Sefton Council

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective		Regenerated Places-GSI	SES Lead	Stuart Barnes
Report Date		Apr-Jun 2026	SES Project Lead	Heather Jago
Previous Status		Green	Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators	(Please add more rows if necessary)		Target	Achieved	Current Status	Progress to date
1	Bootle Town Centre					Green	Progressing design development and programme for implementation of Phase 1 of Bootle Strand transformation project following approval of £20M by MHCLG. The first phase of delivery involves selective demolition of part of the centre, making way to provide a new town square, terraced gardens to address the level change between the existing Mons Sq and Palatine, landscaping down to the canal side and will also involve the shell and core fit out to enable the repurposing of the former M&S unit for retail, community, health and leisure uses. Demolition works are now completed. Work progresses on discharging precommencement conditions.Enabling works commenced in April 2026 and are due to be completed Summer 2026. The main works contract with Vinci is due to commence in August 2026. Further work is needed to develope the feasibility study commissioned in relation to the Salt and Tar site regarding future aspirations for increased usage, year-round events, and night-time economy. A Place Based Strategic Investment Strategy is being developed in collaboration between key SMBC service areas and LCRCA. Social Value reported by contractor includes work placement weeks, providing training hours, people benefiting from NEET activities, etc including interface with Sefton@Work and Care Leavers. Salt and Tar event programme has now been announced for 2026. In August 2026 the music festival will be on tour and relocate temporarily to the Lock and Quay events site, with the Waterboys headlining, and other acts such as Nile Rogers and Chic, Billy Ocean, and The Saw Doctors. Although the Bootle Town of Culture bid was unsuccessful work will continue to deliver on the transformation plans for Bootle town centre building on work undertaken to date. In terms of maximising available opportunities, SMBC continue to work closely with the LCRCA and government departments to explore further funding opportunities. Bootle Trailblazer, (Now called Pride in Place) programme is being devloped. An independent chair and board has now been appointed and work progresses on developing a Neighbourhood Plan. TCR – project scope and content development continues - Bootle bid for £38.7m has been agreed with the LCRCA. This includes improvements to the highway infrastructure and public realm on Washington Parade, transport hub improvements, and public ream and connectivity improvements across the Strand transformation site. Other elements include Walkable Bootle and Active Travel measures. Match Day shuttle bus usage for the Hill Dickinson stadium continues to be monitored in terms of the footfall generated for the town centre. A pilot scheme will also begin in August 2026 to provide shuttle buses to Anfield for matches and music events. The LCRCA are continuing to develop the strategy for Rapid Transport Vehicle to improve connectivity between Bootle and various places across the LCR. Work continues on the Strand Integrated Health and Social Care hub project.
2	Bootle Area Action Plan					Green	The Bootle Area Action Plan (AAP) was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination and has been found to be sound. Sefton Council formally adopted the Bootle Area Action Plan on 15th January 2026.The AAP sets the land-use planning context to inform, direct and permit investment and development the wider Bootle area. In addition, the Council has completed two key Masterplans for Bootle Town Centre (Hawthorne Road/Canal Corridor and site of St. John's House and adjacent land). This will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan review.
3	Bootle Place and Investment Strategy and Place Branding:					Green	SMBC have commissioned a consortium of consultants with WSP as the lead consultant via the TTSS framework who are in the process of developing the Bootle Place and Investment Strategy in parallell to the Southport Place Strategy. This will look at place identity/proposition as part of a wider ambition for change and transformation of Bootle Town Centre. Key stakeholder engagement will form part of this documents preparation and this will help attact investment and improve the town's profile. The outputs for the strategy will include coordinating and setting out both a place and transport delivery plan - taking account of other areas of work e.g. Bootle AAP, Transport for the City Region, Housing Delivery Pipeline and the Visitor Economy Strategy, etc. It will be developed in partnership with internal and external stakeholders and will be funded through Transport for City Regions pre-development funding, and approval in principle has been granted for this work. The inception meeting took place on 27th July and walk and talk and a series of stakeholder workshops are currently being programmed in.

4	Southport Town Deal					Green	"Southport Town Deal programme continues to progress with delivery. To date DSM have successfully demolished Southport Theatre and Convention Centre (STCC) which has enabled them to move onto critical enabling works for the Marine Lake Event Centre which is now complete.Vinci are the preferred contractor for enabling works in advance of the main works contract. Building of a new access ramp from the upper promenade is on-going. A Senior Construction Project Manager post has been appointed. Cabinet approval in June for full scheme of £106m. UKSPF Capital used to deliver a professional Podcast studio within Eastbank and Liverpool University Virtual Engineering Centre (VEC), which has now been completed on site. Operational model for the studio is under discussion. In addition, UKSPF has been used to provide fit out to the third floor of Eastbank which is now complete.Work underway to appoint a contractor for the Ground floor works for a café. Cost management to be provided through external support. Lease discussions on-going but hope to be finalised by Autumn 2026. Fit-out design for the ground floor has been completed and is being costed. Phase 1 of Les transformation de Southport improvement works to Kings Street, Market Street, Eastbank Street is now complete. Market Street is now open. The most visible elements of the work are the introduction of new paving, the excavation for tree pits and rainwater gardens which are a feature of the completed works. Phase 2 has secured approval from our Licencing and Regulatory committee. Detailed design process has commenced. Negotiating an Early Contractor Involvement contract with Balfour Beaty. 'Building a Better Customer Experience' training programme for the hospitality sector has completed. 420 learners have now successfully completed the course (254 delivered by Southport College and 166 with Adult & Community Learning). In addition, 30 business have engaged with the programme. Southport Townscape Heritage Initiative is progressing well with and has levered in £1m of private sector investment into Southport and 7 units now improved through Heritage Lottery grant funding. Works are underway on properties on Neville Street and Bold Street. Work continuing on the Esplanade site (Park and Ride) in exploring the development opportunity presented by the Cove project, and heads of terms are currently in discussion. "

5	Southport Business Park					Green	With support from Sefton Council, EFT Group Ltd are relocating to a long-vacant piece of land at Southport Business Park as part of their ongoing growth, with Sefton Council granting a 999-year lease on plots F, G and H at the Wight Moss Way based business park. This lease commitment enables the company to build both a new operational base and additional small business units as part of their ongoing expansion. EFT Group specialises in life safety, security and construction services and remains committed to staying in Southport, where it employs a large local workforce and supports school-based apprenticeship schemes. Work continues on Southport Business Park and EFT Group Ltd relocation and expansion ambitions, with a planning application submitted and the aim to create high quality jobs and opportunities for local residents. LCRCA bid submitted for EFT, and is being held on reserve list "
6	Southport Town Hall Gardens					Green	Southport Town Square Garden regeneration is progressing. A report was taken to Cabinet in November which outlined the recommendations to approve: • The appointment of Ridge and Partners as the Lead Consultant, Project Manager and Quantity surveyor for the Project. • To confirm support for the appointment of Lady Marina Dalglish as Independent Chair of the Project Board; and • To note the feedback received via the first stage of the consultation and engagement process. Work continues to develop this key project following the procurement of the professional team - Exploring options for the procurement of a contractor to deliver the site. RIBA Stage 2 design pack recieved in July 2026. Moving into RIBA Stage 3 design July/August 2026.
7	Southport Pier					Green	"Following significant investment from the Government's Growth Mission Fund of £20m, repair and refurbishment works to Southport Pier Is now underway, the works will be carried out in two phased with a winter break planned for the end of 2026. It is expected that the works will be complete by the summer of 2028. The works will consist of: • Full replacement of decking boards and timber joists • Extensive steelwork repairs and replacements due to corrosion • Installation of new gates and CCTV • Implementation of a new long-term maintenance regime"
8	Ainsdale					Green	Ainsdale Vision adopted Autumn 2025. Work is progressing in preparation for demolition of the Toad Hall complex and consultants are now appointed to support the preparation of a planning application for the future use of the site for off beach parking and provision also in outline for a future visitor centre on the site (subject to securing appropriate funding). Heads of terms are also in progress for the disposal of the former Sands public house. Following Cabinet approval to progress acquisitions to bring the Ainsdale Neighbourhood Centre, Sandbrook Way into full Council ownership, negotiations are progressing well with the few remaining owners. In addition, a planning application was submitted by Aldi to develop a food store in this location, in March 2026, and is being assessed. The plans if approved will bring a £7m investment into the area, improve the local retail offer and appearance of this area, and create around 40new jobs for local people.
9	Maghull Health Park					Green	Merseycare are continuing to work with Sefton Council to develop plans for a Mental Health Digital Research and Innovation Centre at Maghull Health Park. Building on the significant investment in the site to date by Merseycare to this site - Europe's largest concentration of complex secure mental health services and sector leading clinical excellence for serious mental illness. The site forms part of the successful LCRCA bid for Life Sciences Investment Zone funding. The Investment Zone status offers a number of tax reliefs to business looking to locate within the Health Park, making it a more attractive investment location. Following approval by LCRCA, predevelopment funding has been approved in Spring 2025 to develop the next stage of this project and progress the Planning submission. Merseycare have now appointed planning consultants to prepare the planning submission for this key project. LCRCA also providing dedicated support to develop this key project for the city region.

Commentary

"Bootle Strand enabling works progressing on site following completion of demolition works earlier this year. Finalisation of main works contract with Vinci is almost complete.

Marine Lake Events Centre - Building new access ramp from the upper promenade has commenced. A Senior Construction Project Manager has now been appointed. Main works contract negotiation is almost completed. Cabinet approval for full scheme of £106m.

MHCLG monitoring return for Local Regeneration Fund (April 2025 to March 2026) for Strand and Southport Town Deal funding submitted May 2026."

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Business Growth & Investment
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Stuart Barnes
SES Project lead	Mike Mullin
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Current Status	Progress to date
1	No of outward engagement campaigns targeted at Sefton businesses / No of Sefton businesses targeted	4	10	Green	A wide range of workshops run by InvestSefton attracting large numbers of businesses
2	No of businesses contacting InvestSefton for Information, Advice & Guidance-Triage	50	473	Green	Individual enquiries handled -overall volume remains constant and high
3	No of businesses receiving 1:1 support (face to face/diagnostic /action plan)	13	14	Green	Remains on track, with detailed diagnostic and action plans in place exceeding target
4	No of businesses attending InvestSefton events/workshops	60	200	Green	One to many approach continues to attract excellent overall business attendance
5	No of new jobs created	0	0	Red	Most effort have been directed to capturing jobs reported inprevious quarer. in line with end of UKSPF programme.Employment growth remains an issue across the LCR with business confidence ing low due to prevailing economic condtions
6	No of inward Investment enquiries received	3	3	Green	Companies seeking to relocate to/invest in Sefton; interest remains steady in what are invetiable longer term projects
7	No of investors/developers receiving support	2	2	Green	Includes Business park owners and developers
8	No of large businesses (including Foreign owned) receiving Key Account Management	3	4	Green	Joint activity with Dept of Business & Trade /Growth Platform
9	No of enquiries from Sefton residents seeking to start a business/become self-employed	15	39	Green	Commissioned activity via Merseyside Expanding Horizons and Safe Regeneration
10	No of new business start-ups created	5	2	Green	Commissioned activity via Merseyside Expanding Horizons and Safe Regeneration

Commentary

InvestSefton remains totally focussed on business growth and sustainability a which remains very much central to delivery as businesses face increasing economic pressures including cost of living, materials, supply chain and energy costs across a range of sectors. The team is working with other city region support organisations such as the LCR Growth Platform and a range of other public/private sector providers of support.

WWW.investsefton.com continues to receive high volumes of traffic. Single session website visits which have now reached 106,146. The team has also handled 11,132 enquiries since March 2020.

InvestSefton has been awarded a one-year extension from 1 April 2026-31 March 2027 from the LCR Local Growth Fund for the value of £369,919.

The team's specialist Business Consultancy Framework is designed to augment InvestSefton' s advisory and guidance support in areas including diagnostics; marketing and sales; human resources; strategic business planning; social media & e-marketing; management consultancy; Internationalisation Organisation for standardisation (ISO) Quality Support and Financial Management.

Events and workshops are at the core of InvestSefton' s one- to-many delivery to businesses providing demand led business topics selected by the businesses and covering a wide range of support such as online sales, tendering, marketing, business sustainability, cyber security and digital technologies. The events remain popular and attract large numbers of businesses including Sefton Economic Forum and two new network groups-Sefton Huddle (Digital & technology) and Sefton Finance & Professionals Group.
InvestSefton services can be found at www.investsefton.com . A landing page on the council's main website can also be found Business support and investment (sefton.gov.uk).

Inward Investment has also been secured most notably in Bootle through Mersey Reach and Atlantic Park while the team supports Southport Town Deal and Southport Business Park activities. Other investment and expansion enquiries remain on going including working closely with other EG&H and council services.

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Employment & opps for work	SES Lead	Suart Barnes
Report Date	Apr - June 2026	SES Project lead	Claire Maguire
Previous Status	Green	Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Current Status	Progress to date
1	% of expenditure verified for projects which are externally funded.	100% (quarterly)	100.0%	Green	
2	% of all registered learners who are not working (based on individual learning aims)	65% (quarterly)	75.4%	Green	A high proportion of learners accessing training at SACL are not working.
3	% of registered learners who reside in areas of deprivation as described by funding rules	30% (quarterly)	40.0%	Green	The service continues to be popular with learners who live in the areas of deprivation in Sefton
4	% retention across all Adult Community Learning Courses	94% (quarterly)	98.2%	Green	Retention remains high.
5	No. of residents accessing Sefton@Work programmes in 2026/2027 (cumulative)	805 (annually)	32.7%	Green	The number of residents engaging with the programmes managed through the Sefton@Work employment service continues to be high.
6	No. of workless or economically inactive people gaining employment/self-employment after receiving information, advice and guidance in 2026/2027(cumulative)	378 (annually)	30.2%	Green	Job outcomes for residents accessing the service remain on target.
7	% of vulnerable people referred into the service from a third party receive targeted support, including subsidised placements	70% (quarterly)	81.8%	Green	Third party organisations, both internal and external continue to refer their clients to Sefton@Work to help them in their journey towards employment. The service continues to be successful in engaging with clients with more complex needs.

8	Number of young people aged 15-24 years engaging in interventions to prevent long term disengagement	900 (quarterly)	1,207	Green	This figure represents work carried out with young individuals across our whole service area during the quarter.
9	Remain in the best performing quartile for 16-18 NEET when compared to Liverpool City Region and National Statistical Neighbours.	Yes	Yes	Green	Sefton continues to rank in the best performing quartile
10	Remain in the best performing quartile for 16-18 Not Known when compared to Liverpool City Region and National Statistical Neighbours.	Yes	Yes	Green	Sefton continues to rank in the best performing quartile

Commentary

Sefton@Work

Sefton@Work continued to support residents into meaningful employment throughout the first quarter 2026/27, delivering tailored one-to-one guidance, employer engagement, and targeted programmes designed to help people enter and progress in the labour market.

Our ongoing promotion of the Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) remained a key priority this quarter. The programme provides funding for employers to provide employment for at least six months for Sefton residents aged 18–24 who have been out of work, education, or training for more than six months.
Since the programme began, we have issued 29 grants to employers to employ a young person aged 18 -24. Delivery will continue in 2026/27 with an additional 12 places to fill.
Delivery of the DWP Youth Trailblazer initiative continued across the quarter, supporting 18–21 year olds with tailored employability help, employer engagement, and financial incentives designed to encourage businesses to create opportunities for young people.
During the first quarter we have committed 28 employer grants, with 15 clients starting employment and 13 places actively being recruited for. This grant has enabled more young people to take up meaningful roles with supportive employers. We have also achieved 12 job outcomes where employer grants where not necessary. The programme continues to complement our YPG activity and strengthen our wider youth employment offer.

Sefton@Work continues to commission Citizens Advice (CAB) to deliver specialist advice services from Sefton@Work two days per week, complemented by two days per month from the Southport office. This arrangement ensures that clients have rapid access to high quality advice, including benefit checks, benefit applications and in work better off calculations. Clients are also fast tracked to specialist CAB debt and housing caseworkers where required.

Sefton@Work has continued its rolling programme of delivery across the Bootle and Southport training rooms. Activity during the quarter included a wide range of employability interventions such as functional skills workshops, ESOL courses, digital inclusion support, sector specific qualifications and routeways, job fairs, employer engagement and networking events.
Delivery has been achieved both directly by the Sefton@Work team and through close partnership working with Sefton Community Learning Service (SCLS), external training providers, employers and other partner organisations.
Following the success of previous Sefton@Work careers fairs branded 'Be Inspired, Sefton,' further events are planned throughout 2026/27 as earlier events attracted a strong turnout for residents looking for support.

Career Connect continues to work in partnership with Sefton@Work and attends weekly outreach sessions. This programme supports young people who have cared experienced, not in education, employment or training (NEET), or engaged with Early Help services, ensuring coordinated and targeted engagement.

Our Connect to Work contract commenced 1st April 2026, and delivery is currently underway. The project has made a strong start during this period, with positive performance recorded across the majority of key performance indicators. Referral volumes have steadily increased, resulting in growing caseloads across the adviser team and demonstrating increasing awareness and uptake of the Connect to Work programme across Sefton.
Engagement activity has been particularly encouraging, with referrals comprising a healthy mix of both warm and cold leads, providing opportunities to support a diverse participant cohort. Initial participant engagement and progression rates indicate that the service model is being well received within the local community.
Significant progress has also been made in establishing strategic partnerships and developing local delivery infrastructure. Extensive engagement has taken place with a wide range of community organisations, public sector services and voluntary sector partners to identify opportunities for co-location, outreach delivery and programme integration. These activities are helping to build a strong local network that will improve accessibility, increase referral pathways and support long-term sustainability of the programme.
Internally, the team continues to embed the IPS fidelity model through regular supervision, team meetings and observations. Staff remain engaged, motivated and focused on achieving programme outcomes whilst maintaining fidelity requirements.

The Voluntary Routeway Programme, which provides placements for individuals seeking work experience to enhance their CVs or support a gradual return to employment, is set to recommence in 2026. The programme will be responsive to the needs of Sefton@Work clients and will include a two day accredited pre placement course delivered by SCLS.
Participants will receive comprehensive support including uniforms where required, lunch vouchers and reimbursement of all travel expenses. Clients who successfully complete their placement will be offered a guaranteed interview with Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).
Human Resources colleagues have supported Sefton@Work with the Routeway Programme, including the inclusion of opportunities on JobsGoPublic. The programme was advertised in March, with placements commencing in April, and will conclude with a celebration event.
Current placement providers include Green Sefton, SMBC School Meals, Active Sefton, Sefton@Work, SCLS and Sefton Libraries. Outcomes and success stories from this cohort will be captured and used to promote the programme to additional SMBC departments, supporting the expansion of future cohorts.

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Participants will receive comprehensive support including uniforms where required, lunch vouchers and reimbursement of all travel expenses. Clients who successfully complete their placement will be offered a guaranteed interview with Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

Sefton Adult Community Learning

The Adult Community Learning Service continues to provide high quality, second chance learning opportunities for adults from the Cambridge Road Community Learning Hub. The curriculum remains diverse and responsive, with a strong focus on health and wellbeing; essential skills including literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and employability; and a range of accredited qualification pathways.

The Service receives its funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) and is externally funded to deliver all activities. Delivery is subcontracted to voluntary and community sector organisations to facilitate accessible learning opportunities and accredited qualifications aligned with LCRCA growth areas and priority sectors. The Service is has finalised its 2026/27 delivery plan and Tailored Learning Narrative, including Test and Learn pilot activity and increased subcontracting arrangements to broaden community reach and participation. July's enrolment days have been exceptionally busy with a high volume of learners lining up to enrol.
Enhanced marketing and promotional activity have continued to contribute to a significant rise in unemployed learners beginning their learning journey. Against a target of 60%, performance at the end of Quarter 1 2026/27 stands at 75.4%, representing a sustained increase over the previous year and demonstrating the Service's success in engaging residents who are furthest from the labour market.

The proportion of learners from ethnic minority backgrounds remains at 11.8%, below the local target of 16%. Whilst this reflects ongoing challenges in recruiting staff to meet demand the Service continues to work with community partners to strengthen engagement and increase participation.

Retention rates remain exceptionally strong across all Adult Community Learning provision. At 98.2%, retention continues to significantly exceed the target of 94%, demonstrating high levels of learner engagement, satisfaction and course completion across the curriculum offer.

Looking ahead, the Employment & Learning Service has now commenced Phase 2 of the refurbishment and improvement works at the Sefton Community Learning Service site on Cambridge Road, Seaforth. This phase focuses on enhancing the upper-floor classroom spaces and redeveloping the ground-floor community café to further improve the learner experience and community facilities. Works are progressing well and remain on track for completion within the agreed project timeline, providing confidence that the improved facilities will support the future growth and development of the Service.

Key Achievements & Current Performance for the NEET Reduction & Early Intervention Service (NREIS) – Commissioned by Employment & Learning and delivered by Career Connect

Current Performance – June 2026- (Latest Published Data)

Sefton continues to demonstrate strong performance in reducing the proportion of 16-17 year old who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or those whose status is Not Known (NK).

•NEET and NK rate at 3.9% is unchanged year on year
•Sefton is significantly below the North West average (5.5%) and the England average (5.7%)
•Within the Liverpool City Region Sefton continues to be the best performing local authority for NEET, NK and combined NEET and NK
•Sefton is ranked 2nd best amongst its statistical neighbours
•Our combined NEET and NK rate is 1.6% lower than the North West and 1.8% below the national average.
•NEET rate remains stable at 3.7% which is 0.8% below North West average of 4.5%.
•NK has reduced slightly to 0.1% a year on year improvement and 1% behind the regional average of 1.1%, reflecting robust tracking and engagement processes.
•The proportion of 16 and 17 year olds with an ECHP in EET has increased year on year, rising from 90.74% (392) to 91.38% (432). This reflects both a growth in the overall cohort and continued high levels of participation.
•The total academic 16 and 17 cohort is approximately 6209 young people, with 96.2% (5970) engaged in EET.
•The combined NEET and NK cohort comprises 239 young people.
•28.9% (69 young people) within the NEET and NK cohort are identified as belonging to one of more vulnerable groups.

While NEET and NK numbers remain low, the profile of the remaining cohort indicates increasing complexity, reinforcing the important of early identification, targeted intervention and multi-agency support.

SEND and EHCP Outcomes

The cohort for young people 16-24 with an EHCP continues to increase year on year, Sefton currently have 1283 young people within the cohort. While tracking performance remains strong, with just 0.9% recorded as NK, participation outcomes remain a challenge.

Almost one in five (19.9%) young people with an EHCP are NEET, considerably higher than both the overall Sefton cohort and the North West average of 14.7%. The increase in EHCP NEET levels over the past year highlights the need for continued targeted support, particularly during transition points into post-16 education, employment and training.

Alongside overall NEET performance, tracking outcomes for young people with EHCPs provides important insight into progression and transition challenges. This work directly supports Children's Services SEND and Preparing for Adulthood priorities by helping young people and families navigate complex transitions, maintain engagement with learning and access appropriate progression pathways. The collaborative approach reduces pressure on specialist teams whilst improving outcomes for young people with additional needs.

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Regenerated Places - Housing
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Stuart Barnes
SES Project lead	Lee Payne
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Current Status	Progress to date
1	Social Housing Completions	150	326	Green	Total number of social homes completed 24/25
2	Net additional dwellings per annum	640	885	Green	Total dwellings completed in 24/25.
3					
4					
5					

Commentary
The total number of social homes completed for 2024-25 was 326. Figures for 2025-26 are currently being collated and are expected to be verified in Sept. However, early indications are that, as was the case in 24/25, outputs of affordable housing are positive compared to the trend over the previous 5 years. The figure includes homes for Social Rent, Affordable Rent, Rent to Buy and Shared Ownership. The 24/25 figure was a major increase on numbers achieved in the proceeding years. The pipeline for future social homes remains strong, and with permissions granted for homes meeting a wide range of needs including Extra Care and retirement homes, alongside a mix of affordable tenures. The Social Housing Transformation Project the Council has progressed and will identify further land to come forward in phases to deliver affordable housing as part of the a corporate Asset Review process. The Council has signed a Local Strategic Partnership Agreement with the Sovini group as part of an approach to develop a minimum of 1000 new affordable homes in the borough by 2030. In July 26 Cabinet approved the addition of 3 further sites to the partnership, making a total of 13 Council owned sites now included in the partnership with the capacity for over 630 new homes. In addition, Sovini is in the process of securing key private town centre sites in Bootle for development as part of the partnership approach Partnership working continues with the LCRCA and Homes England via the Strategic Place Partnership. We are currently working collaboratively to develop an investment pipeline to ensure schemes are positioned for funding opportunities in the short, medium and long term. This will support the development of longer term, strategic opportunities to deliver transformational growth. While the Liverpool North New Town proposition was not one of 12 New Towns recommended to the Government by the New Towns Taskforce , work will continue to progress this project via the SPP.

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Regenerated Places - Planning
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Stuart Barnes
SES Project lead	Ian Loughlin
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Current Status	Status	Progress to date
1	Approval of Social Value (Employment and Skills) from	May-22	Approved	Green	adopted May 2023
2	Net additional dwellings per annum	1,400	885 (2024/25)	Red	The government recently changed how each LA housing requirement is calculated. Sefton's housing requirement has now increased significantly to 1,360 homes p/a. The data for 2025/26 is currently being collated and will be available for the next quarter update.
3	Floorspace (m2) developed for employment (by type (B1, B2, B8)	increase	1877m2	Amber	The reported floorspace figures are for 2024/25. The figures for 2025/26 are currently being collated.
4	Number of jobs (full-time equivalent) created on employment sites	increase	6	Amber	The reported jobs figures are for 2024/25. The figures for 2025/26 are currently being collated.

5	% of qualifying development proposals that are supported by an Employment and Skills Plan	100%	75%	Amber	The reported plan figures are for 2024/25. 3 of the 4 relevant major applications have a requirement for an E&S Plan secured through a legal agreement. This is a significant increase on the previous year's reported figure. The figures for 2025/26 are currently being collated.

Commentary
There is no target in Local Plan for amount of employment floorspace development or number of jobs provided. However, reference can be made to previous years for comparison where an increase of previous years should be the aim. The figure for 2024/25 was lower than in previous years. Nonetheless, there is currently significant employment development under construction at Atlantic Park and this should give improved floorspace and job figures for 2025/26 which will be available soon. The target of 1,400 (previously 1,360) net additional dwellings is the result of the government's amended standard approach to calculating housing requirement. The Local Plan average annual requirement for 2012-2030 was 640, and the previous government's standard methodology figure was 578 homes for Sefton. This presents a significant increase and challenge for the borough and could mean that we have to consider sites in the Green Belt for housing proposals. In recent years the Council have comfortably met its housing delivery target, with an average of 757 per annum over the past 5 years. However, the new target means that this is unlikley to be passed in the short term. The 2025/26 completion figures will be available for the

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	Regenerated Places - Tourism
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Stuart Barnes
SES Project lead	Mark Catherall
Overall Status	Red

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Current Status	Progress to date
1	Increase Visitor numbers (both day and staying) by 2% year on year,	7,672,440	7,799,000	Green	2025 Figures grew by 3.1% on 2024 showing solid growth
2	Increase Visitor Economy economic impact by 2.5% year on year,	£697m	£716m	Green	2025 figures grew by 5% overall
3	Increase Visitor Economy total employment by 2% year on year,	6,239	6,160	Red	2025 numbers did not reach its target due visitor economy businesses facing increasing cost pressures
4	Securing new multi-day business events ready for the Marine Lake Events Centre opening	27/28 Onwards		Green	Will commence in 2027
5					

Commentary
The 2025 visitor economy figures for Sefton show an increase across all measures apart from total employment. The visitor economy and hospitality sector in the UK is under increasing pressure therefore to increase visitor numbers and the associated economic impact is a welcome achievement. The increase in visitors and economic impact can be attributed to extensive destination marketing campaigns led by the Council along with its successful events programme of Salt & Tar, Southport Food and Drink Festival, Air Show and British Musical Fireworks Championship along with other events by partners such as Aintree and Southport Flower Show. The total employment target was not achieved, as costs for businesses increase in the sector we have seen a reduction in workforce, hopefully this will be reversed in 2026. Investment continues in visitor economy assets such as Southport Market while a new 10 year Sefton Visitor Strategy has been adopted setting out a clear vision and objectives for the Sefton Visitor Economy, further policy work is also underway on a comprehensive Southport Place Strategy. In 2026 Sefton hosted The Open Golf that attracted over 300,000 visitors while an extensive cultural events programme has taken place alongside the original tourism events attracting further visitors both staying and day. Meanwhile the two major visitor economy projects Southport Pier and MLEC are on site delivering over £120m public sector investment into Southport. NB TOURISM FIGURES PROVIDED ANNUALLY.

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	SI - Equality & Diversity
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Stephen Watson
SES Project lead	Kate Kerwin-Jones
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Current Status	Progress to date
1	Business Support and Investment Team to engage with the Corporate Equality Group, attend regular meetings	Rep to attend all CEG meetings		Green	This action is acheved. Sefton's Corporate Equality Group is well established and operational, with business support representation attending meetings. Regular
2	Communications and engagement audit, identifying the need for accessible information and engagement	Audit completed		Green	The communications and engagement audit has been completed. Findings identified opportunities to improve
3	Review Strategy to take account of the socio-economic duty	Strategy review		Green	Adoption of the SED was approved by Cabinet on the 7th September - https://sefton.gov.uk/mysefton-
4	Improve employment rates and business support for minorities and for people from deprived areas	Under review		Amber	UKSPF business and employment support activities are underway and being reported under Business Growth & Investment and Employment & Access to work strands
5	Review existing data capture with regard to protected characteristics and work towards addressing any gaps	Data reviewed		Green	Invest Sefton and EDI Team working in partnership with LCR Race Equality Hub to identify and engage
6	Ensure that decisions are backed by robust equality impact analysis	EDI Team to review		Amber	Progress has been made through a review of Equality Im
7					

Commentary
Over the past year, significant progress has been made in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion within economic growth, business support and employment activity. Key governance and strategic foundations are now in place, including the establishment of the Corporate Equality Group, regular engagement between Business Support and the EDI team, delivery of a communications and engagement accessibility audit, and the formal adoption of the socio-economic duty. Equality and diversity considerations are increasingly reflected in strategic discussions, with improved collaboration across services and stronger alignment between economic objectives and inclusion priorities. Delivery activity has focused on improving understanding of who benefits from business and employment support and where barriers remain. Data capture relating to protected characteristics has been reviewed, and targeted engagement has begun with businesses owned by people of colour, particularly within Southport's hospitality sector to support inclusive tourism benefits. Commissioned business start-up and employment support aligned to UKSPF priorities is underway, alongside workforce-focused EDI activity including anti-racism training and refreshed EDI learning offers. While key actions have been delivered or are progressing well, some areas remain under development, particularly around evidencing employment outcomes and consistently embedding equality impact analysis into economic decision-making.

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	SI - Sustainable Travel
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Peter Moore
SES Project lead	Andy Dunsmore
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Status	Progress to date
1	Successful development and delivery of a significant programme of work via the Transport for City Regions funding (2027-2032 delivery, plus pre-development funding)	Ongoing (2027-2032 delivery)		Green	Continued support for 2 existing School Street locations with a new School Street planned for the Autumn term. 2 existing School neighbourhoods (6 schools) that are progressing to delivery of interventions with an additional neighbourhood in the early stages of development. Ongoing safety / accessibility, School Street and wider intervention considerations at approx. 6 additional schools. Currently initiating additional School Street and Neighbourhood projects and revisiting borough-wide school prioritisation process to work with additional schools during 26-27. In-House School Neighbourhood Officer in post since March 2026 to help further develop and deliver our school neighbourhoods/streets programme of work.
2	Progressing the Low Carbon Transport Strategy Position Statement (approved by Cabinet in 2025) to provide a strategy document.	Autumn 2027		Green	Low Carbon Position Statement approved in summer 2025. Work now progressing to evolve this into a Low Carbon Transport Strategy document. A document structure has been set out to prepare an accessible and highly illustrated document. Elements of the policy will dovetail with the carbon mitigation expections of the Combined Authority and respective funding avenues, which we continue to understand through collaboration.
	Progressing our approach to carbon assessment and management for highway schemes.	Summer 2025		Green	Work was completed in 2025 to assess the carbon impact of a range of schemes in the Capital Programme and the development of an evolving Carbon Management Advice Note, to progress our approach to reducing the carbon impacts of our schemes. A staff training day was also held in March 2025, to start to upskill staff on this topic. The carbon assessment and management approach is continuing to be applied and will evolve in line with guidance from the CA, in line with the recent adoption of Local Transport Plan 4 and through the Transport for City Regions Gateway process.

2	Emobility and delivery of EVCI Strategy	2026 - 2030		Green	The Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2026 -2030 was approved by Cabinet (April 2026) This sets out the prioritised approach of delivering public EV chargers in our car parks and community spaces and also trialling of on street provision, alongside the medium and longer term aspirations. Both LEVI (Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure) Funding (approx £1.6 m) and Pavement Channel Funding (approx. £150K) has been secured for delivery of charge points. Sefton Council will work alongside the Liverpool City Region Combined Authoirty to deliver the funding in areas where residents do not have access to off road parking. An awareness rasiing campaign about EV and the implementation of the strategy is being planned for launch from summer 2026. Future work will now focus on the wider E Mobility Strategy and work with the Energy and Environment Team on fleet and staff travel, with joint projects being developed, noting this is another key focus of the wider low carbon transport work. Exploration of the opportunity to extend the existing micromobility offer in Liverpool to Sefton - need to identify priority areas for coverage, parking places and geofencing areas.
3	Les Transformations de Southport	Sep-27		Amber	There are two phases to Les Transformations de Southport. Phase 1 relates to the Market Street public realm scheme in Southport, which has been completed. Phase 2 relates to the Promenade public realm scheme to support safer access to the Marine Lake Events Centre (MLEC) and the wider waterfront. Phase 2 has commenced third of three design stages, the detailed design. This followed attendance at the L&R Committee in June 2026. There will be further engagement with the public and businesses. Following the detailed design, full business case and final Grant Funding Agreement with the Combined Authority, the scheme will aim commence delivery in early Autumn 2027 for delivery in late 2028, before the MLEC opens in 2029.
4	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Development	Jan-26		Green	The Sefton LCWIP was adopted by Cabinet on 8th January 2026. The document was prepared with repeated consultation with Ward Members in late 2024 and June/July 2025. Public consultation on the final draft was held between July and September 2025. The implementation of the LCWIP includes an 'LCWIP Delivery' allocation from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority from March 2027, which will be used to deliver small and large scale interventions.
5	School Streets and Neighbourhoods	Ongoing		Green	Continued support for 2 existing School Street locations with a new School Street planned for the Autumn term. 2 existing School neighbourhoods (6 schools) that are progressing to delivery of interventions with an additional neighbourhood in the early stages of development. Ongoing safety / accessibility, School Street and wider intervention considerations at approx. 6 additional schools. Currently initiating additional School Street and Neighbourhood projects and revisiting borough-wide school prioritisation process to work with additional schools during 26-27. In-House School Neighbourhood Officer in post since March 2026 to help further develop and deliver our school neighbourhoods/streets programme of work.
6	Maritime Corridor Improvement Scheme / Business Case	Ongoing		Green	Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 - early contractor involvement / preparing for planning, Phase 3 in pipeline.

7	Southport Eastern Access Improvement Scheme / Business Case	Ongoing		Green	Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 - early contractor involvement / preparing for planning, Phase 3 in pipeline.
8	Sefton Access Controls and Barriers Policy	Sep-26		Amber	The Equality Act 2010 requires reasonable adjustments be made to the built environment including buildings, highways and public spaces to safely accommodate the access needs of disabled people. Guidance provided by Department for Transport and accessible travel stakeholders helpfully recommend access control designs and standards so barriers can accommodate wheelchairs and other usual accompaniments. The policy purpose is to set out Sefton's expectations for our path network. In addition, the policy relates to the Liverpool City Region Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan regarding our Public Rights of Way in all their forms. The policy has been fully prepared and awaiting CM decision on the suitable Governance formality for recommended adoption. The change of portfolio holder has further delayed its recommended adoption and now aiming for this to happen through the Autumn 2026.
9	Greenways Strategy	ongoing		Green	Working with MEAS and other services we are developing a strategy and related policies as needed, to ensure we are managing our assets for the benefit of and in support of nature and the enhancement of biodiversity across the borough. The first draft of the strategy has been submitted to stakeholders for comments. Ahead of the second draft, we will be undertaking some communication activity to raise awareness of the need to use our assets to support nature and increase biodiversity. The second draft will follow this consultation with local members and specialist and interest groups. Once the second draft is ready, wider public consultation will take place inlcuding targeted engagement with relevant local organisations.
10	Chapel Street - small works	ongoing		Green	Ongoing devlivery of a package of measures to improve wayfinding, declutter the streetscape, clarify routes for active modes and accessibility, manage vehiclular access including hostile vehilce mitigation (HVM) measures

Commentary

Low Carbon Strategy: In response to the Council's climate emergency declaration and an increased focus on active travel measures, work is continuing on the development of Low Carbon Transport Strategy for the borough. Baselining work has been undertaken and a report completed. The Low Carbon Transport Strategy will help identify, prioritise, resource and communcate the various activities to achieve our transport-related goals. The development of the strategy is currently delayed until several areas of uncertainty (which will inform the plan) become clearer (Integrated National Transport Strategy, CRSTS and Local Transport Plan 4). However, in the meantime, the Council has published a Low Carbon Transport Position Statement - to set out the transport-related climate emergency goals. There are varous strands to the work and a wide range of actions needed to reduce and remove transport-related Carbon emissions. These include actions to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's own activities and actions to help residents, businesses and visitors to reduce their carbon emissions.

These actions will not be delivered overnight. Some require substantial investment of time, energy and funding, and some require changes to how our towns and cities look and how people travel. The key areas of activity include: -

- **Staff Travel**
- **Council work fleet and mobility**
- **Landscaping, maintenance and drainage**
- **Healthy places and active travel –**
- **E-mobility and electric vehicles**
- **Managing travel demand**

We have started work in all of the above areas, but have identified some as early priorities which are currently progressing:

- **E-mobility and electric vehicles** - We are developing E-Mobility and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategies. These will explain what the Council is doing to support the switch away from Petrol and diesel, including seeking to ensure equitable access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure. We are actively working with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to secure government funding for improved access to charging facilities in Sefton in 2025.

In 2025 we will be consulting on our draft E-Mobility and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategies and will commence the delivery of new public electric vehicle charging facilities in the borough

- **Healthy places and active travel** - we are working with people to look at how we can make streets healthier and nicer places to be. Places that encourage people get around in an active, low carbon and healthy way. We want people and businesses to be able to travel and go about their work by electric vehicles e.g. e-bike, e-cargo bike, cars, vans etc. We have a programme of minor to major schemes in development and delivery. We are also delivering a programme of School Streets and School Neighbourhoods, making it safer and more enjoyable to walk, wheel and cycle to school.

In 2025 we will be consulting on our Local Walking Cycling Infrastructure Plan, showing our understanding of the journeys people make or want to make by walking, wheeling or cycling, and setting out our 5-10 year plan for infrastructure delivery.

- **Landscaping, maintenance and drainage** - we have a major investment programme underway to change all of our street lighting to LED lighting, to improve lighting, and reduce energy usage and carbon emissions. This has already reduced our carbon emissions and we expect to finish this programme in 2026. We have started looking at our road and street maintenance plans, to make sure that we create healthy and climate friendly streets that support a move to active, healthy and low carbon ways to travel. We are developing an Urban Greenways Strategy that will change and improve how we do things, helping to mitigate the impact of climate change and create greener, healthier, more biodiverse neighbourhoods. In 2025 we will develop some Urban Greenway pilot sites to evaluate these new approaches.
- **Construction and embedded carbon** - we are working to correctly assess our carbon emissions and understand how we might change the materials and methods we use to reduce them.

Maritime Corridor Improvement Scheme / Business Case: The Maritime Corridor Improvement Scheme covers the area between Dunnings Bridge Road (A5036) and Ormskirk Road (A59), from Switch Island to Netherton Way (A5038). It will improve junctions and walking and cycling routes, to help people move about the area easier and safer. The project will be delivered over several years, in three phases. Phase 1 (Nov 24 - Nov 25) will improve routes and junctions on Dunnings Bridge Road (A5036) and Netherton Way (A5038). Phases 2 and 3 will be done at a later date and cover Bridle Road, Park Lane, Heysham Road and Atlantic Park Drive.

Southport Eastern Access Improvement Scheme - is focused on introducing new and upgraded junctions and active travel routes along Scarisbrick New Road, Southport Road, Kew Roundabout, Foul Lane, Meols Cop Road, Norwood Road and Haig Avenue. The proposals will make it easier for vehicles, cyclists and those walking to move around the area. Phase 1 will be delivered in 2025 (March - December 2025 - on site), Phase 2 2026 and Phase 3 in 2027 (subject to funding).

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	SI - Net Zero
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	Stephen Watson
SES Project lead	Stephanie Jukes
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators (Please add more rows if necessary)	Target	Achieved	Status	Progress to date
1	To report on - LCR Combined Authority – net zero/ Climate emergency targets	Plan published summer 2023	N/a	Green	The LCR Combined Authority net zero action plan has been approved July 2023. It is now available https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/LCR-PathwaytoNetZero-Report-2022--FINAL-compressed.pdf The LCR Combined Authority target for reaching net zero has been confirmed as changing from a net zero by 2040 to a net zero by 2035 target. This means that all fossil fuels will need to be phased out or those emissions offset elsewhere, 5 years earlier than planned. In 2025/26 a mid point review was carried out to assess progress with a report to the Combined Authority Cabinet Member for Net Zero, April 2026 https://liverpoolcityregion-ca.moderngov.co.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=84221. The mid-term review of the Liverpool City Region Five Year Climate Action Plan (2023-2028) takes stock of work to date and looks to accelerate actions to hit net zero by 2035.
4	Sefton Climate and Retrofit Programme (SCRAP) National Lottery funded scheme	Employ 4 staff meet targets set out in bid	Start date April 2025, end date March 2030	Green	Funded through the National Lottery Climate Action fund, Sefton have been awarded ~£900K to 1. promote climate and domestic retrofit actions (through innovative immersive experiences at the Southport Eco Centre - schools, at Cambridge road adult education centre - young learners and a new installation at the Strand shopping centre - community and passing residents, signposting them to groups and support), 2. create route to green jobs (starting with a taster session at the
5					

Commentary
The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority have brought forward their target for net zero for all parts of the economy to be net zero by 2035 (rather than 2040). This will require all Sefton businesses to halt the use of gas, diesel, oil and only use energy from renewable resources by 2035, a more ambitious target. Examples within this Action plan includes (TBC) On transport - Complete Phase 2 of 'State of Freight' investigation into a future zero carbon freight solution, ensuring that this is aligned with our Freeport goals of decarbonisation and good jobs to deliver outcomes including last mile ZE deliveries and reduce trips, scope options for mechanisms to seek to support decarbonisation of freight, and develop a freight strategy and that connects Freeport locations in a net zero manner On buildings - Identify high-opportunity zones as areas for groups of home/business owners to plan retrofits together or create low carbon communal/district energy schemes and smart networks. On Industry - a series of targets around the following; To effectively transition to net zero, our industrial base will need cost--effective access to clean power, clean hydrogen and effective access to clean power, clean hydrogen and carbon capture and storage technologies alongside efficiency and storage technologies alongside efficiency improvements in process and delivery systems improvements in process and delivery systems. On Clean Energy - Progress the Phase 3 development activities related to Mersey Tidal (LCR Year 1 action plan review SE6) and commence Phase 4 activity to Consent a UK first of a kind (FOAK) Tidal range scheme. On Natural Environment - Develop a pipeline and identify potential funding for pilot innovative and sustainable agricultural projects, such as urban farming, greenbelt agroecological farming, carbon capture etc. Other issues pertinent to business - MEES Regulations applies to non- domestic rented properties, by 1 /4/23 must have an EPC rating of E as a minimum to be able to be rented, plans for this to increase over time, In 2026 it has been confirmed that (possible EPC D by 2025, EPC C by 2028 and EPC B by 2030) Investment in green technologies e.g. building retrofit, EV charging, Heat pump installations will help to generate local jobs and training opportunities InvestSefton has also allocated UKSPF to provide business sustainability support in town centres .Sustainability is high on the agenda for conference buyers and events/exhibition organisers and with this in mind it is critical that as part of the planning process for the Marine Lakeside Events Centre (MLEC) opening 2026 that as a destination Sefton begins to build the sustainability offer. The project will measure the business carbon footprint, design an action plan to reduce and produce a sustainability policy. The LCR Combined authority have been awarded £5M in Summer2024 under the Public Sector Decarbonisation scheme fund. An allocation of ~£900K has been made to Sefton to enable Bootle Library and the Netherton Activity Centre to improve insulation and install a low carbon heating system as part of similar works across the LCR. Sefton are working with the LCR Combined Authority on preparations for the next phase of the domestic retrofit programme (phase 4 of the Local Authority Delivery Green Homes Grant) where domestic properties are upgraded with insulation and low carbon measures. This is expeceted Summer 2025. As part of phase 3 works efforts were made to establish a local supply network with local job creation. March 2025 Update: 1. Sefton have been awarded over £5M to deliver the next phase of the Green Homes; Local Grant domestic retrofit programme between April 2025 - March 2028. This will help to retrofit ~350 local homes. Sefton are working with a local company on delivery and are working with Sefton @work to offer interviews to those who have followed the green jobs training paths 2. Work begins in April on the 5 year National Lottery funded SCRAP scheme (Sefton Climate & Retrofit Action Project), this will encourage domestic retrofit and green job development between 2025 and 2030. It will also support the development of community energy groups, which aligns strongly with the National GB Energy investment in community energy. This programme will also support local job creation and development of training and routes into work on green jobs. 3. The Sefton Council bid for additional Public Sector decarbonisation funding for 6 Council buildings (Bootle Town Hall, CLAC, South Hub, Chase Heys care home, Maghull Leisure Centre, Bootle Leisure Centre) is being considered with results expected in May 2025. If successful the funding would allow for fabric improvements and low carbon heating to be installed. April 2025 Update: Re. Point 3 above, Sefton have been successful and secured nearly ~£6M funding from the Gov PSDF. This will allow Sefton to decarbonise 6 buildings. Work will be 2025/26 to 2028. A bid has also been submitted to the LCR CA Mayors fund for £100K for solar PV works @ Magdalen House, Bootle. Results expected by May 2025. Sefton Council have secured £305K from the LCR CA Mayors fund for solar PV works at Meadows leisure Centre, Dunes Leisure centre and Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre. Works to Magdalen House were put on hold and funding switched to alternative sites due to the need for roof repairs prioir to any instalation and

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	SI - Health
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Amber

SES Lead	Margaret Jones
SES Project lead	Helen Armitage
Overall Status	Amber

Italics = no data update from previous quarter report (Q2)

	Key Performance Indicators	Target	Achieved	Status	Progress to date/Comment
1	Healthy life expectancy at birth (years) 2021/23	Increase	**No:** Reduction from 64.4 yrs pre-covid to 61.0 yrs 2021-23. Typical trend.		Remains highest in LCR
2	Socio-economic inequality in life expectancy at birth (years) 2021/23	Reduction	Yes: Reduction from 12.6 yrs pre-covid to 11.7 yrs 2021-23. Atypical trend. Likely reflects covid mortality inequalities.		Gap remains 4th highest in England for women, but notable drop for men.
3	Percentage of children (FSM) achieving a good level of development at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) 2024	Increase	**No:** Stable at 41.3% in 2024/25 (vs 68.5% non-eligible)		Lowest in LCR
4	Percentage of children in workless households (dependent children) 2023	Reduction	**Yes:** but no new data; 2.5% in 2023		Lowest in LCR in 2023
5	Percentage of under 16s in relative poverty, before housing costs 2023	Reduction	**No:** increase from 19.9% pre-covid to 22.1% (10,559) in 2023		Lowest in LCR. Rates increased by a third since 2014/15
6	Average weekly earnings (£) 2024	Increase	**Yes:** £543.30 but impact of Covid and slowed rises pre-pandemic persist in Sefton		Lowest in LCR. 20th lowest in UTLAs
7	Percentage of employees earning below real living wage 2022	Reduction	**Yes:** % halved in 4 yrs but no new data since 2022 (14.0%)		2nd highest % in LCR. England and NW show increases in 2023 and 2024
8	Percentage of population living in the 20% most unhealthy environments (Access to Healthy Assets and Hazards Index) 2024	Reduction	**No**: Increase from 23% to 31% in 2022		3rd highest in LCR, 5th highest in NW. Associated with deprivation and urbanicity e.g. London
9		Reduction	**No**: stable at 26.5% in 2022, no new data		Lowest in LCR. Associated with urban deprivation.

Commentary

The population outcome indicators below are a subset of those included in the facts and figures dimension of the Sefton Child Poverty Strategy accountability framework. The strategy recognises the intrinsic links and common goals in inclusive growth, health and wellbeing and tackling child poverty. This relationship is captured in the strategy's three priorities: Pockets, Prospects and Places. As always, local authority level statistics such as these obscure the widely differing outcomes seen in more affluent and more deprived parts of the borough. Recent research (e.g., Opportunity Index Interactive Map - The Sutton Trust) continues to show that the socio-economic circumstances in which children grow up in Sefton establish inequalities in health, income, and opportunities from an early age, and these effects are most acute in areas of persistent disadvantage. Of note from the table below is:

•Most children eligible for free school meals have not attained a good level of development at the end of reception, and this is also the case for almost one third of non-eligible pupils.
•10, 559 children under 16 experience relative poverty (income at 60% or less of median income). This is over one fifth of Sefton's children and most belong to families receiving income from work and benefits.
•The above point is reinforced by latest data on median monthly income, which is amongst the 20 lowest in England (£543.30).
•One of the challenges created in an economy where low-income households are prevalent can be a marketplace for less healthy forms of retail, some of which are captured in the Healthy Assets and Hazards Index statistic, e.g., fast food outlets, pubs, gambling stores, as well as availability of health services, green and blue spaces, and overall air quality.

These issues reinforce the necessity of aligning strategic objectives across different professional disciplines, e.g. health, economy, education, as well as across partnerships and levels, from grass-roots community development to major infrastructure development.

The Sefton child poverty steering group is a multi-agency partnership group, which is now approaching the end of its first year. Emphasis has been on establishing enablers – processes, connections, and resources that help decision-makers at all levels to identify, address and prevent child poverty in the course of their work. Some examples are:

•Work to introduce the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) tool to enable auto-enrolment for free school meals for eligible children
•Ongoing collaboration with Resolve Poverty to develop a basic poverty awareness online training offer (which also supports the Council's socio-economic duty commitment), and to undertake community research into food deserts
•Establishment of the regular 'show and tell' quadrant of the accountability tool, which has assisted partners to connect, share and learn from good practice
•Continuing roll-out of Poverty-Proofing© the School day with Children North East (also involved in informing inclusive development of Sefton's Culture strategy – see above), which has achieved very positive feedback from both schools and Education Excellence Colleagues.
•Working with Sefton Communications colleagues, initial engagement and development of a micro-site to collate good quality, trusted resources to help embed poverty-aware changes more widely in the Council and beyond.
•Sefton Council was involved in being a host site for a visit from the new head of the Government's Child Poverty Unit and members of her team. The team wanted to come and learn about Cheshire and Merseyside's Framework for Action on Child and Family Poverty, which was partly inspired and influenced by Sefton's strategy.
•Development of a work programme for the Child Poverty Steering Group in 2026 is not yet finalised, but in conjunction with public health, Council, and wider partners, it is expected to include further progress on the milestones/enablers set out above as well as new additions in policy areas such as commercial determinants of health, e.g. to complement the Council's sign-up to the Workplace Charter to Reduce Gambling Related Harms, and in response to findings from Resolve Poverty's research linked to food poverty, as well as taking account of the new National Child Poverty Strategy, expected in the autumn.

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	SI - Digital	SES Lead	Wayne Leatherbarrow
Report Date	Apr - June 2026	SES Project lead	Stephen O'Brien
Previous Status	Green	Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators	Target	Achieved	Status	
1	Digital Inclusion & Support for Citizens & Businesses	ongoing	ongoing	Green	Sefton continues to work to enhance its Digital Inclusion offer, with the communities team leading this work programme in partnership with the wider Liverpool City Region. Sefton (as part of the wider Liverpool City Region, Digital Inclusion team) has been successful in obtaining national Digital Inclusion Innovation Funding for the further deployment of digital device, training and six months of free connectivity (Login LCR) [Mike, I haven't updated this paragraph yet - I'd probably need Andrea Watts to give me a view on this item] InvestSefton continues to deliver Sefton Huddle, the digital, creative and tech network which meets three times a year. Southport EnterpriseArcade has become the focal point for network meetings which regularly attract 30+ businesses. InvestSefton also continues to promote and refer businesses to LCR digital busness support provision. Cyber Security training sessions are offered to elected members twice a year so that they feel confident in communicating with residents & businesses via digital methods. A programme to upgrade publicly accessible PCs across libraries and the Bootle One Stop Shop is currently in progress, due to complete in Autumn 2026 Libraries will be working with a leading technology supplier to deliver digital inclusion services to users as part of a pilot project across Autumn & Winter 2026. Work is ongoing to ensure that the online services provided by Sefton (via its website and digital customer platforms) are meeting the needs of residents & businesses across Sefton. Key Council meetings are now broadcast live online (with recordings available afterwards), which will enable the public and businesses to have greater access and insight to the decision-making process.
2	Digital Innovation for Citizens & Buisnesses	ongoing	ongoing	Green	The Council is commencing a programme to upgrade its Public Realm CCTV system, due to commence late 2026/early 2027 The Council is liaising with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Nvidia and Vodafone on a pilot using AI to identify incidents of fly-tipping, graffiti and other street scene issues; this is expected to commence in Autumn 2026 The Council is exploring how AI can be used to enhance services to citizens and businesses online, in person and via telephone. The Council is currently assessing the potential to deploy smart technologies to identify issues with highways and the public realm, so that these can be quickly identified, assessed and (where possible) resolved. InvestSefton continues to drive support to Sefton's Digital, Creative and Tech businesses through Sefton Huddle which meets three times per annum attracting 40+ businesses per event

Commentary
Sefton Council's Digital Strategy 2024-2027 outlines the aspirations & activities the Council has in relation to how the Council will use digital technologies to improve how the organization works internally, and also how it will use these technologies to support citizens and businesses across the borough. Key to our ambitions are strong digital foundations, providing secure and robust connectivity across Sefton which reflects and supports our climate pledge as well as enabling and supporting business growth. As a Digital Council we are continuing to develop our digital services, including how we work as a local authority, our information and advice delivered via our council website, and how residents can self-serve online to access services, as well as exploring how as an authority we can work more efficiently across partners to deliver joined up services that reflect the needs of our communities. Key to developing Sefton as a Digital Place is our work around inclusion, that brings together all key partners to ensure that all residents, local partners, and businesses have access to digital skills, devices, and data. In addition, the Council is looking at how AI and smart technologies can be used to enhance public-facing services to better support our citizens and businesses. InvestSefton continues to drive support to Sefton's Digital, Creative and Tech businesses through Sefton Huddle which meets three times per annum attracting 40+ businesses per event

Sefton Economic Strategy Action Plan

Strategic Objective	SI - Culture
Report Date	Apr - June 2026
Previous Status	Green

SES Lead	
SES Project lead	David Eddy
Overall Status	Green

	Key Performance Indicators	Target	Achieved	Status	Progress to date
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					

Commentary

Apr to June 2026: Southport26 programme has seen delivery of Cristal Palace and Big Top events. Cristal Palace main events were impacted by wind conditions. Limited performance on Good Friday and Easter Saturday show cancelled. Full Big Top weekend 2&3 May delivered across various Southport stages, including clowning workshops at Southport Market. Awaiting return of monitoring and evaluation data but events well attended with very positive reception. Planning underway for two external funding projects aligned to Southport 26 - 1) National Lottery Heritage Fund: Big Top theme will lead to 'That's Entertainment' project exploring heritage of entertainment in Southport. Public engagement will lead to creative commissions, exhibition and re-design within the Atkinson museum. 2) Arts Council Place Partnership funding will enable Sefton festival producers to collaborate as a network in support of their event delivery. Atkinson theatre, library and curatorial programme continues, including successful delivery of Sefton Open art competition with increased participation and income generation. Libraries and At The Library programmes continuing with portfolio of projects supporting digital, inclusion and young family agendas.