council would continue to meet assessed need • The achievement of a budget saving of £75k relating to the previously approved option E2.8 (Area Finance) be deferred

		<p>policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couples – disregard income buffer when assessing care needs. This option will mean a change in Council policy 	
<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
Health and Wellbeing	D1.39	Further remodel current day care and associated transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commencement of consultation and engagement process with partners and service users be approved • It be noted that consultation about this approach would in part take place as part of ongoing care package assessments and reviews • It be noted that the Council would continue to meet assessed need
	D1.40	Recover surplus, unspent Direct Payment funds at regular and earlier intervals and cease the first year one off workplace insurance payment of £150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council be recommended to approve the process for recovery and the option to cease the first year one off workplace insurance payment of £150 • It be noted that consultation about this approach would take place as part of the assessment and review process • It be noted that the Council would continue to meet assessed need

Service Area	Ref	Option	Action
Health and Wellbeing	D1.41	Respite – reduction from a range up to a maximum of 2 weeks to be authorized by a social worker and anything above that time period to be agreed by a Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council at its meeting on 24 January 2013 be recommended to approve the change in policy and a budget reduction of £1.9 million • It be noted that consultation about this approach would take place as part of ongoing care package assessments and reviews • It be noted that the Council would continue to meet assessed need
Health and Wellbeing	D1.42	Revise Re-ablement model – To obtain new funding available from Health of £900,000, one year only, to enable more users to go through a re-enablement process, thereby reducing levels of admission to short and long term care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council at its meeting on 24 January 2013 be recommended to approve the change in approach and a budget reduction of £1.2m • It be noted that consultation about this approach would take place as part of ongoing care package assessments and reviews • It be noted that the Council would continue to meet assessed need

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Option</u>	<u>Action</u>
	D1.43	Housing Related Support incremental reductions in housing related funding have reduced the requirement for commissioning/ contractual functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council at its meeting on 24 January 2013 be recommended to approve a change in policy and budget reduction of £500k • It be noted that consultation about this approach would take place as part of ongoing care package assessments and reviews • It be noted that the Council would continue to meet assessed need

- (26) the risks and mitigating actions outlined in Annexes B, C, D, E, F, G, H and I of the report be noted.
- (27) the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel be requested to determine the arrangements for a public consultation exercise to be undertaken to seek views on whether there should be a rise in the level of Council Tax for 2013/14.

Reasons for Decisions:

The recommendations in this report, if approved, are another step in agreeing the 2013/14 budget and a two year budget plan. At this stage there are broadly sufficient options to meet the forecast budget gap assuming the Cabinet approves the report's recommendations. However, additional budget savings and options would need to be identified should the savings gap increase and/or those options currently identified are not approved or delivered. It is a legal requirement to set a balanced budget and to ensure the medium term financial position is robust.

Early consideration of budget options continues to be essential as this supports informed decision making, including the consideration of the outcome of any consultations undertaken, the impact of any decisions to be made and any steps that can be taken to mitigate the impact of a decision.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Further options would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

83. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2013/14 AND CHANGES TO COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS AND EXEMPTIONS FOR UNOCCUPIED PROPERTIES

Further to Minute No. 27 of the meeting held on 19 July 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which outlined the results of the consultation relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme including the Equality Analysis Report, and the results of consultation relating to the removal of Council Tax discounts and exemptions for unoccupied properties, together with an update on Government changes to proposed legislation, including the Equality Analysis Report.

The report also set out a proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme and a range of Council Tax discounts and exemption changes; provided an update on the latest Government announcement regarding transitional funding being made available to Local Authorities for the Council Tax Reduction scheme, together with the impact of the proposed grant on Sefton Council; and identified ways in which the Council proposes to help those most financially affected by the change through a hardship fund in order to meet its objective of protecting the most vulnerable residents of Sefton.

The report contained the following annexes:

- Annex A: Council Tax Reduction Scheme options – with financial implications
- Annex B: Council Tax Technical changes with financial implications
- Annex C: Consultation and Engagement relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Technical Changes
- Annex D: Equality Analysis Report – Council Tax Reduction Scheme
- Annex E: Equality Analysis Report – Council Tax Technical changes relating to discount and exemptions for vacant unoccupied properties
- Annex F: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Decision Taken:

1. That the Council be recommended that
 - (i) the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2013/14 summarised in paragraph 14 and set out in Annex F to the report, be approved and adopted to take effect from 1 April 2013;
 - (ii) the changes to discounts and exemptions for empty and unoccupied properties be approved to take effect from 1 April 2013 in order to minimise the impact for non-pensioner claimants, as summarised in paragraph 14, and set out in Annex B of the report;
 - (iii) the introduction of an empty homes premium to take effect from 1 April 2013, as summarised in paragraph 14, and set out in Annex B of the report; be approved;
 - (iv) the Government transitional grant be not accepted.
2. The consideration of any minor changes in legislation/guidance in relation to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax Reduction Technical Changes be delegated to the Head of Corporate Finance & ICT in consultation with the Leader of the Council, and that any significant changes in such legislation/guidance and any further recommendations be reported to the Cabinet meeting on 17 January 2013; and
3. The consideration and implementation of any minor textual changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme be delegated to the Head of Corporate Finance & ICT;

Reasons for Decisions:

The Government is abolishing the current national Council Tax Benefit Scheme and requires the Council to formally have in place a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme by 31 January 2013, to take effect from 1 April 2013. The Government is giving Councils greater flexibility over discounts and exemptions to be applied locally from 1 April 2013, to help towards mitigating the impact on working age claimants.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Default Scheme and the Government Transitional Grant are detailed within paragraph 2 and Annex A of the report.

84. COUNCIL MOTION - SEFTON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ACTION PLAN

Further to Minute No. 69 of the Council meeting held on 22 November 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment, which indicated that in accordance with Rule 84 of the Council and Committee Procedure Rules, the following motion had been referred to the Cabinet for consideration of the financial implications in advance of any budgetary commitment and prior to any action being taken to implement the decision:

“This Council welcomes the appointment of consultants for a sustainable energy action plan for the Liverpool City Region.

The Council recognises that a sustainable energy action plan will be of immense importance for investment, businesses, jobs and the environment within Sefton.

This Council commits itself to implementing a sustainable energy action plan and notes that delaying the implementation of an action plan will cost jobs and money.”

Decision Made:

That further to the Council motion on 22 November 2012, it be noted that the Sustainable Energy Action Plan is a mechanism for Liverpool City Region and Sefton Council to co-ordinate its own, externally funded and partner activities to deliver low carbon economy goals, is effectively self funding and in itself has no direct additional financial demands on core Council resources above contributory work streams already in progress.

Reason for the Decision:

To provide clarification of the financial implications of the Council Motion in accordance with Rule 84 of the Council and Committee Procedure Rules (Motions on Expenditure).

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

85. LOCAL PLAN FOR SEFTON - OUTCOME OF STUDIES

Further to Minute No. 123 of the meeting held on 1 March 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the outcome of key studies which had been undertaken on employment land and premises issues, the Council’s housing requirements and agricultural land issues, to assist in the preparation of the Local Plan for Sefton. The report also included the proposed brief for a Consequences Study and the updated timetable for the Local Plan.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) the findings of the studies referred to in the report be accepted for the purposes of carrying out a Consequences Study;
- (2) approval be given to the updated housing figures, as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report for use in the Consequences Study;
- (3) the brief for the Consequences Study, as set out in Annex 1 to the report be approved, subject to any minor alterations that may be necessary, to be delegated to the Head of Planning Services;
- (4) the revised Local Development Scheme setting out the updated timetable for preparing the Local Plan, as set out in section 5 of the report be approved; and
- (5) the use of the Planning Advisory Service to provide critical advice at key stages of Sefton's Local Plan be endorsed.

Reasons for Decisions:

To inform Members of the results of the key studies and to agree the next steps in the preparation of the Local Plan.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

86. HOUSING TENANCY STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the Housing Tenancy Strategy which had been produced in accordance with the provisions on Housing Tenure reform set out in the Localism Act 2011 which place a statutory duty on local housing authorities to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decision Made:

That the Housing Tenancy Strategy as set out in the report be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

To meet the requirements of Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011, which requires local housing authorities to publish a tenancy strategy by January 2013.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

87. DRAFT SEFTON ECONOMIC STRATEGY - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Further to Minute No. 130 of the meeting held on 29 March 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the consultation response to the Draft Sefton Economic Strategy.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) the contents of the report and the consultation response be noted;
- (2) the final version of the Strategy which included a completed Equalities Impact Analysis be approved; and
- (3) the Director of Built Environment be granted delegated authority to produce and publish a summary version of the Strategy.

Reasons for Decisions:

To adopt the Sefton Economic Strategy as Council Policy.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

88. COMMISSIONING OPTIONS FOR HEALTHWATCH AND THE INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS ADVOCACY SERVICE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Older People on the various commissioning options for a Local Sefton Healthwatch and Independent Complaints Advocacy Service and the Officers' recommendations which reflected the views of the various stakeholders who have been consulted during the last year whilst LINKs have been preparing for the transition process for the implementation of Local Healthwatch.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 amended the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to make provisions for a Local Healthwatch as the consumer champion for health and social care services. Local Authorities had a responsibility for commissioning this new service to replace the Local Involvement Networks (LINks) from 1 April 2013 and for the commissioning of a Local Independent Complaints Advocacy Service which was previously commissioned by the NHS.

This was a Key Decision and was included in the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

Decisions Made:

- (1) that approval be given to “a transitional host being commissioned to help set up a Local Healthwatch as a social enterprise which could be a trading arm of the host organisation”; and
- (2) that approval be given to a joint commissioning approach for an Independent Complaints Advocacy with other Merseyside local authorities being adopted, with Liverpool City Council leading the procurement exercise and Sefton Council being represented on the Selection Panel.

Reasons for Decisions:

Section 182 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 imposed a duty on the Council to make contractual arrangements with a Local Healthwatch organisation for the involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social services.

Section 185 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 transfers from the government to local authorities the duty to make arrangements for the provision of independent advocacy services for complaints relating to health services.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Details of the alternative options are set out within the report.

89. CAPITAL MAINTENANCE GRANT 2012/13 - ADDITIONAL SCHEMES

Further to Minute No. 4 of the meeting held on 24 May 2012, the Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Young People and Families which sought approval to an increase in the Children's Services funding provision from the Government Capital Allocation of £3,198,000 received for 2012/13.

Decisions Made:

- (1) approval be given to the allocation of £536,250 to the proposed schemes set out in the report, to be funded from Capital Maintenance Grant included within the Capital Programme 2012/13;
- (2) the Director of Young People and Families be authorised to progress the projects in conjunction with Capita Symonds; and
- (3) the Council be recommended to approve the addition of the identified schemes totalling £536,250 into the Capital Programme.

Reasons for Decisions:

Final approval for new projects within the Capital Programme is required from Cabinet and Full Council under Paragraph 31 of Chapter 11 of the Constitution.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

90. SEFTON NEW DIRECTIONS - REQUEST TO SEEK VARIOUS PERMISSIONS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Corporate Support Services on the requests received from Sefton New Directions for various permissions to be given which affect the business operations of the Council's Controlled Company.

Decision Made:

- (1) approval be given to the requests from Sefton New Directions for the following permissions:-
 - (a) to the Company to subcontract
 - (b) to allow the Company to appoint new auditors
- (2) the Head of Corporate Legal Services be authorised to make the necessary contractual arrangements in place between the Council and Sefton New Directions; and
- (3) Sefton New Directions be asked to confirm to the Head of Corporate Legal Services in due course, that the necessary changes have been made to their Articles / Memorandums of Association and registered with Companies House accordingly.

Reasons for Decisions:

The Council holds the single shareholding in Sefton New Directions which is a local authority controlled company as regulated under Part V of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended). The Council is acting under its powers as a shareholder and exercising those in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 (as amended).

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The only alternative option would be to not grant the permission sought.