

**COUNCIL**

**MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE  
ON THURSDAY 22ND JANUARY, 2015**

**PRESENT:** The Mayor, Councillor Cluskey, in the Chair  
The Deputy Chair, Councillor M. Fearn, Vice Chair

Councillors Ashton, Atkinson, Ball, David Barton, Jo Barton, Maria Bennett, Veronica Bennett, Booth, Bradshaw, Brennan, Brodie - Browne, Burns, Byrom, Carr, Crabtree, Cummins, Cuthbertson, Dams, Dawson, Dodd, Peter Dowd, Dutton, Fairclough, Lord Fearn, Friel, Gatherer, Grace, Hartill, Keith, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Kermode, Kerrigan, Killen, Lappin, Lewis, P. Maguire, Maher, Mahon, McGinnity, S. McGuire, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, O'Brien, Owens, Page, Preece, Roberts, Robertson, Roche, Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Webster and Welsh

**61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Dowd, Hands, Hardy, Jones, Papworth, Robinson, Shaw and Weavers.

**62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

**63. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

**64. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

**Welcome**

The Mayor extended a welcome to the Members of the Public present

**Public Health Qualification**

The Mayor reported that in order to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents, 14 Councillors including himself had successfully completed the Royal Society for Public Health: Level 2 Understanding Health Improvement qualification. The Councillors concerned were Marion

Atkinson, David Barton, Maria Bennett, Sue Bradshaw, Paul Cummins, Lynn Gatherer, John Kelly Paulette Lappin, Michael O'Brien, Catie Page, Diane Roberts, Dave Robinson, Veronica Webster and the Mayor (Councillor Kevin Cluskey).

The certificates had been presented to the Councillors by Dr Janet Atherton, the Director of Public Health in the Mayor's Parlour prior to the meeting and the Mayor extended thanks to the Public Health Team for the opportunity to complete the qualification and encouraged all Councillors to attend the course if they get the opportunity.

### **Mayoral Charity Cabaret Dinner – 14 March 2015**

The Mayor reported that his Mayoral Charity Cabaret Dinner would be held on Saturday 14 March 2015 at the Formby Hall Golf Resort and Spa and the proceeds from the event will be distributed to Mayoral Charities. Tickets were on open sale from the Mayoral and Civic Services Officer in Bootle Town Hall at a cost of £35.

### **Christmas Toy Appeal 2014**

The Mayor expressed his thanks to all the people and organisations that had kindly donated toys for the annual Christmas Toy Appeal 2014 which had benefitted children in the Borough of Sefton.

## **65. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC**

The Mayor reported that in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme set out in Chapter 12 of the Council Constitution, 4 public petitions had been submitted for consideration at the Council meeting.

(1) The Council heard representations from Mrs Nuala Kranas of the Aintree Village Residents Group on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing 2,850 signatures which stated:

*"We the undersigned urge the Council to amend the 'Preferred Option' to Option 1, address the issues surrounding our lack of amenities and infrastructure and work with the community to reflect what they want and not what the developers want, whose only aim is to make big profits from local communities."*

*Justification:*

*"Sefton MBC's Local Plan has proposals which will damage the green belt and make Aintree a worse place to live. In the coming months, the Council will undertake a Public Consultation Process. They currently have used inaccurate household population growth information which is 10 years out of date. They do not address the real need for affordable/type of housing but allow developers to build 3/4/5 bedroom executive homes on greenbelt, which none of us would be able to afford. Our amenities are non-existent and they severely underestimate the effect any further development will have on our schools, roads, dentists and GP service. We don't even have a library and the current plan would lead to a decline in the local quality of life."*

The following issues were raised by Members of the Council during the debate on the content of the petition:

- the impact of increased traffic in Aintree and Melling and the need for adequate infrastructure to be provided;
- that a traffic survey had been undertaken during a school holiday period;
- that the Peel Holdings development would have a significant impact on the local environment; and
- that the views of all the people who had signed the three Local Plan petitions should not be ignored.

Members of the Council thanked Mrs Kranas for making her representations.

Following debate, It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher and

**RESOLVED:**

That the petition be noted and taken into account during the consideration of the report under Minute No. 68 below.

(2) The Council then heard representations from Mr Colin Reader of the Maghull and Lydiat Action Group on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing 3,060 signatures which stated:

*“We ask the Council to listen to the community, to re-examine and vote for option 1, which is building on brownfield sites only and not on green belt and high grade agricultural land, this is now possible due to a sharp fall in housing need.”*

*Justification:*

*“Sefton's Local Plan continues to encroach on our beautiful high grade agricultural/green belt land. More accurate up-to-date figures show a significant reduction in housing need. Maghull and Lydiat does not have the infrastructure in place to cater for any additional capacity, roads are already badly congested, schools are oversubscribed, traffic and parking is a major problem and we are already experiencing significant flooding problems.”*

The following issues were raised by Members of the Council during the debate on the content of the petition:

- that the proposed scale of the developments in Maghull and Lydiat was not acceptable; would have a significant impact on the population levels in those areas and would raise questions about the ability of partner agencies to provide adequate infrastructure;

- that high quality agricultural land would be used for the proposed developments; and
- that the 30% affordable housing target in the Local Plan would not be met.

Members of the Council thanked Mr Reader for making his representations.

Following debate, It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher and

**RESOLVED:**

That the petition be noted and taken into account during the consideration of the report under Minute No. 68 below.

(3) The Council then heard representations from Mr Bob McCann of the Formby Residents Action Group – Opposition From Formby (FRAGOFF) on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing 3,330 signatures which stated:

*“We the undersigned urge the Council to amend the 'Preferred Option', reconsider Option 1, rectify current failings in the Local Plan and fully address infrastructural matters, furthermore work with the community to better reflect their needs and place their concerns above those of the developers, as they are the major stakeholders in Sefton.”*

*Justification:*

*“The latest Government figures for Sefton show that population increase in the Borough has been over estimated by more than 50%. Central Government estimate we only need to build about 420 houses per year. Despite this the Council are now proposing to build over 700 homes every year in their Draft Local Plan. As it stands Sefton’s Draft Local Plan does not meet the needs for Formby’s Roads and infrastructure, schools and health services and fails to address flooding and drainage concerns.”*

The following issues were raised by Members of the Council during the debate on the content of the petition:

- that the provision of affordable housing and social housing would not be met in accordance with the targets set in the Local Plan;
- that the proposed new developments in Formby would create flooding problems;
- that the Council should follow the example of Liverpool City Council and establish a Greenfield Task Force comprising community and Council representatives;
- that there was a need for the provision of new affordable housing for young people in Formby; and

- that Councillors should recognise the needs of the local community and not the views of their political group or Council officers.

Members of the Council thanked Mr McCann for making his representations.

Following debate, It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher and

**RESOLVED:**

That the petition be noted and taken into account during the consideration of the report under Minute No. 68 below.

(4) The Council heard representations from Olivia Blyth and Alex Bond - Townsend of the 'Save the Botanic' Campaign on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing 4,886 signatures which stated:

*"It is understood that Sefton Council may be planning to make staff at Botanic Gardens redundant. Such plans could see the outsourcing of the aviary and the fernery as well as causing significant detriment to the planting within the park. The latest plans throw into real doubt whether Sefton Council know what Southport residents value and hold dear. We the undersigned oppose Labour-run Sefton Councils plans to cut staff and services in the Botanic Gardens."*

The following issues were raised by Members of the Council during the debate on the content of the petition:

- Reference has been made to the need for community resilience to enable volunteers and local communities to assist the Council in the delivery of services but the loss of Council staff under this budget saving proposal could result in no support for the Friends of the Botanic Gardens who undertake voluntary work in the park;
- The Botanic Gardens is the 'jewel in the crown' and the 'flagship' for Southport and the lack of flower beds in the park would diminish the number of tourist visitors to the park and Southport; and
- Request made for the Council to meet with the Friends of the Botanic Gardens to discuss the options for the future maintenance of the flower beds in the park.

Members of the Council thanked Olivia Blyth and Alex Bond - Townsend for making their representations.

Following debate, It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher and

**RESOLVED:**

That the petition be noted and taken into account during the consideration of the report under Minute No. 69 below.

(At this point in the meeting, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for a period of fifteen minutes and thereafter, the meeting re-convened)

**66. QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Council considered a schedule setting out the written questions submitted by:

- Councillor Booth to the Cabinet Member – Communities and Environment (Councillor Hardy)
- Councillor Papworth to the Cabinet Member – Transportation (Councillor Fairclough)
- Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member –Corporate Services and Performance (Councillor Tweed)
- Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member – Transportation (Councillor Fairclough)
- Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member – Older People and Health (Councillor Cummins)

together with the responses given. Supplementary questions from Councillor Dawson were responded to by the Cabinet Member – .Corporate Service and Performance, and Cabinet Member – Transportation.

**67. 2014 STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT FOR SEFTON**

Further to Minute No. 46 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 January 2015, the Council considered the report of the Director of Built Environment setting out the key findings of the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Sefton, which was one of a number of key evidence gathering studies that had been commissioned to inform the Local Plan and the Council's Housing Strategy.

It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher:

“That the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Sefton be approved.”

During the debate, the following issues were raised by Members of the Council:

- that the population projections in the SHMA produced by consultants were not credible, but other Members indicated that the findings of the SHMA were based on Government statistics, which were fully taken account of in the study by independent consultants and would be examined by the independent Government Inspector;
- The Keppie Massie Viability Study indicates that it would be difficult to achieve the 30% affordable housing targets on new developments and a comment was made that the Local Plan should stipulate that the targets must be met;
- that the estimated level of affordable housing need per annum in Figure 7.11 of the 2014 SHMA, as set out in the report would not be met across the Borough; and
- The SHMA states that the shortfall between need and supply can be met by the private rented sector but concern raised about how and when this would be achieved.

Following the debate and on a show of hands, the Mayor declared that the Motion was carried by 38 votes to 19 and it was

RESOLVED:

That the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Sefton be approved.

## **68. LOCAL PLAN FOR SEFTON - PUBLICATION DRAFT PLAN**

The Council considered the report of the Director of Built Environment in relation to the Local Plan for Sefton. The report presented the Publication Draft Plan, a key stage in the preparation of Sefton’s Local Plan. The Plan set out issues and challenges facing Sefton that included:

- a vision for Sefton looking ahead to 2030
- a strategy for how Sefton’s housing, business and other development needs can be met

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- development management policies to help guide development and provide a policy framework for making decisions on planning applications
- detailed site allocations showing how needs can be met
- details of the Publication period and next stages.

The Publication Draft Plan had been developed within the statutory planning framework and it had been considered and scrutinised in detail by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) on 9 December 2014; the Planning Committee on 12 January 2015 and the Cabinet on 15 January 2015. Copies of the resolutions from those meetings had been circulated to all Members of the Council, together with a supplementary note produced by the Director of Built Environment which provided information on a number of suggested changes to the Draft Plan.

It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher:

“That the recommendations set out in the report, as amended by the supplementary note be approved, subject to the inclusion of the following additional text:

The Council recognises:

- (i) the concerns of the petitioners and where possible is committed to addressing those concerns;
- (ii) that the Publication Draft Plan had been produced following a lengthy and rigorous planning process and that it had been considered and scrutinised in detail by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) on 9 December 2014 and the Planning Committee on 12 January 2015. It was further considered by Cabinet on 15 January 2015;
- (iii) that the Publication Draft Plan had been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework produced by the Government;
- (iv) that the Council had a legal obligation to produce a Local Plan that met the requirements of the Framework;
- (v) that as this is a Government led process, the Council had limited discretion to influence the size of the housing requirement;
- (vi) that following the approval of the Publication Draft Plan by the Council, it would be published for a period of eight weeks prior to its submission to the Secretary of State for examination;
- (vii) that members of the public wishing to object to the Publication Draft Plan must do so during the 8 week period in February and March 2015;



- (viii) that all of the comments received on the Publication Draft Plan during the eight week period would be submitted to the Government appointed independent inspector for consideration at the examination hearing. It is only those comments made during that 8 week period that would be considered by the Government Inspector;
- (ix) the need to continue to work with local communities to ensure that the Publication Draft Plan fulfills the aspirations of current and future generations; and
- (x) if local government had more discretion in this process, we may have been able to make different choices, but it had to work within the constraints of current legislation and Government guidance.”

The Leader of Council (Councillor P. Dowd) indicated that the Council was required by law to go through the process of producing a draft Local Plan in accordance with the National Planning Framework. The Government claim that ‘local people make local decisions’ but the reality is very different from that and the Local Plan had been produced in line with what the Council ‘is required to do’ under the Framework and not ‘what we want to do’. Following the eight week consultation period, all of the representations received would be submitted to the Secretary of State and an independent Government Inspector would then be appointed to hold a planning inquiry to determine whether the Submission version of the Plan was robust and sound for a fifteen year period.

The Leader rejected the ‘myth’ that there are Brownfield sites available on the Dunnings Bridge Road corridor and elsewhere in the Borough for housing development, which would prevent the need for any development on Greenfield sites. He also rejected the claims that the Council only had to produce a 5 year plan when the National Planning Framework stipulated a 15 year plan had to be produced. He indicated that Policy HC1 in the Local Plan required 30% of each housing scheme to be provided as affordable housing and Policy HC2 required a minimum of 25% of market dwellings be 1 or 2 bedroom properties and a minimum of 40% of market dwellings be 3 bedroomed properties, but those local stipulations have to be considered alongside Government guidelines which state that the costs of obligations or policy requirements for developing sites must be economically viable for the developer.

The Leader also referred to the provisions in Chapter 9 of the Local Plan which indicated that the Council would work with a range of partners to make sure that infrastructure was provided in the right location when required and, where appropriate, financial contributions would be sought from developers to enhance and provide infrastructure to support new development. He concluded by indicating that there were surplus school places available in the Borough and that a number of ‘myths’ were being promulgated by local groups with regard to the Local Plan which had to be challenged.

During the lengthy debate, the following concerns were raised by Members of the Council:

- that some of the data referred to in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment did not appear to match the Government population projections in the Local Plan which brought into doubt the reliability of the Plan;
- the Local Plan lacked ambition and did not project a positive vision for the Borough – there was too much reliance on new homes and not enough on the provision of services and facilities at a community level;
- that the Local Plan did not include provision for improvements to the Southport to Manchester Rail Line and the electrification of the line from Southport to Wigan in addition to the electrification of the line from Wigan to Manchester; and no consideration had been given to the possible provision of a rail station at the unused park and ride facility at Kew, which showed a lack of vision;
- that the Local Plan did not put enough emphasis on the need for economic growth in Southport, which is reliant on the provision of employment opportunities in the retail, tourism and health care sectors and the provision of proposals for improved transport links to the north and east of Southport to increase the number of visitors to the town;
- that the physical impact of the development proposals for sites at Maghull and Lydiate could increase the population in Maghull by 25% and Lydiate by 35% and the proposals for the use of high grade agricultural land which brought into doubt the claims that the proposals were environmentally sustainable;
- that the affordable housing and social housing targets in the Local Plan could not be achieved due to the economic viability requirements in relation to development;
- that the Local Plan does not address the community concerns with regard to environmental, health and other infrastructure issues;

- that the Local Plan appears to include too much content on the needs of Bootle and the Liverpool City Region and not enough provision for other areas in the Borough;
- that the Local Plan should challenge the Planning Inspector on concerns raised by the community and not present something that he/she will simply accept;
- It was suggested that there was a need for more dialogue with West Lancashire Borough Council and indeed the provision of a joint Local Plan with that Council on proposals for housing developments in the vicinity of the boundary between the two local authorities and the provision of adequate infrastructure, as the local community was concerned about the proposed housing developments just over the boundary in West Lancashire which would increase the number of applications for places in schools in Southport from West Lancashire residents;
- With regard to the proposals for Site MN 2.4 at Moss Lane, Churchtown, Southport, some Members expressed the view that it would not be possible to widen Moss Lane to accommodate the development of the site; and that the proposed number of housing units was too intense for the site; that this would have a detrimental environmental impact on the existing neighbourhood and would lead to infrastructure problems.
- that consideration should be given to the future use of the Bootle Golf Course referred to in Policy NH6;
- that the opportunities for renewable energy referred to in Paragraph 9.33 of the Local Plan should be concentrated in the Mersey Estuary rather than in the Green Belt;
- comment made that Sport England would indicate that the provision of sports facilities in the Borough was poor ;
- that nothing on a Playing Field Strategy had been included in the Local Plan until Sport England raised the issue; that the consultation on the future use of the Ainsdale Hope High School playing fields was inadequate and the scrutiny of the Local Plan by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) and Planning Committee was very questionable;

- that there were insufficient school places in the Borough available to meet the demand following the construction of new housing developments and concern raised that two schools in Ainsdale would be knocked down when we will need new schools in the future;
- that there was a lack of data on second homes in the Council Tax Register on Empty Homes and that there is an over - reliance on retail development within the proposed business park south of Formby Industrial Estate which would be to the detriment of the businesses in Formby town centre; and
- that there is a lack of opportunity offered to local community groups to meet with Officers on technical questions appertaining to the Local Plan.

The following issues were also raised by Members of the Council during the debate:

- Other Members of the Council reaffirmed the comments of the Leader of the Council that the Council had a legal obligation to follow the guidance in the National Planning Framework and produce a Local Plan for the next 15 years which was economically and environmentally sustainable;
- that there were insufficient brownfield sites available in the Borough to meet the Government's requirements for the provision of new housing units and this meant that greenfield sites would need to be utilised;
- Reference was made to the detailed provisions made in Policy MN3 (Strategic Mixed Use Allocation – Land east of Maghull) relating to the provision of infrastructure and the financial contributions to be made by developers;
- Reference was made to the detailed recommendations made by the Infrastructure Working Group, which were approved by the Cabinet on 15 January 2015 and would be closely monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) and the Cabinet to ensure that the recommendations on infrastructure issues were implemented;

- that the National Planning Framework was flawed and weighted in favour of developers but the Council was legally obliged to implement the guidance;
- that the production and adoption of robust Neighbourhood Plans would help to control aspects of development within the Borough;
- Assurances were given that the views of residents in Maghull on the Local Plan had been taken into account by local Councillors and that the controlling group on Maghull Town Council would make a robust submission to the Planning Inspector;
- Reference was made to the comments made by local residents to a Councillor in Formby seeking the provision of new affordable homes for young people;
- Comment was made that new homes would only be built by developers if there was a demand for them and if there was no demand then they would not be built. The view was expressed that the greater the supply of new houses, the more affordable they would be for new home buyers;
- Reference was made to the detailed scrutiny of the Local Plan as referenced in the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) and Planning Committee and the summary of questions by Councillors and responses given by Officers;
- Reference was made to the detailed reasons for the selection of the Preferred Option for the Local Plan, previously made by the Council in accordance with the Government's requirements, as set out in Section 10 of the covering report to the Local Plan;
- Reference was made to the Council's 'legal duty to co-operate' with adjoining local authorities on the Local Plan, as detailed in the Local Plan; and
- Reference was made to the need for the protection of urban greenspace in Bootle to deal with the concerns about air quality.

Following the lengthy debate, the requisite number of Members having signified their wish that the voting on the Motion should be recorded in accordance with Rule 92 of Chapter 4 in the Council Constitution, the

voting was duly recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

FOR THE MOTION:

Councillors Atkinson, Veronica Bennett, Bradshaw, Brennan, Burns, Byrom, Carr, Crabtree, Cummins, Dams, P. Dowd, Fairclough, Friel, Gatherer, Grace, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Kermode, Kerrigan, Killen, Lappin, P. Maguire, Maher, Mahon, McGinnity, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, O'Brien, Owens, Page, Roberts, Roche, Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Webster and the Mayor (Councillor Cluskey).

AGAINST THE MOTION:

Councillors Ashton, Ball, David Barton, Jo Barton, Maria Bennett, Booth, Brodie-Browne, Cuthbertson, Dawson, Dodd, Dutton, Lord Fearn, Maureen Fearn, Hartill, Keith, Lewis, S. McGuire, Preece, Robertson and Welsh.

The Mayor declared that the Motion was carried by 38 votes to 20 and it was

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) The Council recognises:
  - (i) the concerns of the petitioners and where possible is committed to addressing those concerns;
  - (ii) that the Publication Draft Plan had been produced following a lengthy and rigorous planning process and that it had been considered and scrutinised in detail by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) on 9 December 2014 and the Planning Committee on 12 January 2015. It was further considered by Cabinet on 15 January 2015;
  - (iii) that the Publication Draft Plan had been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework produced by the Government;
  - (iv) that the Council had a legal obligation to produce a Local Plan that met the requirements of the Framework;
  - (v) that as this is a Government led process, the Council had limited discretion to influence the size of the housing requirement;
  - (vi) that following the approval of the Publication Draft Plan by the Council, it would be published for a period of eight weeks

- prior to its submission to the Secretary of State for examination;
- (vii) that members of the public wishing to object to the Publication Draft Plan must do so during the 8 week period in February and March 2015;
  - (viii) that all of the comments received on the Publication Draft Plan during the eight week period would be submitted to the Government appointed independent inspector for consideration at the examination hearing. It is only those comments made during that 8 week period that would be considered by the Government Inspector;
  - (ix) the need to continue to work with local communities to ensure that the Publication Draft Plan fulfils the aspirations of current and future generations; and
  - (x) if local government had more discretion in this process, we may have been able to make different choices, but it had to work within the constraints of current legislation and Government guidance;
- (2) the Local Development Scheme as set out in Section 2.6 and Annex A of the report be approved;
  - (3) the Authority Monitoring Report as set out in Section 20 of the report be approved;
  - (4) the further evidence which supports the Draft Plan, as outlined in Section 21 of the report, be approved for consultation;
  - (5) the Draft Plan as amended by the supplementary note be approved for publication;
  - (6) approval be given to the approach to notify people of the Draft Plan, as outlined in Section 22 of the report;
  - (7) the Director of Built Environment be granted delegated powers to make minor editorial changes to the draft Plan before it is published, as referred to in Section 23.1 of the report; and
  - (8) following the end of the publication period, and subject to there being no material change of circumstances, authority be given to the Director of Built Environment to submit the draft Plan to the Secretary of State for examination.

(At this point in the meeting, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for a period of ten minutes and thereafter, the meeting re-convened)

**69. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND BUDGET 2015 TO 2017**

The Council considered the joint report of the Chief Executive and the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which:

- provided an update on the Council's financial position for 2015/16 and 2016/17 following the Local Government Finance Provisional Settlement 2015/16
- set the financial position in the context of the Council's priorities
- described the process undertaken to deliver a programme of savings options that reflected the need to produce a balanced budget alongside the objective of minimising the impact of the cuts on Sefton communities
- provided the Council with savings options that would contribute to the forecast budget gap for the next two years
- outlined the gap remaining and the timetable for producing a balanced two year budget plan.

The report indicated that since 2011, the Council had faced unprecedented reductions in its resources as a result of cuts in Government Funding. In the preceding 4 years, cuts of £114 million had been identified and implemented. The Council had now received confirmation of the level of Government funding it would receive in 2015/16 and this had confirmed that for the period 2015/16 to 2016/17, further savings of £55 million would need to be identified. This represented a real term reduction of 45% on the 2011 spending level.

Detailed on-going work had sought to identify budget reductions that would meet the two year savings requirement. This process had involved detailed risk assessments, relative prioritisation and the impact on our communities. The process was agreed by Cabinet in November 2014.

Reductions of this level had and would continue to have a significant impact on Council services and outcomes for Sefton communities. It was therefore important that the Council's remaining resources were spent in areas of highest priority that minimised the negative impact on communities. However it was also important to stress that it would be impossible to deliver savings of this magnitude without reducing levels of service across the range of Council activities. This included those services commissioned with public, private, voluntary, community and faith partners to deliver support to our communities.

It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher:

"That the recommendations set out in the report be approved."

Following the debate, the requisite number of Members having signified their wish that the voting on the Motion should be recorded in accordance with Rule 92 of Chapter 4 in the Council Constitution, the voting was duly recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:



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### FOR THE MOTION:

Councillors Atkinson, Veronica Bennett, Bradshaw, Brennan, Burns, Byrom, Carr, Crabtree, Cummins, Dams, P. Dowd, Fairclough, Friel, Gatherer, Grace, John Kelly, John Joseph Kelly, Kermode, Kerrigan, Killen, Lappin, P. Maguire, Maher, Mahon, McGinnity, McKinley, Moncur, Murphy, O'Brien, Owens, Page, Roberts, Roche, Thompson, Tweed, Veidman, Webster and the Mayor (Councillor Cluskey).

### AGAINST THE MOTION:

Councillors Ball, David Barton, Booth, Brodie-Browne, Cuthbertson, Dawson, Dodd, Dutton, Lord Fearn, Maureen Fearn, Hartill, Keith, Lewis, S. McGuire, Preece, Robertson and Welsh.

### ABSTENTION;

Councillor Maria Bennett

The Mayor declared that the Motion was carried by 38 votes to 17 with 1 abstention and it was

### RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the approach to identifying options including the Core Purpose as given in paragraph 2.2 and the Budget Principles as given in paragraph 4.2 of the report and endorsed by Cabinet on 27 November 2014 be noted;
- (2) the update of the Local Government Finance Provisional Settlement 2015/16 and the updated Medium Term Financial Plan as outlined in paragraph 3 of the report be noted;
- (3) the work programme timetable in Annex A of the report be noted;
- (4) the budget process undertaken by officers to date as set out in paragraph 4 of the report and the process that officers would be undertaking to conclude the budget plan for the next two financial years, as agreed by Cabinet on 27 November 2014 be noted;
- (5) it be noted that the following items approved by Cabinet on 27 November 2014 and identified in Annex C1 of the report as efficiencies within the existing policy and budget framework were being implemented immediately by officers:

<b><u>Ref</u></b>	<b><u>Service Area</u></b>	<b><u>Efficiency</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Budget Net Reduction £000</u></b>
1	Registration Service	Increased income as result of increased service activity	54

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2	Community Equipment	Improved efficiency	72
3	Burials and Cremations Service	Increased income as result of increased service activity	390
4	Catering Services	Increased income as result of increased service activity	66
5	Commercial Waste Skips Services	Increased income as result of increased service activity	45
6	Coroners	Shared service agreed cost reduction due to completion of mortuary	24
7	Commissioning	Decrease in non-staffing expenditure	36
8	Sefton Care Line and Sefton Securities	Increased income as result of increased service activity	238
9	Home Improvements DFG	Re-profiling the allocation of costs and increasing the level of recharges	10
10	SEN 0-4 Inclusion Funding	Improved efficiency	12
11	Procurement	Reduction in non-staffing expenditure	16
12	Members Allowances	Reduce the budget provision for Members Allowances –as agreed by the Council on 5 July 2012	35
13	Learning Support - LAC	Reduction in the LA budget	10
14	Complementary Education	Removal of vacant posts from the establishment	51
15	Education Psychology	Spend to be directed to DSG High Needs Funding	25
16	SEN Assessments & Monitoring	Spend to be directed to DSG High Needs Funding	36
17	DCATCH	The scheme has already closed to new pupils, saving reflects cohorts of pupils completing the programme	30
18	LEA playing fields maintenance	Improved efficiency in maintenance scheme	52
19	Finance	Reduced debt management charges	390
20	Health Protection and Infection Control	Efficiency following re-procurement of service	52
21	Civic Services	Civic Services (Attendants) – Voluntary Redundancy	20

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22	Tourism	Revised estimate following policy decision	27
23	Trading Standards	Deletion of vacant post and reduction in supplies / services	114
24	Democratic Services	Voluntary reduction in support staff hours	14
25	General inflation provision	Remove general inflation provision set in MTFP at 2%. This will require all services to deliver general efficiency in the delivery of all services	4,360
26	Additional public health grant	Utilise increase in the public health grant to support the ongoing delivery of the Council's Health and Well Being strategy priorities	544
27	Levies	Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority and the Integrated Mersey Transport Authority have been requested to support the Council by finding 10% efficiency savings in setting their budgets for 2015/16/17	3,700
28	Review of previous budget assumptions and implications of previous budget decision	The estimates of the financial implications of all budget decisions have been reviewed in the light of implementation of options and subsequent changes in service demand. The original Medium Term Financial Plan can be revised to take account of this updated information.	1,841
28b	Reduced accommodation costs	Lease on Hoghton Street	76
29	Adult Social Care	Social care services will be required to contain net demographic growth within existing budgets for the duration of the plan. The figure has been adjusted to reflect Cabinet's previous decision relating to the underachievement of the services 2014/15 budget savings requirement. This assumption will need to be kept under close scrutiny to ensure deliverability	3,000
		<b>Total Efficiency Savings</b>	<b>15.340</b>

- (6) it be noted that the Equality Impact Assessment information provided, latest recorded position with respect to consultation, the identified risks and mitigating actions and information, and the impact on the community service users, partners and the Council

for each individual proposal in Annex C2 of the report had been taken into account and officers be authorised to take necessary steps to progress the proposals;

- (7) the following proposals contained in Annex C2 of the report be approved:

**Most Vulnerable**

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
30	Children With Disability Service	Continue with the development of, and implement, new eligibility criteria	3,500	315
31	Domiciliary Care	Further explore the use of adaptations, equipment and Assistive Technology  Reduce the number of hours, number of calls, or number of carers utilised, where this is appropriate  Work in partnership with the voluntary/community sector to facilitate the development and utilisation of low-level alternative/preventative community services  Explore more outcome-focused commissioning	5,322	1,560
<b>Total</b>				<b>1,875</b>

**Core**

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
32	Street Cleansing	Further expand the use of electric vehicles and reduce the number of cleansing operatives delivering a manual service	3,670	360
33	Highways Infrastructure	To continue for a further 2 years the reduction of £800k which was introduced as an annual saving in previous years	6,672	800
		Reduction in Highways Maintenance programmes to focus on preventative, critical		160

		and high risk works		
34	Street Lighting Energy	Invest to save in lighting columns and bulbs to allow reduced hours of lighting	1,180	530
35	Libraries	Review of operation and management of libraries including bookfund and opening times	1,901	270
<b>Total</b>				<b>2,120</b>

### Community Resilience

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
36	Aiming High	Continue with the development of, and implement, new eligibility criteria  Review and potential cessation of funding for some activities	1,360	400
37	Housing Standards	Reduction in housing enforcement services including cessation of corporate illegal traveller sites co-ordination	450	60
38	Supported Living	Alternative and more efficient ways of meeting assessed care needs	18,435	1,800
39	Neighbourhoods	Reduction and re-prioritisation of activity	778	150
<b>Total</b>				<b>2,410</b>

### Economy & Environment

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
40	Planning	Realign and reduce revenue budgets – including consultancy budgets		72
41	Planning	Increase in income across parts of the service Development Management, Building Control, and Technical Support [land charges] in light of economic forecast	958	130
42	Trading Standards	General reduction in enforcement activity. Limit resident service request	480	55

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		response		
43	EEMS (Energy and Environment)	Reduction in Carbon reduction service and community energy service	384	84
44	Parks Maintenance	Botanic Gardens shop Closure	2,903 (Parks Maintenance Budget)	45
45		Increase allotment fees by an average of £10 per full size plot in 2016/17 and again in 2017/18. Rates per full size plot will increase to £96 by 2017/18		20
46		The recharging of the cost of statutory checks to sports pavilions and repairs and maintenance of sports pavilions and associated hard infrastructure to sports users		15
47		Further Changes in Style and Standards of Parks Management		144
48		Reduction in GM Contracts		60
49	Coast	Reduction to visitor and site management activities.  Extension to the length of the life guard contract on reduced terms.  Car-parking income charges	878	150
<b>Total</b>				<b>775</b>

**Health & Wellbeing**

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
50	Environmental Health	Reduction in front line environmental health regulatory services.  Reduction in pest control services but retain full rat control service	1,812	370
51	School Health	Re-specify/recommission the Healthy Child programme for the whole 0-19 age range	1,388	260
52	Yet to be determined			0
53	Sports Leisure	Review and Restructure Management/Administration/ Operations including deletion of Service Manager post	1,044	470

		Re-tender direct debit collection Reduce agency payments  Energy efficiency		
			<b>Total</b>	<b>1,100</b>

**Running the Council**

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
54	Adult Assessments	An end to end review of assessment and review policies, procedures and processes within Adult Social Care	7,580	300
55	Client Contribution	Restructuring and integrating the above service with the specialist Substance Misuse Housing and Welfare Rights Team	586	54
56	Commissioning	Reduction of the Commissioning Service staffing	Budget within Most Vulnerable	144
57	Attendance Welfare Service	Improved administration of legal procedures.  Reduced eligibility for service interventions.  Increase income	473	192
58	Youth Offending Team	Merge services and potential to reduce management capacity	661	120
59	Outreach Respite Recovery	Restructure the delivery team	635	96
60	Locality Assessment	Redesign of Common Assessment Framework team Implement a stronger Lead Practitioner model Implementation of electronic – common assessment framework (E-CAF)	299	132
61	School Standards and Effectiveness	Reduction in the Local Authority support provided to schools which are not in receipt of statutory	530	60

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		intervention, requiring improvement or are assessed at risk of being less than good		
62	Schools Regulatory Services	An end to end review of activity, policies, procedures and processes	449	60
63	14-19 Services	Changes to commissioning arrangements for Information, Advice & Guidance	938	120
64	Children's administrative support	Service redesign	167	63
65	Highway management, development, design and safety.	Changes to charges Service reorganisations	1,135	300
66	Parking	Review of service and charging regimes	-1,524	547
67	Property Management	Closure and disposal of operational properties	1,052	60
68	FCERM (Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management)	Reduction in service Reduced response times Reduction in works delivery	362	82
69	Regulatory Services Support	Reduction in administrative support due to changes in working practices and increase to online services	219	24
70	Public Conveniences	Closure of all public conveniences	74	74
71	Bulky Items	Increasing collection charge from £7.50 to £10 per collection	48	48
72	Arts	Review management and opening times at the Atkinson	1,417	240
73	Sports Leisure-Active Sports	Increase in income due to increased charges and new programmes	0	84
74	Sports Leisure Aquatics	Maximise pool time at Meadows offering more swimming lessons to meet demand	-234	36
75	Public Health	Internal restructure to reflect the need to strengthen the influencing role of the team and reduced need for	822	416



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		commissioning capacity		
76	Corporate Communications Team	Deletion of vacant posts and Team restructure	400	204
77	Transformation	Reduction of Transformation resource	204	75
78	Legal Services	Restructure of the legal management department Removal of the Monitoring Officer's budget	914	134
79	Finance & ICT Services	Restructuring Finance and ICT services after implementation of new financial system in 2015 Reduce ICT, printing and telephone costs in line with general Council reductions	2,812 552	500 190
80	Learning & Development	Reduction in activity associated with learning and development	623	188
81	Personnel	Reduction in Personnel resource and efficiency savings	1,600	100
86	Business Intelligence & Performance	Restructure	1,077	360
87	Public Health	Reduction in funding for commissioned intelligence work		50
88	Catering	To increase the charge for each meal by 10p in September 2015 (start of the school term) and by a further 10p from September 2016		450
89	Building Cleaning	To increase fees and charges to schools		70
90	Commercial Waste	To increase fees and charges		10
91	Tourism	Additional income from events		13
			<b>Total</b>	<b>5,596</b>

**Community Resilience**

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
82	Housing Related	Further decommissioning and re-commissioning of funded services in accordance with the	2,169	900

	Support	approved Commissioning Intentions and Priorities		
<b>Total</b>				<b>900</b>

**Health & Wellbeing**

Ref	Service Area	Change Proposal	2014/15 Budget £000	Proposed Budget Reduction £000
83	Integrated Wellness	Integration of Lifestyle services	5,349	3,049
84	Substance Misuse	Reduction in Substance Misuse spend	6,031	740
85	Affordable Warmth	Cessation of SEARCH scheme and Easier Breathing Project	54	54
			<b>Total</b>	<b>3,843</b>
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18, 619</b>

- (8) it be noted that officers would comply with Human Resource policies and procedures and this will include regular HR monitoring reports to the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services and Performance;
- (9) it be noted that figures in the annex of the report were working assumptions of proposals to be considered and the figures should not be seen as predetermining any decisions; and
- (10) it be noted that further options were being developed and assessed and a further report would be presented to Cabinet for consideration in February 2015 and the Council in March 2015.

**70. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2015/16 AND UPDATING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE 2015/16**

Further to Minute No. 49 of the Cabinet meeting held on 15 January 2015, the Council considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided details of feedback received on the recent consultation exercise regarding the proposed amendments to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015/16 and details of the updated Council Tax Base for 2015/16.

It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher and

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the revisions to the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2015/16 summarised in paragraph 3 of the report be approved and adopted to take effect from 1 April 2015;
- (2) the Council Tax Base 2015/16 as set out in Annex B of the report be approved; and
- (3) approval be given to the payment of grants to the Parish Councils in 2015/16 to compensate them for the cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, as set out in Annex B of the report.

**71. REFRESH OF THE CARERS STRATEGY FOR SEFTON**

Further to Minute No. 50 of the Cabinet meeting held on 15 January 2015, the Council considered the report of the Director of Older People which provided details of the draft Carers Strategy 2014-2019, which provided an overarching framework within which the Council can provide support to Carers to continue to undertake their unpaid caring roles, with a focus on self - reliance, independence and community resilience

It was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher and

RESOLVED:

That the Sefton Carers Strategy for 2014 - 2019 be approved.

**72. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES 2014/15**

No changes were made to the Membership of Committees.

**73. MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DAWSON**

It was moved by Councillor Dawson, seconded by Councillor Brodie - Browne:

"This Council notes:

- (i) the loyalty, bravery and professionalism with which troops recruited in the North West of England, including the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton, conducted themselves during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.
- (ii) widespread concern that the decision to embark upon the Iraq invasion was made based upon false premises and untrue propaganda fed to the British people by representatives of the Government of the time.

- (iii) that the Chilcott Inquiry into the events which led the United Kingdom to embark upon the the invasion and occupation of Iraq, is complete and has been shared, months ago, with former Prime Ministers.
- (iv) that the publication of the Chilcott report has been delayed for many months, without excuse, which is leading to widespread and profound belief by ordinary members of the public that those who supported that war on false premises are covering up these matters.

The Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister, expressing concern at the continuing delays in publication and calling for an immediate publication of the Chilcott report."

An amendment was moved by Councillor P. Dowd, seconded by Councillor Maher that the Motion be amended by the deletion of the text in Paragraphs (ii), (iii) and (iv); and that the final Paragraph be revised to read:

"The Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister, expressing concern at the continuing delays in the publication of the Chilcott report and calls for its publication as soon as possible."

Following a brief debate, it was unanimously agreed that the amendment and Substantive Motion be agreed and it was

RESOLVED:

This Council notes the loyalty, bravery and professionalism with which troops recruited in the North West of England, including the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton, conducted themselves during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

The Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister, expressing concern at the continuing delays in the publication of the Chilcott report and calls for its publication as soon as possible.