

# Sefton Council Sponsorship Policy

(Internal version)

February 2026



Sefton Council



# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
Objectives .....	2
Sponsorship Definition .....	2
Principles .....	2
Procedure and Financial threshold .....	3
Payment Profile .....	5
Branding .....	5
Review .....	5
Appendix A.....	6

## Change History

Reviewed – 31/03/22: Update to Principles section of the Policy –  
**Any individual or organisation which is subject to UK sanctions)**

Document reviewed and no further changes – February 2026.

# Introduction

This policy document sets out the Council's definition of 'sponsorship' and the terms upon which the sponsorship may be both sought, considered and accepted by the Council.

**Sefton Council** has a policy on sponsorship in order to:

- Uphold the Council's reputation and corporate identity.
- Further the Council's strategic vision and support its Core Purpose and Values.
- Secure best value for money and maximise income opportunities.
- Provide a framework and control measures.
- Protect members and officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with sponsors.
- Establish a corporate approach and standards (including best practice).
- Support development of commercial and social value partnerships with the private sector and others.

## Objectives

- To ensure that our position and reputation are adequately protected in sponsorship agreements.
- To ensure that we adopt a consistent and professional approach towards sponsorship.
- To ensure best value is obtained and provided in sponsorship arrangements – including any arrangements made where we receive either money or benefit in kind.
- To protect members and individual officers from allegations of inappropriate dealings or relationships with sponsors.

## Sponsorship Definition

Sponsorship is defined as - *“An agreement between the Council and the sponsor, where the Council receives either money or a benefit in kind for an event, campaign or initiative from an organisation or individual which in turn gains publicity or other benefits”.*

## Principles

The Council welcomes all opportunities to work in partnership with organisations which are aligned with the Council's Core Purpose and Values and where a sponsorship opportunity is appropriate.

However, the Council will not put itself in a position where it might be said that such a partnership has, or may, be thought to have:

- influenced the Council or its officers in carrying out its statutory functions;
- been offered unduly favourable terms from the Council in any business or other agreement;
- aligned the Council with any organisation which conducted itself in a manner which conflicted with the Council's Core Purpose and Values.

The Council will not therefore, be able to enter into a sponsorship agreement with:

- Organisations not complying with the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) codes for broadcasting and non-broadcasting, sales promotions and direct marketing, or other statutory or regulatory requirements enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).
- Organisations involved in unlawful discrimination against people with one or more protected characteristics within the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
- Organisations in financial, planning, legal, tender process (or other application) or conflict with the Council. For example, anyone who has an active planning or procurement application with the Council will not be able to apply to sponsor at that time.
- Organisations whose activities may bring the Council into disrepute for example gambling organisations
- Organisations with a political purpose.
- Any individual or organisation which is subject to UK sanctions

The above list is not exhaustive, and the Council retains the right to decline to enter into sponsorship agreements with any organisation or individual or in respect of particular products or projects which the Council in its sole discretion considers inappropriate for whatever reason.

The Council will always comply with its procurement policy and procedures and shall, in accordance with those procedures, promote any sponsorship opportunities to potential sponsors.

## Procedure and Financial threshold

All officers seeking sponsorship opportunities should follow the sponsorship checklist outlined in Appendix A.

This checklist will provide officers with easy to follow steps on how they should seek sponsorships, the necessary checks and securing the sponsorship deal.

A dedicated webpage has been created on [sefton.gov.uk](http://sefton.gov.uk) to ensure transparency and will list the sponsorship opportunity and who the sponsor should contact if they're interested.

The following financial thresholds must be adhered to;

Value	Level of evidence	Level of Approval
£0-10k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published on Sefton.gov.uk 'Sponsorship' page</li> <li>A published Chief Officer Report (COR) outlining checks have been carried out and rationale re: sponsor chosen if applicable (i.e. more than one applicant).</li> <li>Email communications@sefton.gov.uk with information you wish to be publicised and specify what communication channels, for example Social media, Press etc and update sponsor register</li> <li>Copy Head of Service into email for information</li> </ul>	Executive Director
£10k-£50k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published on Sefton.gov.uk 'Sponsorship' page</li> <li>A published Chief Officer Report (COR) outlining checks have been carried out and rationale re: sponsor chosen if applicable (i.e. more than one applicant).</li> <li>Email communications@sefton.gov.uk with information you wish to be publicised and specify what communication channels, for example Social media, Press etc and update sponsor register</li> <li>Copy Head of Service/Executive Director into email for information</li> </ul>	Chief Executive
£50k+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published on Sefton.gov.uk 'Sponsorship' page</li> <li>A Published Cabinet Report</li> <li>Email communications@sefton.gov.uk with information you wish to be publicised and specify what communication channels, for example Social media, Press etc and update sponsor register</li> <li>Copy Head of Service/Executive Director into email for information</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> <i>Anything over 100k or materially affecting 2 or more wards will need including on the Forward Plan as a key decision.</i></p>	Cabinet

## Payment Profile

This will be discussed and agreed on an individual basis, however the Council would expect once the sponsorship commences and an invoice is sent out that payment will be received within 30 working days.

## Branding

Sponsorship agreement does not authorise the use of Sefton Council branding, if you would like such use please contact [Communication@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Communication@sefton.gov.uk) who will advise accordingly.

The Council will assume permission of use of any logo of whom they enter into a sponsorship agreement with.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it complies with best practice, any relevant legislation and any internal changes.

## Appendix A

### Staff Sponsorship Checklist – As the lead officer seeking sponsorship, you will be responsible for the ascertaining sponsorship and adhering to the checklist.

Sponsorship is an effective way to support events, festivals and other Council activities without putting additional pressure on existing Council resources. These sponsors often add more than financial support and can bring with them expertise, new ideas and offer reputational value.

Please research your target sponsors before approaching them. Understanding a company’s and individual’s objectives will help you to devise packages more likely to appeal to them. Remember businesses will only sponsor you if they can see a return on their investments, which meets company objectives, and this may include social value.

A decision will be reached providing the sponsor meets the principles outlined in the policy and once you have gone through the required due diligence checks. The Council wants to maximise each sponsorship opportunity and therefore a decision will be made based on highest proposed sponsorship amount. If more than one company is offering the same amount, negotiations will take place.

The Communications Team will be the responsible for maintaining a register which will include a list of approved sponsors.

The following checklist will help you to make sure that you are meeting all of the basic requirements when seeking sponsorship opportunities. This will ensure that any decisions you make comply with the Sponsorship Policy to protect yourself and the reputation of the Council.

No	Required Check	Notes and Check Completed ✓
1.	<p>Ensure that your sponsorship opportunity is added to the sponsorship page on <a href="http://Sefton.gov.uk">Sefton.gov.uk</a>. In this way, we have ensured transparency and made the opportunity available to all.</p> <p>To do this please email the details of the opportunity to <a href="mailto:communications@sefton.gov.uk">communications@sefton.gov.uk</a>. Details should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name of event/product</li> <li>• Cost of sponsorship</li> <li>• Length of sponsorship agreement</li> <li>• Package received by sponsor e.g. Publicity</li> <li>• Key contact name and number (service area)</li> <li>• Identify the best communication channels to promote the opportunity e.g Twitter, LinkedIn, <a href="http://Sefton.gov.uk">Sefton.gov.uk</a> etc</li> </ul> <p>Cc <a href="mailto:investsefton@sefton.gov.uk">investsefton@sefton.gov.uk</a> so they can advertise on <a href="http://www.investsefton.com">www.investsefton.com</a></p>	

No	Required Check	Notes and Check Completed ✓
2.	<p>Ensure you carry out due diligence about the potential sponsor. Please check with the relevant teams such as Finance, Legal, Planning, Procurement, Communications etc.</p> <p>Ask the following questions to ensure the potential sponsor is compliant with the policy.</p> <p>Is it involved in unlawful discrimination against people with one or more protected characteristics within the terms of the Equality Act 2010? – Request an email from sponsor a self-certification that they are not involved in unlawful discrimination.</p> <p>Is it in financial, planning, legal or other conflict with the Council? For example, does the potential sponsor have an active planning or tender application in process?</p> <p>Could the organisation bring the Council into disrepute?</p> <p>Does the organisation have a political purpose?</p> <p>Does the organisation’s values conflict with our core values?</p> <p>Consider Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) codes for broadcasting and non-broadcasting, sales promotions and direct marketing, or other statutory or regulatory requirements enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority</p> <p>If the answer to any of these questions is ‘yes’ then you must not proceed with the sponsorship opportunity. If you’re unsure then please seek guidance from your Head of Service or as and when appropriate Executive Director.</p>	
3.	<p>Ensure that you have liaised with your Finance Officer, who will undertake a Financial Health Check on the company/organisation prior to commencing.</p>	
4	<p>If you have any concerns about the reputation or require background checks of a sponsor, please speak to a member of the Invest Sefton Team who will be able to assist.</p>	
5.	<p>If you are exploring a sponsorship opportunity with an organisation whose product may be considered inappropriate, conflicts with services already provided by the organisation or bring the Council into disrepute e.g. Alcohol but may be relevant to your event/product please seek</p>	

No	Required Check	Notes and Check Completed ✓
	further guidance from your Head of Service/Executive Director or Cabinet Member prior to approval.	
6.	Have you discussed external signage or advertising as part of the sponsorship package? If so, you may need planning consent- please check this with the planning department before committing to the sponsorship	
7.	<p>Once you've completed your due diligence checks, the following will be required for action:</p> <p>Chief Officer Report (COR) outlining key details of the sponsorship, that the appropriate checks have been carried out and the rationale for choosing the sponsor (see financial thresholds for level of approval) – decisions are to be published on Mod Gov</p> <p>Once approved an email must be sent to <a href="mailto:communications@sefton.gov.uk">communications@sefton.gov.uk</a> who will update the sponsorship register, they will need to know:</p> <p>Name of Company/organisation            Name of Event/Initiative            Value            Length of Sponsorship            Key Contact (Service Area)</p> <p>Once approved an email must be sent to the sponsor to document the agreement and saved for audit purposes.</p>	
8.	For longer-term sponsorship, carry out an evaluation of your sponsorship deal every year to ensure your sponsor is happy and that the deal is still good value for both parties, but also make regular checks to ensure there are no changes in the circumstances of the sponsor that might conflict with the Policy.	

