

THE “CALL IN” PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY, 8TH JULY 2026. MINUTES NOD. 21 (5), (6), (7), (9), (11) AND (12); AND 25 (5), (6) AND (7) ARE NOT SUBJECT TO “CALL-IN”.

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE BIRKDALE ROOM, TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 25TH JUNE, 2026

PRESENT: Councillor Atkinson (in the Chair)
Councillors Dowd, Hart, Harvey, Lappin, Moncur,
Diane Roscoe and Williams

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Howard.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

13. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2026 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. JOINT LOCAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2026-2031

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Public Health seeking approval of Sefton’s Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWBS) 2026–2031, Sefton Well Together, as attached at appendix 1 to the report. The Strategy set out a high-level, evidence-led framework to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Sefton and to address health inequalities across the Borough. It was built around three core themes, as follows:

- Children, adults, families and communities
- Learning, employment and lifelong opportunity
- Housing, environment and inclusive communities

The Strategy was underpinned by two cross-cutting approaches to change:

- Tackling health inequalities and discrimination,

- Advancing equality and inclusion

The development of the Strategy was informed by a wide range of quantitative and qualitative evidence including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), subject-matter expertise, and extensive stakeholder and community engagement. The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy was the primary, place-based population health improvement strategy for Sefton, thus it complemented and strengthened goals set out in the Council's Corporate plan.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 - Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026–2031 – Sefton Well Together- Accessible version
- Appendix 2 - Sefton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026–2031 – Sefton Well Together-Easy Read version

Cabinet Members welcomed the report and Strategy and raised the following matters:

- Assessment of future progress and the fact that the Local Outcomes Framework would allow the Health and Wellbeing Board to monitor progress, particularly in terms of tackling health inequalities.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the final draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026–2031, Sefton Well Together, be endorsed for adoption and implementation by the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- (2) a publication date of 10 July 2026 be approved; and
- (3) Sefton's vision for population health improvement where wider partnership strategies, existing action plans and aligned performance frameworks will continue to underpin JLHWBS delivery, be endorsed and supported.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The JLHWBS promoted prevention, early intervention and community resilience and drove system change to address the wider determinants of health. In doing so, the Strategy contributed to building confident, resilient communities, enabling inclusive growth, creating healthier, greener places and more prosperous communities.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

15. GARDEN WASTE DISPOSAL CONTRACT PROCUREMENT 2026

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services indicating that ahead of the expiry of the existing Garden Waste Disposal Contract in December 2026, permission was sought for the Council to begin working with Star Procurement, Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) and its partner districts Liverpool City Council, St Helens Council, Knowsley Council, Wirral Council and Halton Council to undertake procurement of the composting and treatment of garden waste from established recycling services.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 Green Waste Contract 2019 (002) - 11 March 2019
- Appendix 2 ITT Green Waste Final v2

Decisions Made:

That approval be granted for Star Procurement, hosted by St Helens Council on behalf of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Strategic Waste Partnership to commence a procurement exercise to seek to appoint a new contractor for the treatment of garden waste from participating households across the Liverpool City Region.

Reasons for the Decision:

All parties were committed and satisfied to continue with a new joint procurement process and a LCR Waste Partnership Working Group was sufficiently established to look at further joint procurement opportunities in relation to the needs and directions of DEFRA's Environment Act 2021.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None – Existing arrangements allowed for greater value for money via a joint procurement exercise.

16. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT CLIMATE EMERGENCY 2026

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets indicating that since Sefton Council's elected Members declared a climate emergency in July 2019, work had progressed within the Council, and a climate emergency strategy was developed. Annual reporting on progress made was required as part of the governance approach to the programme. Members were asked to note the progress made in 2025/26, on achieving net zero carbon by 2030 and the programme of works supporting the Council's transition to low carbon working, as well as the challenges that lay ahead.

The following appendix was attached to the report:

- Climate Annual Report 2025/26

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- Significant investment would be required to progress matters further and the Council would seek any external funding opportunities.

Decision Made:

That the progress made on the targets in the Sefton climate emergency strategy and the challenges that lie ahead on the path to meet net zero by 2030 and transition to low carbon working, be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

The Council had made significant progress in reducing emissions since the climate emergency declaration was made with a 43% overall decrease. However, the pace at which the Council are able to reduce emissions had slowed. The Council had been successful in securing external funding to support work in this area and would continue to prioritise this in future. There was still a significant amount of work to be carried out to meet the local, regional and national net zero targets.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not acting would increase the risks to Sefton in future years, on the themes of energy cost and security, and climate change resilience (increased incidence of extreme weather events, sea level rise etc.). Sefton would also be subject to regional (2035) and national targets (2050) to meet net zero emissions, which was outside the current scope of work, and would require additional action. Therefore, ensuring net zero emissions for Sefton Council operations was the first stage of this wider body of work.

17. LOCAL PLAN SCOPING REPORT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Planning Officer indicating that the current Sefton Local Plan was adopted in April 2017 and was out-dated in many respects and a new Local Plan was required. A new Local Plan would set out the Council's long-term vision and planning policies to guide how Sefton's communities would grow and change, including where homes, jobs, infrastructure, and services should be located, whilst protecting the environment and responding to local needs. It would provide the main basis for deciding planning applications and ensuring development was sustainable, well-planned, and aligned with national policy. The Local Plan scoping report stage was an early step, where the

Council identified the key social, economic, and environmental issues the Plan needed to address. It provided an early opportunity to ask the public and others what the plan should contain; what the vision and objectives should be; and how people would like to be involved in the process. The Local Plan scoping report would be made available for public comment.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 Local Plan Key Preparation Stages
- Appendix 2 Sefton Local Plan Timetable
- Appendix 3 Local Plan Scoping Report

Cabinet Members raised the following matters:

- The opportunity to shape future infrastructure and the importance of involving residents at an early stage in this process.
- The need to look at current empty properties and what the Council could do to address this issue.
- The local economic impact and the impact on town centres in the development of the Local Plan.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the Local Plan Scoping Report be approved for publication and public engagement; and
- (2) authority be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Housing and Highways, to make minor editorial, typographical and presentational changes to the Local Plan Scoping Report, prior to it being published.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The Sefton Local Plan was adopted in April 2017. In many respects this was out-dated and needs replacing. This was specifically relevant to issues of housing and employment land supply; identifying priorities for and promoting regeneration; providing policies for a more flexible approach to diversifying town, district and local centres; providing a more robust approach to the challenges of a changing climate; reflecting new guidance and emphasis on ecology and biodiversity; meeting the needs of a changing population; prioritising the needs of children and young people in communities; and tackling health and wellbeing inequalities in the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None. The Council was required to produce a Local Plan and the regulations set out that a Local Plan Scoping Report was the first stage.

18. NON-IMMEDIATE ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION IN SHOPPING PARADES IN BOOTLE (COMMERCIAL TO RESIDENTIAL)

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Planning Officer seeking approval for the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction in relation to changes of use from commercial to residential (Use Class C3) in relation to shopping parades within the Bootle Area Action Plan area. The Article 4 Direction would remove the permitted development rights that would allow for units within shopping parades to change to residential dwellings without the need for planning permission.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix A - Draft Non-Immediate Article 4 Direction
- Appendix B - Draft Article 4 Direction Public Notice
- Appendix C - Case for Non-Immediate Article 4 Direction for Shopping Parades in Bootle
- Appendix D - Policy BAAP7 from the Bootle Area Action Plan (January 2026)

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved for the reasons set out in the report, in relation to changes of use from Use Classes E and Sui Generis to C3 in the identified shopping parades in the Bootle Area Action Plan area;
- (2) the required notifications as set out in the report and the publication of the public notice as shown at Appendix B to the report, be authorised; and
- (3) the preparation of a report, following notification and consultation, be authorised, in order to seek Cabinet approval as to whether to confirm this non-immediate Article 4 Direction.

Reasons for the Decisions:

It was proposed to progress with what would be a non-immediate Article 4 Direction in relation to changes of use from commercial to residential in shopping parades in the Bootle Area Action Plan area. A non-immediate Article 4 Direction would not come into effect immediately and instead specified a later date when it took effect, usually at least 12 months after the last notice of making the direction was served to avoid the liability for compensation.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Option 1 – Do not introduce an Article 4 Direction. The Council would not have control of conversion from commercial to residential across shopping parades in the Bootle Area Action Plan area. There was a risk of further fragmentation to the existing parades, negatively impacting the vitality and viability of those parades. It might also mean that there was poor quality accommodation providing poor living conditions.

Option 2 – Introduce an Article 4 Direction with immediate effect. This would mean that the control of use from units in parades to dwellings would be in place as soon as the direction is made. However, the Council would be liable to pay compensation to owners. This could be costly and it was not clear how it would be financed.

Option 3 – Cover the whole of the Borough with an Article 4 Direction. The National Planning Policy Framework was clear that an Article 4 should be kept to the minimum area that was necessary. The Article 4 Direction would assist in meeting the ambitions of the recently adopted Bootle Area Action Plan, particularly policy BAAP7 regarding how best to redevelop non-core areas of the longer shopping parades in the area, therefore it was proposed that the Article 4 should only cover this area.

19. LOCAL GROWTH FUND GRANT ACCEPTANCE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Housing regarding the formal acceptance of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Growth Fund (LGF) Grant offer of £369,919 for the Place Based Business Support Project (PBBS) for Sefton for 2026/27.

Cabinet Members welcomed the grant offer and raised the following matters:

- The Key Performance Indicators had surpassed original targets in supporting local businesses.

Decision Made:

That the formal acceptance of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Growth Fund (LGF) Grant offer of £369,919 for the Place Based Business Support Project (PBBS) for Sefton for 2026/27, be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

The award would help fund delivery of InvestSefton's business growth and inward investment activities for the period 2026-27. The funding was derived from the Local Growth Fund and would contribute to delivery of Integrated Settlement outcomes for financial year 2026/27.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not to accept LGF -This was rejected, as not to accept the funding would forego the benefits, both financial and economic, associated with LGF. LGF was key to the Liverpool City Region's financial settlement for 2026/27, providing an essential component of the Sefton 2030 Vision, Corporate Plan and Sefton Economic Strategy in terms of delivering business growth and inward investment in the Borough.

20. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2026/27

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer regarding the appointment of the Council's representatives to serve on Outside Bodies for 2026/27 for periods of one year and longer, as set out in the appendices attached to the report.

The appendices set out the proposed appointments for 2026/27 following the submission of nominations by the Political Groups on the Council.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 Proposed appointments for 12-month period expiring in May 2027
- Appendix 2 Proposed appointments for a period of over one year

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) the proposed representation on the various Outside Bodies for a twelve-month period expiring in May 2027 as set out in revised Appendix 1 to the report be approved, and the following Members be appointed to serve on the Outside Bodies indicated below for 2026/27:

<u>ORGANISATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE(S)</u>
Armed Forces Member Champion	1	Councillor Carragher
Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership	1	Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Health (Councillor Moncur)
Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care System Joint	2	Councillor McKee and Pugh The political places available

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Health Scrutiny Committee		on the Committee for 2026/27 are Lab 1 / Lib Dem 1 / L&MCI 0/ Reform 0 / Green Party 0
Elevate Education Business Partnership	3	Cabinet Member - Children, Schools and Families (Councillor Diane Roscoe) and Councillors Moncur and Pugh
Formby Pool Trust - Board	2	Councillor Christine Howard and Assistant Director - Communities (Mel Ormesher)
Liverpool City Region Business, Investment and Trade Board	1	Cabinet Member – Corporate Services (Councillor Christine Howard)
Liverpool City Region Employment, Education and Skills Board	1	Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families (Councillor Diane Roscoe)
Liverpool City Region Health and Inequalities Board	1	Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Health (Councillor Moncur)
Liverpool City Region Housing and Regeneration Board	1	Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways (Councillor Hart)
Liverpool City Region Innovation Board	1	Cabinet Member - Communities and Partnership Engagement (Councillor Dowd)
Liverpool City Region Net Zero Board	1	Cabinet Member – Public Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Williams)
Liverpool City Region Transport Board	1	Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin)
Liverpool John Lennon Airport Consultative Committee	1	Councillor Hart (Substitute: Councillor McNabb)
Local Government Association General Assembly	1	Leader of the Council (Councillor Atkinson) - 5 votes (Substitute: Councillor Lappin)

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Merseyside Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Partnership Committee	1	Councillor Williams
Mersey Forest Partnership Steering Group	1	Councillor Richards
Mersey Port Health Committee	6	<u>Member</u> <u>Substitute</u> Cllr. Conalty Cllr. Grace Cllr. Delves Cllr. Thompson Cllr. Kelly Cllr. Hinde Cllr. Leatherbarrow TBC Cllr. McKee Cllr. Catie Page Cllr. Shaw Cllr. Thompson The political places available on the Committee for 2026/27 are Lab 3 / Lib Dem 2 / L&MCI 1 / Reform 0 / Green Party 0
Merseyside Pension Fund Pensions Committee	1	Cabinet Member – Corporate Services (Councillor Christine Howard) or nominee
North West Employers' Organisation	1	Cabinet Member – Corporate Services (Councillor Christine Howard) (Substitute: Councillor Lappin)
PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee	1	Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways (Councillor Hart) (Substitute: Councillor Lappin) (NB - Nominated Member and Substitute must be Cabinet Members)
Peterhouse School,	1	Councillor Catie Page

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Southport – Governance Committee		
Regional Flood and Coastal Committee	1	Councillor Williams
Safer Sefton Together	3	Cabinet Member – Communities and Partnership Engagement (Councillor Dowd) and the two Council representatives on the Merseyside Police and Crime Panel (Councillors Brodie-Browne and Cavanagh)
Sandway Homes Limited Board and Sandway (ACS) Holding Company Ltd (Sefton Housing Development Company)	2	Councillor Porter Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways (Councillor Hart) is the Shareholder Representative)
Sefton Coast Landscape Partnership Board	2	Cabinet Member – Public Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Williams) and Councillor Lappin
Sefton Council for Voluntary Service (Advisory non-voting members on the Board of Trustees)	3	Councillors Braham, Howe and Veidman
Sefton Cycling Forum	2	Councillors Danny Howard and Williams
Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	2	Cabinet Member – Communities and Partnership Engagement (Councillor Dowd) and Assistant Director - Communities – Mel Ormesher
Sefton Hospitality Operations Limited Board	3	Councillor Duerden (member); Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy & Assets – Stephen Watson; and Service Manager (Finance) – Paul Reilly Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Economy and Skills (Councillor Lappin) is the Shareholder Representative

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Sefton New Directions Limited Board	4	Councillors Moncur, Richards and Veidman plus 1 Labour vacancy (Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Health (Councillor Moncur) is the Shareholder Representative
Sefton Partnership for Older Citizens	1	Cabinet Member – Adult Social Care and Health (Councillor Moncur)
Southport Pier Trust	3	Councillors Lappin, Hinde and Pugh The political places available on the Committee for 2026/27 are Lab 2 / Lib Dem 1 / L&MCI 0 / Reform 0 / Green Party 0
Southport Town Deal Board	2	Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Skills (Councillor Lappin) and Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy & Assets (Stephen Watson)
Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE)	4	<u>Member</u> <u>Substitute</u> Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Families (Cllr. Diane Roscoe) Cllr. Gibson Cllr. Pugh Cllr. Leatherbarrow Cllr TBC Cllr. Thomas Cllr McNabb The political places available for 2026/27 are Lab 2 / Lib Dem 1 / L&MCI 1 / Reform 0 /

		Green Party 0
Trans Pennine Trail Members Steering Group	2	Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways (Councillor Hart) and Chair of Planning Committee (Councillor Spring) or their nominee.
Veterans in Sefton Board	1	Councillor Dowd
AD-HOC APPOINTMENTS		
Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (where 3 or less local authorities request the scrutiny of a substantial variation to a service)	3	Chair (Councillor McKee) and Vice Chair (Councillor Chris Page) of the O&S Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) and one Lib Dem Member (Councillor Pugh) The political places available on the Committee for 2026/27 are Lab 2 / Lib Dem 1 / L&MCI 0 / Reform 0 / Green Party 0
Joint Health Scrutiny Committee (where 4 or more local authorities request the scrutiny of a substantial variation to a service)	2	Chair (Councillor McKee) of the O&S Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) and one Lib Dem Member (Councillor Pugh) The political places available on the Committee for 2026/27 are Lab 1 / Lib Dem 1 / L&MCI 0 / Reform 0 / Green Party 0
OFFICER ONLY APPOINTMENTS (NOT LISTED ABOVE)		
Southport Business Improvement District (BID) Board	1	Service Manager – Tourism (Mark Catherall)

and

- (2) the proposed representation on the various Outside Bodies for the term of office as indicated as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be

approved, and the following Members be appointed to serve on the Outside Bodies indicated for the term of office indicated:

<u>ORGANISATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE(S)</u>	<u>TERM OF OFFICE EXPIRES</u>
Merseyside Strategic Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Partnership	1	Cabinet Member – Public Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Williams) (Substitute representative – Councillor Lappin)	31.05.2029 (4-year appointment)
North West Reserve Forces and Cadets Association	1	Councillor Byrom	31.05.2029 (3-year appointment)
North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority	2	Councillor Richards or nominee and Countryside Officer (Gordon White)	31.05.2027 (4-year appointment)
Regenerus - South Sefton Development Trust	1	Councillor Lappin	30.05.2027 (3-year appointment)
CHARITIES			
Ashton Memorial Fund, Formby	1	Councillor Chris Page and Rev. Dr. M. Davis	31.05.2027 (4-year appointment)
Consolidated Charities of Thomas Brown and Marsh Dole (Formby)	2	Councillors Catie Page and Cavanagh	26.06.2030 (4-year appointment)
Halsall Educational Foundation	1	Councillor Grace	31.05.2028 (2-year appointment)
NHS FOUNDATION TRUST GOVERNING BODIES			
Liverpool University Hospital NHS Foundation	1	Councillor Conalty	31.07.2028 (3-year appointment)

Trust - Council of Governors			
Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust - Council of Governors	1	Councillor Carragher	30.09.2029 (3-year appointment)
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust – Council of Governors	1	Councillor Carragher	30.04.2028 (3-year appointment)
The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust - Council of Governors	1	Councillor Burns	01.09.29 (3-year appointment)

Reasons for the Decisions:

The Cabinet had delegated powers set out in Chapter 5, Paragraph 40 of the Constitution to appoint the Council's representatives to serve on Outside Bodies.

The appointment of Council representatives to the Outside Bodies would ensure that the interests of residents of Sefton were taken into account by each Body.

The Cabinet was requested to approve the recommendations in order for the Council to have on-going representation on the Outside Bodies concerned.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

21. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2026/27 TO 2029/30 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2026/27 - ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Corporate Resources / S151 Officer that set out supplementary capital and revenue estimates for approval in the Council's Capital Programme and Revenue Budget and an update on revised allocations of grant from central government and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA).

Cabinet Members welcomed the allocation of additional grants.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.246m for the revised Schools Devolved Formula Capital Grant allocation 2026/27, funded by a grant from DfE, be approved; and it be noted that this estimate replaces the provisional estimate approved by the Cabinet in February 2026;
- (2) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.265m for the additional Warm Homes Local Grant allocation 2026/27 funded by a grant from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority be approved, pending final confirmation of the grant award and receipt of the Grant Funding Agreement Deed of Variation;
- (3) authority be delegated to the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets to sign the Warm Homes Local Grant Funding Agreement Deed of Variation;
- (4) a supplementary capital estimate of £0.150m for the EV Pavement Channels 2026/27, funded by a grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, be approved;
- (5) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £1.753m for the Schools Condition Allocation 2026/27 funded by grant from DfE; and it be noted that this estimate replaces the provisional estimate of £1.767m recommended by the Cabinet in February 2026;
- (6) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £5.001m for the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation 2026/27 funded by grant from DfE; and it be noted that this estimate replaces the provisional estimate of £3.514m recommended by the Cabinet in February 2026;
- (7) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £1.395m for the DfT Local Highways Maintenance Funding 2026/27, funded by a grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority;
- (8) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Highways and Public Protection, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways to enter into the LCR CA Grant Funding Agreement for the DfT Local Highways Maintenance Funding and EV Pavement Channels Grant;
- (9) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary revenue estimate of £2.106m for the Highways Pre-Development Funding Work 2026/27, funded by a grant from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority;

- (10) authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Highways and Public Protection, in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways to enter into the LCR CA Grant Funding Agreement for the Highways Transport Pre-Development Work;
- (11) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £0.428m for the Car Parking – Pay and Display Machines Upgrade 2026/27, funded by prudential borrowing;
- (12) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary budget estimate of £1.114m, consisting of £1.103m capital and £0.011m revenue, for the Local Authority Housing Fund – Round 4 funded by a grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); and
- (13) authority be delegated to the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets and the Assistant Director - Economic Growth and Housing to sign the Local Authority Housing Fund funding agreement documentation with MHCLG.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The recommendations in the report provided additional and updated estimates to the capital programme and revenue budget so that they could be applied to schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall financial strategy. The estimates presented for Schools Funding, as set out at paragraph 1 of the report, replaced the provisional estimates approved by the Council in February 2026.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

22. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To comply with Regulation 5(2) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, notice had been published regarding the intention to consider the following matter in private for the reasons set out below.

Decision Made:

That, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favours exclusion of the information from the Press and Public.

23. SOUTHPORT MARINE LAKE EVENTS CENTRE - EXEMPT APPENDIX

The Cabinet considered exempt information provided by the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets in relation to the Southport Marine Lake Events Centre - (Minute No. 25 below refers).

Decision Made:

That the exempt information be considered as part of the report in relation to Southport Marine Lake Events Centre (Minute No. 25 below refers).

Reasons for the Decision:

The exempt information was required to be considered with the information in the public domain in order that an informed decision might be made.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

24. RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

Decision Made:

That the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

25. SOUTHPORT MARINE LAKE EVENTS CENTRE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets updating on the progress of the Southport Marine Lake Events Centre (MLEC) project, proposing to agree to enter into a main construction contract with Vinci Building Limited. The MLEC was the signature project included within the Southport Town Deal bid submitted in 2020, which secured £37.5m of Government funding. The economic case for the project was stronger than previously reported, with the venue contributing circa £31m per annum to the local economy, creating 386 new jobs (excluding induced construction jobs on the project), and attracting over 600,000 new visitors to the town. The venue would be operated by Legends Global, one of the world's leading companies in live events, venues, and brands, who remained committed to the project, to the town and to the Borough. This operating agreement included significant annual income to Sefton Council. The report provided an update on the main construction contract, cost pressures and their contributory factors, and the revised economic case and business plan. Cost inflationary pressures, driven by external factors and affecting the whole construction industry, since the bid to Government for funding was

submitted in 2020, meant that the total development cost would be £106m. The report provided further information on the inflationary pressures, and work to date to mitigate the impacts to the extent possible. Additional capital funding of £33m was therefore required, which the Council would seek to secure from a mix of grant funding from Central Government, grant funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, and from additional Council borrowing.

The report recommended that the investment still delivered significant value for money in terms of venue income to the Council, visitor numbers, job creation, and economic impact.

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1 – Commercial Summary (Exempt)
- Appendix 2 – Business Case Addendum 2026 (Exempt)

Cabinet Members welcomed the report as positive news for the Borough and residents of Sefton and raised the following matters:

- Lessons learnt from the process.
- The reference to value engineering and savings of £12m – how this would impact on the project.
- The significance of the project for the Borough and for the City Region as a whole.

Decisions Made:

That

- (1) authority be delegated to the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills to approve the award of the main contract to Vinci Building Limited as a direct award via a compliant framework;
- (2) the budgetary pressures as set out in the report along with the proposed funding solutions, be noted;
- (3) authority be delegated to the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills, to approve an early order via a Letter of Intent before the signing of the main contract;
- (4) the Executive Director - Regeneration, Economy and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economy and Skills, be authorised to complete a procurement process for a contractor to deliver the water, light and sound show as a separate contract to the main construction contract;
- (5) **the Council be recommended to approve** a supplementary capital estimate of £33m, the financing of which will be underwritten

by the Council in the first instance prior to any additional funding being received;

- (6) **the Council be recommended to note** that the finance arrangements for the Council's total contribution of up to £52.7m will be agreed following consultation with the Council's Treasury Management advisors and reported to the Cabinet through the quarterly Treasury Management reports and the final proposal will be included within the budget report; and
- (7) **the Council be recommended to approve** the completion and signing of any additional grant funding agreements to be delegated to Chief Executive and the Executive Director - Corporate Resources / Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Executive Director – Regeneration, Economy and Assets, the Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Economy and Skills and the Cabinet Member - Corporate Services, should it be formally approved by the relevant partner organisations.

Reasons for the Decisions:

The report provided an update on the main construction contract, cost pressures and their contributory factors, and the revised economic case and business plan.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

1. Stop the Project and Mothball the site.

This would involve cancelling the project and not to progress, there would be further work to landscape the site to ensure it was safe, this could cost circa £1m.

There would be a high risk that external grant monies would be clawed back leaving the Council to fund £12m-£13m already committed expenditure for a gap site. There would be further Implications for private sector development in Southport, unlikely the adjacent hotel would be sold while other proposed private sector investments might not take place.

The recently commissioned Visitor Accommodation study for Sefton indicated that the MLEC would create a demand for two new hotels in Southport by 2028 and a further hotel by 2034. With no MLEC the study indicated Southport might only need one hotel by 2034 and saw no additional hotel demand in the next few years.

2. Smaller £73m Scheme

This would substantially reduce the footprint of the building, and a complete redesign would be required. The outcome would be a singular building capable of holding conference and entertainment facilities, but it would lose its flexibility to hold multiple events. This would substantially

delay the project by possibly 18-24 months due to the redesign and the need to resubmit a new planning application. This might cause the loss of any remaining town deal funds.

Due to the change in venue size and operation, a new operator procurement would have to be undertaken with no guarantees that the current operating partner, or an operator of such international standing, would be interested in managing a centre of this size. The Council's venue and planning consultants had also undertaken due diligence to the forecast P&L for this scheme. It would be very likely the Council would have to underwrite and subsidise any operator like the previous STCC contractual arrangements. Therefore, the Council revenue budget would have to serve the borrowing along with annual revenue payments to an operator, which the business case demonstrated provided a worse revenue position for the Council than the larger scheme, given the income that would bring.

The scheme would see a loss of 7 conferences a year with the total number of event days dropping from circa 290 to 206 resulting in a 35% drop in attendees.