



Council

Town Hall
Wallasey

28 November 2014

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held at **6.15 pm on Monday, 8 December 2014** in the Council Chamber, within the Town Hall, Wallasey, to take into consideration and determine upon the following subjects :

Contact Officer: Andrew Mossop
Tel: 0151 691 8501
e-mail: andrewmossop@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Council are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest, in connection with any matter to be debated or determined at this meeting and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

2. CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive the Mayor's announcements and any apologies for absence.

3. PETITIONS

To receive petitions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 21.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To deal with questions from members of the public, in accordance with Appendix 1 to Standing Orders.

5. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 24)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 October, 2014.

**6. LEADER'S, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' AND CHAIRS' REPORTS
(Pages 25 - 54)**

To receive the written reports of the Leader, Cabinet Members and Chairs of the Policy and Performance Committees and receive questions and answers on any of those reports in accordance with Standing Orders 10(2)(a) and 11.

7. MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL

To consider any recommendations of the Leader, Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Committees which require the approval of the Council. (The minutes for items A, B and C will be included in a supplement).

7a CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2016 (Pages 55 – 84)

A copy of the report, 'Corporate Plan 2015-2016' (which includes the future financial position), considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 November, is attached. The Council will be invited to consider and approve the recommendations from Cabinet.

7b TRANSITIONAL PAY POLICY (Pages 85 – 88)

A copy of the report 'Transitional Pay Policy', considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 November is attached. The Council will be invited to consider and approve the recommendations from Cabinet.

**7c PROPOSED MERGER OF THE WIRRAL AND LIVERPOOL
CORONER AREAS AND CORONER SERVICES
(Pages 89 – 142)**

A copy of the report, 'Proposed Merger of the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas and Coroner Services' (including the Business Case), considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 November, is attached. The Council will be invited to consider and endorse the recommendations from Cabinet.

7d CAR PARKING SCRUTINY REVIEW (Pages 143 – 146)

Cabinet – 6 November, 2014

Minute 91 - Car Parking Scrutiny Review

The Council is requested to agree the recommendations contained in part (2) of the resolution, as follows:

That

- (i) from Tuesday, 9 December until the end of December 2014 the Council cuts the cost of parking in Council owned car parks by introducing free parking after 3pm;**

- (ii). on Boxing Day and New Year's Day the Council provide free all day parking in Council owned car parks; and
- (iii). officers be instructed to evaluate any change in usage in Council owned car parks over the time periods set out in (a) and (b) above, compared to previous years.

7e EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANELS

(Pages 147 – 152)

Employment and Appointments Panels – 24 November 2014

Minutes of both Panels are attached.

The Council is requested to agree the recommendations contained in parts (1), (4) and (5) of the resolution of minute 3 of the Panel for the Chief Executive appointment, as follows:

- (1) Wirral Council is the ninth largest metropolitan authority in the country. The current salary of the Chief Executive is not sufficiently competitive given the size and scope of the authority.**

Given the external advice from the Local Government Association and Penna Plc, acting recruitment consultants, this Panel recommends to Council, at its meeting on 8 December 2014, that:

- (i). the salary range for the Chief Executive be agreed between £155,000 - £175,000 per annum; and**
 - (ii).the final salary for the Chief Executive be agreed (within the salary range) by the Employment and Appointments Panel as part of the recruitment process.**
- (4) That this Panel recommends to Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014 that David Armstrong be appointed to the position of Acting Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, with effect from 1 January 2015 until the newly appointed Chief Executive takes up the position, and as Deputy Chief Executive from 8 December to 31 December, 2014.**
 - (5) That this Panel recommends to Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014, the appointment of Surjit Tour, Head of Legal and Member Services, as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, and that Joe Blott, Strategic Director: Transformation and Resources is appointed as Deputy Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, both effective from 1 January 2015 until the newly appointed Chief Executive takes up the position.**

The Council is further requested to agree the recommendations contained in part (2) of the resolution of minute 3 of the Panel which considered the Director of Resources appointment, as follows:

(2) That this Panel recommends to Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014 that:

(i). Tom Sault, Head of Financial Services, be appointed as Acting Section 151 Officer, and Jenny Spick, Finance Manager, as Deputy Acting Section 151 Officer.

(ii). Mike Zammit, Chief Information Officer, be appointed as Acting Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).

8. MATTERS FOR NOTING (Pages 153 - 156)

The following matters, determined by the Cabinet, are drawn to the Council's attention in accordance with the Constitution (copies of the related reports can be provided for Council members on request).

Cabinet – 9 October, 2014

Minute 61 – Financial Monitoring 2014/15 (Month 5) - Revenue

Minute 62 – Financial Monitoring 2014/15 (Month 5) - Capital

Cabinet – 6 November, 2014

Minute 79 – Financial Monitoring 2014/15 (Month 6) - Revenue

Minute 80 – Financial Monitoring 2014/15 (Month 6) - Capital

Minute 92 – Youth Employment Gateway (Youth Contract Underspend) (Reason – waiving of call-in)

9. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To consider Members' general questions to the Mayor, Cabinet Member or Committee Chair in accordance with Standing Orders 10 (2)(b) and 11.

10. MATTERS REFERRED FROM POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEES (Pages 157 - 158)

To consider and determine any references from the Policy and Performance Committees.

The Council is advised that the Notice of Motion, 'Becoming a Dementia-Friendly Council', referred from Council at its meeting on 14 July, 2014 (minute 17 refers) was considered by the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee at its meeting on 9 September, 2014 (minute 16 is attached).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council is asked to consider the following recommendation of the Regeneration and

Environment Policy and Performance Committee:

Resolved: That

- (1) the Council be advised that the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee fully supports the Notice of Motion in relation to Becoming a Dementia Friendly Council; and
- (2) the Chief Executive be requested to implement a training programme for all staff and elected members.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION (Pages 159 - 162)

Notices of motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7(1), are attached. They are listed in the order received, and the full text of each motion is attached. The Mayor, having considered each motion, in accordance with Standing Order 7(4) has decided that they will be dealt with as follows:

- (i). **The Corporate Plan's Ideals in Practice**
The Civic Mayor to refer to the Cabinet
- (ii). **No Fire Station in the Centre of Greasby**
- (iii). **Government's Fire and Rescue Service Cuts**
To be debated
- (iv). **Selective Licensing Scheme**
To be debated

12. VACANCIES (Pages 163 - 180)

To receive nominations, in accordance with Standing Order 25(6), in respect of any proposed changes in the membership of committees, and to approve nominations for appointments to outside organisations.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To consider any other items of business that the Mayor accepts as being urgent.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'JG' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Head of Legal and Member Services

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL

Monday, 20 October 2014

Present:

The Civic Mayor (Councillor Steve Foulkes) in the Chair

Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor Les Rowlands)

Councillors	RL Abbey	P Hackett	Tracey Pilgrim
	T Anderson	J Hale	C Povall
	B Berry	P Hayes	D Realey
	C Blakeley	A Hodson	L Reecejones
	E Boulton	K Hodson	L Rennie
	A Brighthouse	M Hornby	D Roberts
	P Brightmore	T Johnson	J Salter
	C Carubia	AER Jones	H Smith
	P Cleary	C Jones	Tony Smith
	W Clements	S Kelly	W Smith
	M Daniel	A Leech	C Spriggs
	G Davies	AR McLachlan	A Sykes
	P Davies	M McLaughlin	J Walsh
	WJ Davies	C Meaden	G Watt
	P Doughty	D Mitchell	S Whittingham
	D Elderton	B Mooney	J Williamson
	G Ellis	C Muspratt	I Williams
	P Gilchrist	S Niblock	KJ Williams
	JE Green	T Norbury	P Williams
	R Gregson	M Patrick	S Williams

Apologies

Councillors	J Crabtree	J Stapleton
	L Fraser	M Sullivan

35 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Council were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest, in connection with any matter to be debated or determined at this meeting and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

By virtue of their being Board Members of Magenta Living, Councillors Steve Foulkes, Jeff Green, Denise Roberts and Stuart Whittingham declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 7C – 'Matters requiring approval by the Council' (see minute 48 post) in respect of Cabinet minute 71, 'Revision of Constitution Arrangements for Wirral Partnership Homes Trading as Magenta Living to Enable a Proposed Group Structure'.

Councillor Bill Davies declared a personal interest in agenda items 10C (i) – ‘Minority Report - Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure’ by virtue of him having relatives who had served in the armed forces but who did not reside in Wirral and in agenda item 10C (iii) – ‘Minority Report – The Lyndale School’ (see minute 56 post) by virtue of him having a family member attending Foxfield School.

Councillors Lesley Rennie, Steve Williams and Stuart Whittingham declared a personal interest in agenda item 10C (iii) – ‘Minority Report – The Lyndale School’ (see minute 56 post) by virtue of them being governors at Elleray Park, Foxfield and Gilbrook Schools, respectively.

Councillor Steve Niblock declared a personal interest in agenda item 7C – ‘Matters requiring approval by the Council’ (see minute 48 post) in respect of Cabinet minute 71, ‘Revision of Constitution Arrangements for Wirral Partnership Homes Trading as Magenta Living to Enable a Proposed Group Structure’ by virtue of his tenancy.

Councillor Chris Meaden declared a personal interest in agenda item 10C (i) – ‘Minority Report - Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure’ (see minute 54 post) by virtue of her daughter being a former member of the armed forces but who now resided abroad.

Councillor Adam Sykes declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 10C (i) – ‘Minority Report - Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure’ (see minute 54 post) by virtue of a family member being a former member of the armed forces.

Councillors Phillip Brightmore, Louise Reecejones, Denise Realey and Joe Walsh declared personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item 10C (i) – ‘Minority Report - Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure’ (see minute 54 post) by virtue of their former membership of the armed forces or Territorial Army.

Councillor Phillip Brightmore declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 10C (iii) – ‘Minority Report – The Lyndale School’ (see minute 56 post) by virtue of him being a governor at Stanley Special School.

Councillor Christina Muspratt declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 10C (i) – ‘Minority Report - Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure’ (see minute 54 post) by virtue of her son being a former member of the armed forces.

36 **MARK DELAP**

The Mayor referred to the recent and sudden death of Mark Delap, Principal Committee Officer and the Council stood in silent tribute to Mark’s memory.

37 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor noted that apologies were received from Councillors Jim Crabtree, Leah Fraser, Jean Stapleton and Mike Sullivan.

The Mayor then proposed that with such a full agenda of business, the period of time allotted to questions to Cabinet Members be reduced to 45 minutes.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (42:16) (Two abstentions) (Councillor Blakeley voting against)
-

That Standing Order 11(e) be suspended and the total time allocated to questions to Cabinet Members be restricted to no more than 45 minutes.

On a motion by Councillor Bill Davies, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was then –

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) –

(1) That at item 10C (iii) on the agenda, given that the subject matter of all minority reports has been considered at Call-in meetings, only the movers, seconders, and appropriate Cabinet Members speak in relation to each report before the matter being put to the vote.

(2) That at item 11 on the agenda, given the number of Notices of Motion, only one from each Group be debated, in the order, Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat, after which the remaining Motions be dealt with in the order listed by being formally moved and seconded but without any debate, and that Standing Order 5(4) be suspended.

38 **PETITIONS**

In accordance with Standing Order 21, the Mayor received petitions submitted by –

Councillor Wendy Clements on behalf of 333 signatories objecting to any proposed reduction in opening hours at Greasby Library.

Councillor David Elderton on behalf of 160 signatories objecting to the proposed increase in the waiting restriction time from 30 minutes to 60 minutes in Acacia Grove, West Kirby.

Councillor Mike Hornby on behalf of 366 signatories objecting to any proposed reduction in opening hours at Irby Library.

Councillor Pat Cleary on behalf of 105 signatories regarding climate change.

Councillor Joe Walsh on behalf of 89 signatories requesting the introduction of speed bumps on Ashfield Road, Bromborough.

Councillor Steve Niblock on behalf of 1276 signatories requesting the retention of a school crossing patrol on the A41 in New Ferry.

Councillor Chris Jones on behalf of 354 signatories objecting to proposals for the establishment of a concrete crushing plant in Whitfield Road, Seacombe.

Resolved – That the petitions be noted and referred to the appropriate Chief Officer in accordance with Standing Order 34.

39 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Mr J Brace, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 11, submitted a question on the requirement for Local Authorities to publish certain classes of information such as land and asset data.

Councillor Adrian Jones (Cabinet Member – Support Services) responded accordingly.

In accordance with Standing Order 10, Mr Brace asked a supplementary question and Councillor Jones replied that he would respond in writing.

40 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 July, 2014 had been circulated to Members and, it was –

Resolved – That the minutes be approved and adopted as a correct record.

Councillor Jeff Green sought to ask a question to Councillor Adrian Jones with regard to a response he had given at the meeting of Council on 14 July 2014 as recorded in the minutes.

The Head of Legal and Member Services advised that as the accuracy of the minutes had now been confirmed any questions in respect of such should be dealt with under item 9 of the agenda.

41 LEADER'S, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' AND CHAIRS' REPORTS

The Leader of the Council presented his summary report upon matters relevant to his portfolio. He responded to a question from Councillor Green and made a number of comments including –

- A review was taking place by Internal Audit to determine whether the Contract procedure rules had been followed correctly.
- An external organisation (V4) had assisted the Council to identify savings of £1,500,000 in years 1, 2 and 3, at a cost to the Council of £260,000.
- Some issues had been identified with contract procedure rules and this would be reported to the Audit and Risk Management Committee when a review had been completed.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Ann McLachlan on her Governance, Commissioning and Improvement Portfolio report. Her responses to questions from Councillors Leslie Rennie, Jeff Green and Janette Williamson including the following comments –

- A suggestion to review the possibility of sharing training events with outside bodies with the view to reduce costs and avoid duplication was welcomed and would be explored. Best practice across the North West region could be looked at by the Member Training Steering Group.
- Budget Proposals regarding Senior Management would be considered at December's budget Council.
- The Annual Governance Statement was a good news story for Wirral. The Council was now robust in its corporate governance arrangements, however, the Authority could not afford to be complacent and would continue to be scrutinised and monitored.
- She expanded upon the proposal to establish a Corporate Compliance Unit to deal with the Council's Internal Controls.

Questions were then invited for Councillor George Davies on the Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement Portfolio report. No questions were posed.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Pat Hackett on his Economy Portfolio report. His responses to questions from Councillors Stuart Kelly and Phil Gilchrist included the following comments –

- A number of neighbourhood forums were going ahead, including in Hoylake and Devonshire Park in order to address local issues such as licensable activity. The situation in Oxton, with regards to the high numbers of licensed premises would be reviewed as part of this process.
- In respect of proposed plans for the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, discussions were still ongoing with Neptune Developments. A full

consultation would take place in due course, including exhibitions and surveys.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Adrian Jones on his Support Services Portfolio report. His responses to questions from Councillors David Elderton, Adam Sykes and Jeff Green included the following comments –

- A written response would be provided on the development of negotiations with the new owners of Tranmere Rovers in respect of the Ingleborough Road / Solar Campus proposals, which had now received planning approval.
- Following IT outages this year the Council now had a full ‘disaster plan’ in place to prevent similar occurrences.
- The Labour administration’s approach to redundancies was less onerous than that of the previous administration and also the current administration had made no conditions in terms of negotiations with Trades Unions.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Chris Jones on the Adult Social Care and Public Health Portfolio report. No questions were posed.

Moving onto the Leisure, Sport and Culture Portfolio report, questions were then invited for Councillor Chris Meaden. She responded to a question from Councillor Chris Blakeley and made the following comment:

- As there was currently a consultation process under way she was not going to commit to anything at the moment regarding the libraries.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Bernie Mooney on her Environment and Sustainability Portfolio report. Her responses to questions from Councillors Chris Blakeley, Leslie Rennie (when asking her question, Councillor Rennie also declared a personal interest by virtue of her being a friend of Birkenhead Kennels), Stuart Kelly, Pat Cleary and Rob Gregson included the following comments –

- There were 146,000 households in Wirral, 38,105 of which had subscribed to the garden waste collection service, although quite a few households did not have gardens.
- With regards to Birkenhead Kennels, staff had expressed an interest in making use of land opposite their site to exercise the dogs. The land in question had multiple owners and had previously been developed. She informed the meeting that she would review the situation and the possibility of making use of the land and report back.
- She would look at the issue of street cleansing in Oxton Village, with particular regard to addressing the matter of autumn leaf fall.
- There would be some data provided in due course regarding levels of fly tipping. Biffa had reported that they could now service areas in the allotted

time, suggesting that problems with fly tipping had decreased, but there would be a report on this in six months.

- The transfer of Birkenhead Kennels to the Charity, Friends of Birkenhead Kennels, was underway and should be signed off within the week and she commended former Councillor Brian Kenny for his work on this matter.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Tony Smith on his Children and Family Services Portfolio report. His responses to questions from Councillors Denise Roberts and Treena Johnson included the following comments:

- The proportion of young people who were NEET (Not engaged in Employment, Education or Training) reduced in 2013/14. There had been positive results for children in care who had seen an increase in gaining employment post 18. The latest data showed in 2013/14, 66 percent care leavers progressed to employment, education or training. This was a 29 percent improvement in comparison to 2011/12.
- The percentage of children in early years foundation stage achieving a good level of development had increased to 63 per cent.
- Percentages of looked after children achieving reading and writing had increased, however attainment in mathematics had decreased and the reasons as to why this had occurred would be reviewed.
- He thanked all teachers, schools staff and officers for their work.

Questions were then invited for Councillor Stuart Whittingham on his Highways and Transport Portfolio report. His responses to questions from Councillors Chris Blakeley, Tony Norbury, John Salter and Harry Smith included the following comments:

- With new developments in Wirral such as the Wirral Waters Project it was key that the Borough had a good quality transport infrastructure.
- A written response would be provided regarding a question asked about the Heron Road, Meols scheme.
- European funding and funding from external partners was being investigated with regard to transport improvements and he would provide an update on this in the coming months.
- Specialised gangs of workers were carrying out works on surface dressing of roads filling in potholes.

Questions were then invited for the Policy and Performance Committee Chairs on their report. No questions were posed and it was then –

Resolved –

(1) That each of the Cabinet Portfolio Summary reports be noted.

(2) That the report of the Policy and Performance Committee Chairs be noted.

42 **MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL**

In accordance with Standing Order 5(2), six matters were submitted for approval by the Council (see minutes 43 to 48 post).

43 **GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT**

The first matter requiring approval was in relation to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the recommendations of Cabinet at its meeting 11 September 2014 (minute 51 refers).

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Cabinet minute 51, be approved.

44 **UPDATE OF HR POLICIES**

The second matter requiring approval was in relation to an update of HR Policies and the recommendations of the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting 17 September 2014 (minute 30 refers).

On a motion by Councillor Ron Abbey, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the Dignity at Work procedure and supporting documents, and the Council's Grievance Policy, be approved.

45 **WIRRAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2014 - 19**

The third matter requiring approval was in relation to the Wirral Climate Change Strategy 2014-19 and the recommendations of Cabinet at its meeting 9 October 2014 (minute 67 refers).

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the Wirral Climate Change Strategy 2014-19 be endorsed as the agreed framework to encourage and coordinate local climate-related action in Wirral.

46 **STREET LIGHTING STRATEGY**

The fourth matter requiring approval was in relation to the Street Lighting Strategy and the recommendations of Cabinet at its meeting 9 October 2014 (minute 68 refers).

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Cabinet minute 68, be approved.

47 **AMENDMENT TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014**

The fifth matter requiring approval was in relation to amendments to the Scheme of Delegation and the recommendations of Cabinet at its meeting 9 October 2014 (minute 70 refers).

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the proposed changes to the Council's Scheme of Non-Executive Delegation of Functions to Officers within the Constitution, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

48 **REVISION OF CONSTITUTION ARRANGEMENT FOR WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP HOMES TRADING AS MAGENTA LIVING TO ENABLE A PROPOSED GROUP STRUCTURE**

Councillors Steve Foulkes, Jeff Green, Denise Roberts and Stuart Whittingham, having declared an interest in this matter, left the Chamber during its consideration.

Councillor Les Rowlands, Deputy Civic Mayor, in the Chair.

The sixth matter requiring approval was in relation to a revision of the Constitution arrangement for Wirral Partnership Homes, trading as Magenta Living, to enable a proposed group structure and the recommendations of Cabinet at its meeting 9 October 2014 (minute 71 refers).

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan, it was –

Resolved (57:0) (One abstention) – That the recommendations contained within Cabinet minute 71, be approved.

49 **MATTERS FOR NOTING**

The Civic Mayor, Councillor Steve Foulkes, resumed the Chair.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor McLachlan, it was –

Resolved – That minute 27 (Cabinet – 7 July 2014) – Financial Monitoring 2014/2015 and minute 46 (Cabinet – 11 September 2014) – Financial Monitoring 2014/2015 (Months 3/4), be noted.

In respect of minute 49 (Cabinet – 11 September 2014) - Notice of Motion – The Brown Bin Tax and the Digital Divide, an amendment had been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly
Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

“Council notes the response of Cabinet of the 11 September 2014 to the Notice of Motion referred to it by the Mayor on 14 July 2014 entitled The Brown Bin tax and the Digital Divide.

Council however disagrees with the conclusion of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability for the following reasons:

- The additional £5 off-line charge for people not willing or able to subscribe online is being paid disproportionately by residents living in Wirral’s most deprived wards (26% in Birkenhead & Tranmere and Seacombe, 20% in Bidston & St James, 18% in Liscard, 16% in Rock Ferry)
- The digital surcharge is at odds with previously agreed Motions passed by the Council, particularly the Motion entitled Digital Inclusion moved by Councillor Brian Kenny on 16 April 2012.
(<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=17254>)
- The suggestion that libraries are available to assist people to subscribe online is likely to be diminished should the proposals to drastically reduce libraries’ opening times in the current budget proposals be agreed.
- The additional charge is considered particularly unfair as it is the only council service that operates such a digital divide.

Council finally notes the Cabinet rejected the suggestion in the Motion that the £5 could be refunded and, instead, decided to spend circa £10,000 on an advice leaflet to be distributed with the council tax bills. Council considers that the cost of the ‘advice leaflet’ plus the additional income secured above the budget target could be utilised to standardise the cost of subscription and eliminate the unfair digital divide.

Accordingly Council resolves to ask Cabinet to reconsider the issues in the motion.”

The Mayor then invited the mover of the amendment to speak, followed by the seconder and the Cabinet Member to reply.

Whilst replying, Councillor Bernie Mooney declared a personal interest in the matter by virtue of her employment with Age UK.

The amendment was then put and lost (27:34) (One abstention).

It was then –

Resolved (34:27) (One abstention) – That minute 49 (Cabinet – 11 September 2014) - Notice of Motion – The Brown Bin Tax and the Digital Divide, be noted.

50 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Councillor Phil Gilchrist, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 10(2) (b), submitted a question addressed to Councillor Phil Davies (Leader of the Council), in respect of money being given back to the Council by Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority.

Councillor Davies had not been given notice of the question and stated that he would provide a written answer to Councillor Gilchrist.

Councillor Stuart Kelly, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 10(2) (b), submitted a question addressed to Councillor George Davies (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement), in respect of special bye-laws on dog controls.

Councillor George Davies responded accordingly.

Councillor Alan Brighthouse, having given the appropriate notice in accordance with Standing Order 10(2) (b), submitted a question addressed to Councillor Phil Davies (Leader of the Council), in respect of the current position at Williamson Art Gallery.

Councillor Phil Davies responded accordingly.

51 **MATTERS REFERRED FROM POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEES**

Two matters had been referred to the Council by Policy and Performance Committees, in accordance with Standing Order 7(5) and a number of

Minority reports had been submitted for the Council's consideration (see minutes 52 to 56 post).

52 **UNDERGROUND COAL GASIFICATION - COMMITTEE REFERRAL**

At the meeting of the Council on 14 July, 2014 (minute 17 refers) the Mayor had referred a Notice of Motion, 'Underground Coal Gasification' to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee. The motion was duly considered at the meeting of the Committee on 22 September, 2014 (minute 15 refers).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee, which advised that -

The Notice of Motion be supported and the Council be advised accordingly.

On a motion by Councillor Jerry Williams, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved – That the Motion be agreed as follows:

- (1) **Council recalls that at its meeting on 18 July 2011 it approved, with unanimous (all-party) support, a motion 'Shale Gas Fracking' (minute 28 refers) stating its opposition to shale gas or coal bed methane testing or extraction in Wirral until the Council was satisfied as to the safety of the process and the risk of adverse environmental impacts had been fully addressed.**
See:
<http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/g3562/Printed%20minutes%2018th-Jul-2011%2018.15%20Council.pdf?T=1>
- (2) **It has subsequently emerged that conditional licences to explore for underground coal gasification under parts of the Dee Estuary, including the Hilbre Islands and a coastal strip from Caldy to Hoylake have been granted to Cluff Natural Resources Ltd and for an area just off the entire North Wirral Coast to Riverside Energy Ltd.**
- (3) **Council notes that the Hilbre Islands are within the Dee Estuary Special Area of Conservation and Dee Estuary Special Protection Area (all part of a network of protected sites stretching across Europe called Natura 2000) and therefore covered by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations which also covers the Dee Estuary Ramsar Site. They are also protected through national legislation under the Countryside and Rights of**

Way Act as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, as is the North Wirral Coast and the Mersey Narrows.

- (4) Council notes that operations both onshore and above the low water mark would require planning approval to be granted by this authority and also that the Hilbre Islands and much of the coastal strip are within its ownership and thus under its control.**
- (5) Therefore, Council:**
 - (a) Confirms its opposition to Unconventional Gas Extraction, including Underground Coal Gasification, Coal Bed Methane and Fracking, under Wirral, its offshore coastal waters and the Dee and Mersey estuaries until such time as the Council is satisfied as to the safety of the process and that the risk of adverse environmental impacts have been fully addressed.**
 - (b) Instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change and to Wirral's four Members of Parliament, informing him and them of this decision.**
 - (c) Instructs the Chief Executive to write to Wirral's neighbouring coastal local authorities (Sefton, Liverpool, Halton, Cheshire West & Chester, and Flintshire) informing them of this decision and inviting them to pass an equivalent resolution with the intention of protecting our shared environment.**

53 PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR REFORM - COMMITTEE REFERRAL

At the meeting of the Council on 14 July, 2014 (minute 17 refers) the Mayor had referred a Notice of Motion, 'Private Rented Sector Reform', to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee. The motion was duly considered at the meeting of the Committee on 22 September, 2014 (minute 16 refers).

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5) the Council was invited to consider the recommendation of the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee, which advised that -

The Notice of Motion be supported and the Council be advised accordingly."

On a motion by Councillor Jerry Williams, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, it was –

Resolved – That the Motion be agreed as follows -

Council re-affirms its support for the Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme proposed in the 2014/2015 Labour Group budget. It also welcomes the significant proposals put forward by the Labour Party in relation to preventing tenants being ripped-off by unscrupulous landlords and providing them with long term security they desperately need. More specifically –

- **The introduction of longer term three year tenancies**
- **The banning of letting agents fees to tenants, saving them on average £350**
- **Predictable rents with Landlords only allowed to review them once every year with an upper ceiling to prevent excessive rises.**

54 **MINORITY REPORTS - TRANSFORMATION OF LEISURE SERVICES SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES PRICING STRUCTURE**

Councillors Philip Brightmore, Christina Muspratt, Louise Reecejones, Denise Realey, Adam Sykes and Joe Walsh, having declared an interest in this matter left the Chamber during its consideration.

The Council considered two Minority Reports in respect of 'Transformation of Leisure Services Sports and Leisure Facilities Pricing Structure'.

The Mayor invited the movers of the Minority Reports to speak, followed by the seconder and the Cabinet Member to reply.

Councillors Phil Gilchrist and Paul Hayes moved the Minority Reports in respect of the Liberal Democrat and Conservative Groups respectively. They were then formally seconded by Councillors Dave Mitchell and Jeff Green respectively.

Councillor Chris Meaden having replied, the Minority Report proposed by Councillor Gilchrist was put and lost (23:29) (One abstention).

The Minority Report proposed by Councillor Hayes was put and lost (25:29) (One abstention).

55 **MINORITY REPORT - PUBLIC HEALTH OUTCOMES FUND (HEALTHY HOMES AND FOREST SCHOOLS)**

The Council considered a Minority Report in respect of 'Public Health Outcomes Fund (Healthy Homes and Forest Schools)'.

The Mayor invited the mover of the Minority Report to speak, followed by the seconder and the Cabinet Member to reply.

Councillor Stuart Kelly moved the Minority Report which was seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell.

Councillor Phil Davies having replied, the Minority Report was put and lost (27:34) (One abstention).

56 **MINORITY REPORT - THE LYNDALE SCHOOL**

Councillor Phillip Brightmore having declared an interest in this matter left the Chamber during its consideration.

The Council considered a Minority Report in respect of 'The Lyndale School'.

Councillor Paul Hayes formally moved the Minority Report which was seconded by Councillor Tom Anderson.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist then moved an amendment to the Minority Report, seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell as follows:

"It be noted that the SEN Improvement Test as set out on Page 87 as Appendix 3 in the Consultant's report did not fully set out paragraph 40 as set out in the Guidance Document, namely that:

'...decision makers should make clear how they are satisfied that this SEN improvement test has been met, including how they have taken account of parental or independent representations which questions the proposer's assessment'.

... was not included and that, therefore, the matter should be referred back to Cabinet so that they can fully set out how they have undertaken this assessment in the light of the guidance."

The Head of Legal and Member Services advised the Council that it was possible for an amendment to be moved without notice as notice was only required in respect of amendments to Notices of Motion.

The Mayor then adjourned the meeting at 8.05pm whilst the amendment was circulated.

The meeting resumed at 8.15pm.

The Mayor invited the mover of the Minority Report to speak, followed by the seconder.

Councillor Gilchrist then spoke to his amendment and Councillor Tony Smith replied.

Prior to the vote on the amendment, Councillor Jeff Green and five Conservative Members rose to request a 'card vote'.

A 'card vote' was then taken on Councillor Gilchrist's amendment and the Council divided as follows:

For the amendment (27) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, C Carubia, P Cleary, Mrs W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, P Gilchrist, J Green, J Hale, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, M Hornby, S Kelly, D Mitchell, T Pilgrim, C Povall, Mrs L Rennie, L Rowlands, A Sykes, G Watt, Mrs P Williams and S Williams.

Against the amendment (33) Councillors R Abbey, M Daniel, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, R Gregson, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, A Leech, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, S Niblock, T Norbury, M Patrick, D Realey, L Reecejones, D Roberts, J Salter, H Smith, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams and J Williamson.

One abstention – Councillor S Foulkes.

The amendment was therefore lost (27:33) (One abstention).

Prior to the vote on the Minority Report, Councillor Jeff Green and five Conservative Members rose to request a 'card vote'.

A 'card vote' was then taken on the Minority Report and the Council divided as follows:

For the Minority Report (27) Councillors T Anderson, B Berry, C Blakeley, E Boulton, A Brighthouse, C Carubia, P Cleary, Mrs W Clements, D Elderton, G Ellis, P Gilchrist, J Green, J Hale, P Hayes, A Hodson, K Hodson, M Hornby, S Kelly, D Mitchell, T Pilgrim, C Povall, Mrs L Rennie, L Rowlands, A Sykes, G Watt, Mrs P Williams and S Williams.

Against the Minority Report (33) Councillors R Abbey, M Daniel, G Davies, P Davies, W Davies, P Doughty, R Gregson, P Hackett, T Johnson, A Jones, C Jones, A Leech, A McLachlan, M McLaughlin, C Meaden, B Mooney, C Muspratt, S Niblock, T Norbury, M Patrick, D Realey, L Reecejones, D Roberts, J Salter, H Smith, PA Smith, W Smith, C Spriggs, J Walsh, S Whittingham, I Williams, KJ Williams and J Williamson.

One abstention – Councillor S Foulkes.

The Minority Report was therefore lost (27:33) (One abstention).

57 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

Notices of motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7(1) were reported to the Council. The Mayor, having considered each motion, in accordance with Standing Order 7(4) had decided that they would be dealt with as follows:

- (i). Homes that Meet our Future Needs
To be debated
- (ii). Townmeadow Station
To be debated
- (iii). 44 Councillors
To be referred to the Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee
- (iv). Support for HS2
To be debated
- (v). Labour's Financial Mismanagement
To be debated
- (vi). Devolution to City Regions and Local Government
To be debated

58 **MOTION - DEVOLUTION TO CITY REGIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Ann McLachlan

This Council welcomes the result of the Scottish referendum and is pleased that the people of Scotland voted to stay within the United Kingdom.

Council notes that the coalition government has agreed to produce legislation by January 2015 to devolve additional powers and responsibilities to Scotland and the other constituent parts of the United Kingdom.

Council supports the principle that decisions on the needs of Wirral and the Liverpool City Region are best made by locally elected members rather than ministers and civil servants in Whitehall.

Council therefore believes that a key part of the proposed legislation should include measures to devolve more powers and funding from Whitehall to City Regions and local authorities in England.

Council urges the government to refuse to pander to right-wing Tory backbenchers who wish to use the result of the Scottish referendum for party political advantage.

Council therefore agrees to lobby the government for greater devolution to Wirral Council and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and to write to the four Wirral MPs to request them to support this stance.

Two amendments which had been circulated in advance of the meeting were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

First amendment -

Proposed by Councillor Geoffrey Watt

Seconded by Councillor Adam Sykes

To the existing first paragraph add: 'Council notes the Prime Minister's determination to meet the commitments made by the leaders of the three main parties at Westminster through the 'Better Together' campaign'.

To the existing second paragraph add: 'on the basis of fairness'.

From the existing third paragraph delete: 'the Liverpool City Region' *and replace with* 'neighbouring authorities'.

From the existing fourth paragraph delete: 'City Regions and'.

Delete the entire fifth paragraph and replace with: 'Council welcomes the enthusiasm expressed by the Rt. Hon. George Osborne MP, Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, for a Northern Powerhouse and looks forward to Wirral playing a full part in such an initiative'.

From the sixth paragraph delete: 'the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority' *and replace with* 'neighbouring authorities'.

Second amendment -

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Add:

Council recognises that both the LGA (in its document 'Investing in our Nation's future') and the 'Core Cities' group look forward to devolution of funding associated with the work programme, with the commissioning of

investment in apprenticeships, training and other funds being brought together in 'Place based settlements'.

Council notes that these steps would remove the responsibility of running this funding from the Civil Service and take control of that funding from central Government.

In achieving democratic control over and accountability for these potential funding streams:

- a. the open nature of the Combined Authority and its decision making must be assured;
- b. the ability of councillors and constituents to develop policy and properly influence the direction of spending should be enshrined;
- c. any funding, duties and responsibilities should be democratically accountable and not fall into the hands of an elected Mayor.

Prior to debating this motion, Councillor Phil Davies moved, it was duly seconded and –

Resolved – That Standing Order 9 be suspended until after three debates had taken place.

Following a debate and Councillor Phil Davies having replied, the first amendment was put and lost (19:41) (One abstention).

The second amendment was put and carried (41:19) (One abstention).

The substantive motion as amended was put and carried (41:19) (One abstention).

Resolved (41:19) (One abstention) –

- (1) This Council welcomes the result of the Scottish referendum and is pleased that the people of Scotland voted to stay within the United Kingdom.**
- (2) Council notes that the coalition government has agreed to produce legislation by January 2015 to devolve additional powers and responsibilities to Scotland and the other constituent parts of the United Kingdom.**
- (3) Council supports the principle that decisions on the needs of Wirral and the Liverpool City Region are best made by locally elected members rather than ministers and civil servants in Whitehall.**

- (4) Council therefore believes that a key part of the proposed legislation should include measures to devolve more powers and funding from Whitehall to City Regions and local authorities in England.
- (5) Council urges the government to refuse to pander to right-wing Tory backbenchers who wish to use the result of the Scottish referendum for party political advantage.
- (6) Council therefore agrees to lobby the government for greater devolution to Wirral Council and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and to write to the four Wirral MPs to request them to support this stance.
- (7) Council recognises that both the LGA (in its document 'Investing in our Nation's future') and the 'Core Cities' group look forward to devolution of funding associated with the work programme, with the commissioning of investment in apprenticeships, training and other funds being brought together in 'Place based settlements'.
- (8) Council notes that these steps would remove the responsibility of running this funding from the Civil Service and take control of that funding from central Government.
- (9) In achieving democratic control over and accountability for these potential funding streams:
 - a. the open nature of the Combined Authority and its decision making must be assured;
 - b. the ability of councillors and constituents to develop policy and properly influence the direction of spending should be enshrined;
 - c. any funding, duties and responsibilities should be democratically accountable and not fall into the hands of an elected Mayor.

The Mayor stated that Councillor Green had declared a prejudicial interest in this item and left the Chamber during the debate.

59 **MOTION - TOWNMEADOW STATION**

Proposed by Councillor Steve Williams

Seconded by Councillor Bruce Berry

- (1) Council notes the investment in our railways, notably the £400 million for electrifying lines in the North West, including £160 million to electrify the line between Liverpool and Manchester.

(2) Council welcomes the Long Term Rail Strategy, developed by Merseytravel and Network Rail, which outlines further ways in which investment in the local rail network can help to deliver additional benefits for the economy and local commuters, including:

- Service improvements on the Bidston - Wrexham line, electrification and new stations.
- New stations, including Townmeadow, on the Wirral Line

(3) Council instructs the Chief Executive to make available all evidence held by the Council that can be used to support the business case for these improvements, including data on jobs, investment, travel and population in the areas affected.

Following a debate and Councillor Steve Williams having waived his right of reply, the motion was put and carried (61:0) (One abstention).

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the motion be approved.

60 **MOTION - HOMES THAT MEET OUR FUTURE NEEDS**

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

This Council welcomes the publication of 'Housing in later life' by Age UK.

Council notes that the report called on the Government to ensure that all new homes are built to the 'lifetime standard' so that they can be easily adapted as people age, with standards that allow older people with different care needs to live independently, for as long as possible.

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-press/lack-of-suitable-housing-costing-the-nhs-millions-every-year/>

Council notes that the document contained a number of observations and recommendations about re-ablement services, assessments of properties and commissioning strategies and future investment in extra care housing.

Council also recognises that the Government has introduced five core standards for housing.

These include new optional building regulations for accessible and adaptable mainstream housing to meet the needs of older and disabled people.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/housing-standards-review-technical-consultation>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/354091/02_140731_HSR_Supporting_Doc1_Access.pdf

Council requests that appropriate officers and Cabinet Members:

- (1) Review these publications and respond to the consultation.
- (2) Establish how the Council's current and emerging policies can reflect these suggestions, requests and changes.
- (3) Consider how new building projects in the Borough can be provided with hallways and doorways that enable adequate access in line with the outcome of the consultation and legislation.
- (4) Report back on their findings and on which matters they can take forward.

Following the mover and seconder speaking, the motion was put and carried (61:0) (One abstention).

Resolved (61:0) (One abstention) – That the motion be approved.

61 **MOTION - SUPPORT FOR HS2**

Proposed by Councillor Paul Hayes

Seconded by Councillor Tom Anderson

This Council, in recognising that High Speed Rail will do much to ensure that Wirral continues to benefit from our nation's growing economy, resolves to:

- (1) Fully support the '20 Miles More' campaign and the Liverpool Echo's 'Linking Liverpool' campaign which seeks to ensure that Liverpool is directly linked to the proposed High Speed Rail network.
- (2) Asks the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressing this Council's determined support for the campaign for Liverpool to have a direct connection to HS2 and furthermore our support for any HS3 East – West route to begin with Liverpool.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate this matter.

Resolved (60:1) (One abstention) – That the motion be approved.

62 **MOTION - LABOUR'S FINANCIAL MISMANAGEMENT**

Proposed by Councillor Jeff Green

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

Council is extremely disappointed to note the reported £260,000 spent with the V4 consultancy firm and believes this is yet another demonstration of Labour's lack of grasp of economic realities.

In addition, the Labour Administration has overseen –

£150,000 spent on 'illegal' vehicles
£100,000 spent on the old Town Hall lift
£26,000 spent on a new carpet for Wallasey Town Hall
£20,000 spent on upgrading toilets in Wallasey Town Hall
£1,000,000 spent on the so called 'Downtown Abbey' staircases

These warped financial decisions means the public is now faced with choosing whether to stop funding school crossing patrols and closing libraries in the latest budget consultation.

Council believes that hardworking Wirral residents have the absolute right to know exactly where their hard earned cash goes and therefore Council requests the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee urgently review the current scheme of delegation with a view to recommending that the scheme be altered so that all consultancy spend in excess of £50,000 is reported to Cabinet prior to authorisation being given.

Having applied the guillotine in accordance with Standing Order 9 the Council did not debate this matter.

The motion was put and lost (26:35) (One abstention).

63 **VACANCIES**

The Council was requested to deal with the following matters in respect of appointments to Committees and outside organisations.

Committees

Policy and Performance Coordinating Committee

Councillor Andrew Hodson to replace Councillor Chris Blakeley as spokesperson and Councillor Blakeley to become a deputy for this Committee.

Outside Bodies

Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust

Councillor Matt Daniel to replace Councillor Anita Leech as a Governor.

Resolved – That the appointments and amendments to the membership of the Committee and outside body listed above, be approved.

COUNCIL

8TH DECEMBER 2014

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Phil Davies
CABINET PORTFOLIO	Leader of the Council
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. CORPORATE PLAN

The Council's 2013-16 Corporate Plan has been refreshed for its final year 2015-16 and reaffirms the Council's vision for Wirral to be a place "where the vulnerable are safe and protected, where employers want to invest and local businesses thrive, and where good health and an excellent quality of life is within the reach of everyone who lives here".

The purpose of the Plan is to ensure that the Council is investing its resources appropriately and in line with agreed priorities; to protect the vulnerable, to drive growth in our economy and to tackle health inequalities.

2. FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Like many other authorities across the country, Wirral Council is dealing with unprecedented cuts to its funding, together with increasing demand for its services. We have already made savings of £151 million since 2010 and still require further savings of approximately £70 million by the end of 2018, as a result of Government austerity measures; by 2017 our Government grant will have reduced by 57%

We have made strong progress to respond to the financial challenges that we face and our recent audit report confirmed that we have appropriate arrangements in place to manage our financial risks and challenges. However, difficult decisions will continue to be required in order that we are able to deliver services that meet our Corporate Plan priorities and the needs of our residents.

The Local Government Association and HM Treasury have predicted that there will be significant further cuts to local government funding following the election. A recent report by the National Audit Office has also warned of the impact of budget cuts in local authorities in England and highlights that over half of upper tier authorities are not well placed to provide services over the next three to five years.

3. PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSFORMATION

The Council continues to work with our partners to drive public service transformation across the Borough. A key strand within this agenda is Wirral's role in the national Public Service Transformation (PST) Network, bringing local public service providers to work together to meet local needs. Driven by a strong multi-agency approach via the Public Service Board (PSB), latest activity includes:

- **Better Food Wirral: a Food Plan for Wirral:** how to develop a healthy and vibrant food culture in Wirral. The project will help to increase access to good food, support the local food economy to thrive and support people to make healthy food choices;
- **Increasing Neighbourhood Resilience:** Constituency Committees have funded a number of small-scale behaviour change projects including: a community based advice service; a behaviour change campaign targeted at young people; Increasing support networks for older people; and reducing the impact of child poverty;
- **Tackling Health Related Worklessness:** The aim of this project is to reduce the long term, persistently high levels of health (including mental health) related worklessness in Wirral, with a particular focus in Birkenhead.

We have also submitted a funding application to the Government's Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) to help support delivery of the worklessness project, and expect to hear the outcome of our bid in December.

4. COMBINED AUTHORITY DEVOLUTION

The latest meeting of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (CA) took place on 21st November, when a number of significant decisions were taken in relation to economic growth and transport improvements – building on the extensive partnership work already taking place across the City Region. Members agreed to amend the CA Constitution to enable Associate Membership, and a number of neighbouring local authorities have already expressed interest in closer working with us, including West Lancs who will now become an Associate Member.

Wirral also took a report to the Combined Authority meeting which set out the case for why a strong package of powers and budgets should be devolved to the City Region. Members agreed that the CA should approach central government as a matter of urgency to discuss these proposals and how they can be progressed. As Chair of the Combined Authority, I have written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting a meeting as soon as possible to progress this work.

5. INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Investment Strategy focuses on key sectors within Wirral's economy including Offshore Energy, Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering. Officers are working with UKTI and other agencies to promote Wirral for investment and also support indigenous businesses to access new opportunities.

Working with the Wirral Chamber of Commerce and the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Council is working to develop a growth hub to support Wirral businesses, securing new resources to support business growth. Invest Wirral continue to support businesses by offering advice and support.

Significant progress has been made in securing new investment into Wirral Waters. In October, work started on the development of a new campus for Wirral Met College on Tower Road South, a key gateway of Wirral Waters. The new £8.5m campus will open in September 2015.

Adjacent to the new college campus, work is now underway on Tower Wharf to build a new 60,000 sq ft office development which is expected to complete in late summer 2015. Officers continue to work a number of other projects within the Enterprise, including key infrastructure development.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Ann McLachlan
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Governance, Commissioning and Improvement
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Graham Burgess, Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to her portfolio.

1. LOCAL TRANSPARENCY CODE

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a revised Transparency Code in October 2014, setting out the requirements of local authorities in publishing open data. The Code sets out the minimum data that local authorities should be publishing, the frequency it should be published and how it should be published. Work is underway to ensure compliance with this Code with first quarter information (1st Sept–1st Dec 2014) scheduled for publication by the 31st December 2014. Data required annually will be first published on 02 February 2015. Data will be refreshed on a quarterly or annual basis thereafter.

2. MEMBER IT

Phase 1 of the Windows 7 project continues to roll out new client devices to staff across the Council and is forecasted to deliver 1,700 Windows 7 machines (desktops, large laptops and small laptops) by the 5th December 2014. Phase 2 will complete the deployment of the remaining replacement machines, including Elected Members and incorporate previously out of scope IT solutions to address business imperatives arising from three other areas; Children's Centres, Adult Learning and Mersey Pension Fund. IT Services are conducting a series of workshops with Elected Members so that they are aware of the options open to them. Elected Members will also be asked to complete an online survey which is designed to assist in planning the deployment of their chosen equipment.

3. COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

A Commissioning Strategy has been approved by Cabinet, which sets out the Councils commissioning vision and objectives, and the approach for achieving them. Through this approach the commissioning activities of the Council will be aligned directly to the overarching vision for the borough as set out in the Corporate Plan.

The aims of the strategy are to:

- To set out the vision and direction for commissioning activity across the Council
- Provide clarity around what we mean by commissioning, procurement and contract management
- Define the basic principles which support all commissioning decisions
- Identify the key outcomes required to make the Council an expert commissioner and client
- Set out how the Council proposes to achieve intended outcomes
- Enable greater personal choice and responsibility
- Deliver the Council's public sector responsibility and equality duties.

Work is now in hand to implement the strategy with officers from across the council meeting to ensure that the key embedding actions are undertaken during the next six months. The key themes of this work include creating a consistent and transparent commissioning approach across the Council; to ensure commissioning is focussed on local needs, outcomes and priorities; supporting a mixed economy of providers; engaging in effective strategic partnerships and maximising efficiencies and value for money.

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor George Davies
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement
CO-ORINDATING CHIEF OFFICER	Emma Degg, Head of Neighbourhoods and Engagement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. ENABLING NEW HOUSING SUPPLY

Quarter 2 of 2014/15 saw the completion of 79 affordable housing units in Wirral. Completions included 33 units for affordable rent on the site of the former Poulton Primary School made up of 8 x one bed apartments, 4 x two bed apartment, 3 x two bed bungalows, 16 x two bed houses and 4 x 3 bed houses. The development saw inward investment for Wirral of £3.14million, of which £0.45million was Homes and Communities Agency grant.

Quarter 2 also saw the commencement of Regenda's contract for the re-development of the derelict Cygnet pub in Birkenhead, into 10 x one bed apartments and four x 2 bed apartments for Affordable Rent for completion in 2015/16. This scheme will see inward investment for Wirral of £1.2million of which £364,126 is being funded through Homes and Communities Agency grant.

In addition, Quarter 2 saw first time buyers being assisted on to the housing ladder and households facing repossession being able to remain in their homes. There were 16 households who utilised the Government's Help To Buy equity loan to purchase a new build home across sites in Rock Ferry, Birkenhead North and Eastham. Two households assisted to bring back empty properties into use, by purchasing homes under Riverside Housing Association's Own Place scheme which assists by giving a 25% discount. In addition, four households facing repossession were enabled to remain in their homes through the Mortgage Rescue scheme.

2. HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY / AFFORDABLE WARMTH

Wirral Council took part in the promotion of the 3rd Liverpool City Region Collective Energy Switch, which closed on 29th September 2014. A Collective Energy Switch brings households together that are interested in changing energy suppliers to reduce their energy costs. By grouping together, buying power is increased to negotiate cheaper tariffs from energy suppliers. The scheme offers greater support and advice to consumers, particularly vulnerable consumers, compared to switching supplier themselves. It also encourages switching amongst households that haven't previously considered it, estimated to be around 50% of all Wirral households.

717 Wirral residents registered with scheme manager Energy Projects Plus and 174 switched suppliers. Wirral had the highest number of registrations by local authority area and the highest number of people switching. Those who switched saved an average of £203 a year on their energy bills. One Wirral resident saved £825 and a significant number of people were able to save over £500 a year. The next Collective Switch is due to take place between January and March 2015.

3. ENFORCEMENT & SELECTIVE LICENSING

A comprehensive consultation on plans to radically improve living standards in four designated parts of the borough begins next week and will run for a 10 week period from to 24th November 2014, finishing in February 2015. The areas identified for the Selective Licensing scheme fall within Birkenhead South, Egerton North, Seacombe Library and Egremont Promenade South.

These areas are experiencing the highest levels of low demand in the borough caused by factors such as high numbers of vacant properties and low house prices and rental values. The introduction of a scheme in specific, targeted areas would help to stabilise these neighbourhoods by declaring an intention to drive up property management practice and property standards in the private rented sector as well as helping to solve other issues contributing to low demand within a neighbourhood.

A Selective Licensing scheme would require landlords in certain areas to purchase a license from the Council and commit to meeting certain requirements, including bringing their property up to a good standard, in order to be legally allowed to put their homes on the rental market.

A variety of methods will be used as part of the consultation to engage with a range of stakeholders including tenants, residents, landlords, service providers, council staff, members and National and Regional Landlord organisations. The consultation results and the final Selective Licensing Business Case will be reported back to Cabinet in spring 2015.

4. ALLOCATION OF HOUSING / MEETING HOUSING NEED

A revised version of the Property Pool Plus Policy approved by Cabinet in October 2014 is due for implementation in January 2015. The Policy has been revised due to the introduction of the Localism Act, introduction of Legislation regarding rehousing for Armed Forces Personnel, and operational experience since Property Pool Plus was introduced in July 2012.

The most significant changes include additional provision for former members of the Armed Forces who meet certain criteria relating to their housing need, relaxation of the criteria for the award of a priority status due to employment, prevention of those who have been rehoused via the scheme from re-registering for 12 months, change to the number of bedrooms a household can apply for in line with Housing Benefit regulations, provision to award a priority to prevent homelessness. These amendments to the policy should assist with:-

- building sustainable communities,
- encouraging economic activity,
- tackling low demand for some property types,
- tackling potential homelessness in a timely manner preventing the need for temporary accommodation, and
- assisting former Armed Forces Personnel in need of rehousing.

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Pat Hackett
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Economy
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Kevin Adderley, Strategic Director Regeneration and Environment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The Devonshire Park Neighbourhood Planning Forum has now submitted its final plan for Council approval prior to statutory public consultation and independent examination.

2. BIRKENHEAD TOWN CENTRE

Neptune developments are continuing with their work to produce a master plan for the town centre which will be available for the Council's consideration in January 2015.

3. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The College development is progressing well at Tower Road and this will be completed by September 2015. Work has also just commenced on a new office development at Tower Wharf.

4. SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

Officers have worked to secure Government investment to deliver a programme to reduce youth unemployment across the city region over the next three years. Knowsley Council will be the accountable body for the funds on behalf of the 6 Local Authority areas in the city region and funds will be allocated to local authority areas based on their levels of youth unemployment. In November, Cabinet authorised Officers to work to appoint a supplier for the Wirral delivery starting in March 2015.

In addition to the funding for youth unemployment, Officers have secured additionally monies from Jobcentre Plus to deliver health related worklessness support to Wirral residents. The Flexible Support Funding will allow the Council to deliver support to help residents to access employment opportunities.

5. MERSEY DEE ALLIANCE

Significant progress has been made in support of the Mersey Dee Alliance. Wirral Council chairs the partnership and has this year presided over a review of priorities and the Alliance is undertaking a number of initiatives to promote the cross border economy across Wirral, Cheshire and North Wales and raising the profile of several key initiatives that will allow better access to employment across the wider travel to work area.

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Adrian Jones
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Central And Support Services
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Joe Blott, Director of Transformation & Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. FINANCIAL SERVICES

The start of the new financial year is less than 5 months away and the focus of work is currently in two areas; managing the 2014/15 forecast outturn and building the budget for 2015/16

The forecast is being closely scrutinised to ensure the actual outturn is close to the predicted outturn, within year financial pressures being closely monitored.

The draft budget for 2015/16 is being formulated. Savings are being assessed for deliverability. There is a requirement to set a budget that is both balanced and robust with the agreed savings being deliverable.

2. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Work is underway to dispose of major sites across Wirral including Acre Lane, Fernbank Farm and Rock Ferry High School.

Negotiations are ongoing to acquire land for the Golf resort. New Hall Farm is being sold to the current tenant in exchange for the surrender of 160 acres of land. The current tenant will continue to rent this land until the Golf Resort is ready to go live.

3. HEALTH, SAFETY & RESILIENCE

The Health, Safety and Resilience team responded to the collapsed buildings on King Street on the evening of Wednesday 12th November. Fortunately there were no casualties and the response to the emergency went well. Investigations are underway to identify the cause of the collapse but a gas explosion has been ruled out. Press and media releases and a Members briefing note were circulated following the incident.

The Corporate Health & Safety Committee agreed a revised Health and Safety structure to reflect the recent organisational changes and delivers a far more coherent communication pathway for health & safety matters.

The Health, Safety and Resilience team have launched an improvement program for Business Continuity. A briefing note was taken recently to CESG and work is underway with the Councils most Critical Services, to ensure they have robust plan is in place. The revised Corporate Business Continuity Policy has been released and is available on the intranet via the following link:

<http://wbcnet.admin.ad.wirral.gov.uk/governance/business-continuity>

4. IT

The largest project, Windows 7 rollout continues on schedule. There will be a series of meetings with members through November and equipment will be rolled out to them after the Christmas break as part of Phase II. Phase II includes the Libraries, Children's Centres, Adult Learning, and IT.

Some major procurement exercises have recently completed, including the tender for renewal and upgrade of the main network across the borough and the tender for new telephony within the contact centre. Both projects will be initiated before Christmas. The tender for email migration was awarded and the project is underway. There are a number of other procurements ongoing, including one to extend and improve Wi-Fi coverage across corporate buildings.

As part of the major IT investment initiative, various major infrastructure works continue to be delivered, including:

- The installation of a major corporate data storage device;
- The replacement of more than 150 servers coming to the end of their supportable life;
- The replacement and refresh of network equipment across the entire estate, starting with the core network switches

The IT Service remodelling consultations have been completed; planning is underway for implementation of new structures in the New Year.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES

National pay award

The National Employers Association has just agreed a two year national pay award for all Local Authority staff with the nationally recognised Trade Unions. This is within our budget projections and does not affect our budget position.

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Christine Jones
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Adult Social Care & Public Health
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Graham Hodgkinson, Director Of Adult Social Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Good progress is being made across a number of strategic developments. The most critical of these include the integration of health and social care, commissioning and delivery. Preparation for implementing the Care Act from April 2015, and developing plans for transferring day services into a Local Authority Company.

1. BETTER CARE FUND

Wirral's BCF submission has been approved with support. Confirmation has been received from Director of NHS England, confirming the local team now has full responsibility for its BCF budget. The funds will be released to be used in accordance with final approved plan, in a section 75 (pooled budget) agreement. The element of the fund linked to non-elective admissions paid to CCG, will be released into the pool, if the target reduction of 5%, is achieved. A proportionate amount will be released if the target is part met. This is a positive outcome for Wirral. Focus now moves to implementation of the prioritised schemes and governance arrangements, ensuring robust performance management and preparation for the pooled budget.

2. CARE ACT

A programme lead has been appointed and strong links have been made to the regional programme team. Staffing requirements to meet increased demand have been considered as part of re-modelling options for social care. A workshop to be held in December will be held to ensure that key workstream leads across the Council are engaged in taking forward implementation of the Act. Further specific provider events are being planned for December 2014 and January 2015.

3. DAY SERVICES

Cabinet agreed early this year, to the establishment of a Wirral Local Authority Company. The strategic business case, implementation and project plans and a report in relation to the due diligence undertaken have all now been through an internal financial challenge process.

Progress is now being made to move the company into shadow form prior to the go live date of April 2015. The involvement of a Co-Design Project Group to lead the development has been a great success with parents, carers, people who use services and staff being empowered to develop the vision, objective and principles of the new organisation.

4. PUBLIC HEALTH

The **Wirral Health and Wellbeing Board held a Spotlight event focussing on transport and health** on the 25th November at Tranmere Rovers Football Club.

The Board is running a series of Spotlight On events to promote and encourage debate amongst partners on the wider determinants of health and this was the fourth event, following ones on crime, asset based community development and housing.

The Borough's transport system plays a very important part in people's health. It enables local people to access jobs, education, shops, recreation, health and social services as well as travel to see friends and family. All of these are essential for a healthy, fulfilling life. Presentations were given by David Brown Chief Executive of Merseytravel, Nick Cavill from Public Health England and David Rees from the Road Safety Team. There were a number of key areas debated that will inform the refresh of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy not least that we should see roads as places not just a means of getting from A to B; we need to be clear that the benefits of walking and cycling outweigh the risks and that by using public transport we are well on our way to achieving our daily physical activity quota!

As part of a **sexual health needs assessment** an on line survey has been open to local residents asking for their views on Wirral's sexual health services so that we can ensure that local services are meeting residents' needs. We are also holding focus groups with looked after children and young parents and women. The needs assessment will be available in February once the survey work and data analysis have been written up.

Alcohol Awareness week took place, week beginning 17th November. Partners across the borough worked together to promote the dangers of alcohol and the advice and help on offer to people who want to stop or reduce their drinking. This included advice and information stands at Wirral Met College, Birkenhead Shopping Centre and before Tranmere Rovers' game at Prenton Park on the 22nd.

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Chris Meaden
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Leisure, Sport & Culture
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Clare Fish, Strategic Director, Families & Well-Being

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to her portfolio.

1. LIBRARIES

The Summer Reading Challenge is a national creative reading programme organised by The Reading Agency and the UK public library network and is for children up to age 12. Our libraries help support reading in new ways, combining free access to books with social activities and a creative online element. Children taking part in the Challenge read more over the summer, choosing for themselves from a wide range of books in the library. Every year the Challenge has a new theme for the 2014 Challenge was *Mythical Maze* and is the sixteenth annual Summer Reading Challenge and Wirral Libraries has participated in the scheme since the outset. This year on Wirral 7472 children joined the challenge, 4127 fully completed the challenge and we gained 408 new library members. This is an increase in numbers completing the challenge and joining the library over the previous year. The service was still able to offer 315 summer activities and it was really encouraging to see 17 young people (aged 14–18) volunteer as summer reading support in nine of our libraries. In the recent national return it showed Wirral second highest performing in the North West and I thank everyone for their help in achieving this and hope all participants enjoyed the experience

Birkenhead Reference Library Displays – we ensured a number of the authority’s Treasures are on display at Birkenhead Reference Library to commemorate November as the month of remembrance in this significant centenary year of the First World War. They include war diaries, memorabilia and recently bound copies of the London Illustrated News for the war years. These have been well received by our services users and my thanks to our staff in ensuring the Libraries help commemorate this poignant anniversary.

Wirral Libraries large range of literary and cultural events has continued and held the annual Bookfest for Wirral in October with a wide range of talks showcasing both national and local authors, poets and historians. My thanks to all those who supported this popular event and they were well attended well received and enjoyed.

Chris Salmon Poetry competition was launched on 15th September. This year’s theme is “Light” and the closing date is 15th January and I encourage all aspiring poets to submit an entry to this highly worthwhile event.

Our investment in technology in Libraries helps meet the budget challenge all services face. One key example is our self-serve technology (called RFID) which has most recently been rolled out to Bebington and Birkenhead libraries with seven sites now having it. We will install it at Wallasey Central in the New Year. This does require our book stock to be tagged and I am pleased that this is undertaken with the help of Wirral Autistic Society as part of the "Step into Work" programme. To show effective it can be Rock Ferry Library has 89% of their book transactions through the RFID kiosks, which exceeds expectations nationally of 80% self-serve versus staff issue and this importantly allows our staff to concentrate in helping users and visitors with more detailed tasks.

2. LEISURE SERVICES

Guinea Gap Redevelopment – the 5-a-side pitches are due to be handed over to Wirral Council on 28th November 2014, and will be open for general public use as soon as possible thereafter. The new Fitness Suite (the refurbishment of the Sports Hall) is due to be handed over to Wirral Council on 19th December 2014, and is planned to be open for new customers the first week in January 2015.

West Kirby Concourse – work is due to start on the new Fitness Suite, mid January 2015 and is due to be finished around Easter time.

Golf – Wirral Council has now formally withdrawn from the joint golf procurement exercise with Cheshire West and Chester, due to value for money concerns. Officers have now been tasked with bringing a further report back to Members on the future delivery of municipal golf in Wirral, following detailed consultation with golf user groups and organisations.

RLNI – the Council is still in discussions with the RNLI in terms of transferring the Beach Lifeguarding service, in readiness for the new summer season.

3. BONFIRE NIGHT FIREWORK DISPLAYS

This year's council bonfire night and firework displays took place at 8 of Wirral's Parks (Birkenhead Park, Central Park, Mersey Park, Woodchurch Leisure Centre, Mayer Park, Upton Park, Lingham Park and Leasowe Adventure Playground). The firework displays were enjoyed and appreciated by large numbers of people at each location with a number of compliments for some spectacular and enjoyable shows. We also received very positive feedback from the emergency services for the borough's commitment to putting on the events and community safety. The cost of the displays is less than £20 thousand pounds in total. We received a lot of compliments congratulating us on the organisation and running of the displays, an example of which is "Thank you so much for the marvellous firework display last night at Mayer Park. Please don't ever think to discontinue these annual displays. We are a couple of seniors. As well as loving fireworks, we also appreciate the excuse to get out of the house on a November night, to use the excellent Merseyrail service and to mingle with a lot of younger folk all having fun. Thank you again to all concerned".

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Bernie Mooney
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Environment And Sustainability
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Smith, Head of Environment & Regulation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to her portfolio.

1. WASTE AND RECYCLING

The Waste and Environmental Streetscene Services Contract is under review. At Cabinet on 6th December, we will consider whether to extend the existing contract with Biffa Waste Services, in return for a range of added value commitments and discounted contract price. Once the decision on the contract is known, Officers intend to develop proposals for improving recycling rates and in so doing reduce the financial burden residual waste.

As the leaf fall season is upon us, residents continue to subscribe to the garden waste service, increasing the total number of subscribers to 38,100. So far this subscription year (June-October) we have collected 718 tonnes more garden waste than in the previous year. This 11% increase on last year's tonnage is primarily due to more residents subscribing, with approximately 3% of the increase being attributed to better seasonal growing conditions.

The Council has been successful in securing external funding to support its first "Waste Apprentice Scheme", where four young people will be given the opportunity to join the Waste and Recycling Team for at least 12 months to learn all about home composting and reducing food waste, in order to promote waste prevention initiatives to local residents. The apprentices will start working with us in December.

2. STREET CLEANSING

The Parks and Countryside Service are working closely with waste colleagues and the Disposal Authority to provide two temporary leaf fall transfer sites, making the Biffa leaf removal programme from our streets more efficient than ever. The leaf litter is being taken to White Moss Horticulture in Merseyside, where it is treated and bagged into saleable home compost. Currently the leaf fall programme is on schedule. Members are encouraged to report any issues to Streetscene, as limited resources are available to respond urgently to any hazardous leaf hot spots that we are made aware of.

The Corporate Indicator for Local Environmental Quality continues to overachieve in quarter 2, reaching a score of 97% of streets surveyed along gateways and key investment areas being maintained to an acceptable standard with regards to cleansing and graffiti removal.

3. FLY TIPPING

The national fly tipping database “Fly capture” has published 13/14 statistics for all English districts. Wirral continues to perform well, despite a reduction in environmental enforcement officers. We investigated 99.6% of all fly tipping complaints in 13/14 against an all English district average of 59%.

Two successful fly tipping prosecutions have been taken through the magistrate court in the last three months. One offender was given a conditional discharge and the other was fined. They were ordered to pay over a thousand pounds in costs to the Council. Several more cases are pending.

To date, 230 fixed penalty notices have been issued to residents in a bid to curtail the dumping of rubbish in alleyways by residents and landlords. All terraced properties will be sent an update on the Good neighbour Campaign in December, detailing the outcomes of our investigations so far, and the time limited “free replacement wheeled bin offer”. Residents will also be made aware of the implications of failing to get in touch with us if they are issued with a fixed penalty. Recently, non-payment of notices has led to the tripling of fines by the courts with offenders also being ordered to pay court costs of £160 each.

4. TRADING STANDARDS ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Trading Standards Enforcement Officers have recently successfully prosecuted 2 offenders one for committing door step crime and the other for Trade Mark Act and Food Safety Act offences. In the first case the trader was prosecuted for fraud after taking £900 to purchase bathroom fittings. The District Judge sentenced the defendant to 80 hours community service, costs of £1908.20 and a compensation order of £900. In the second case the offender exposed for sale at the Grange Hotel, Moreton, Vodka labelled as Smirnoff Vodka which upon analysis was not Smirnoff. Wirral Magistrates sentenced the defendant a Fine of £500, costs of £803.90 and a Victim Surcharge £20.

5. FOOD SAFETY UPDATE

Following the introduction of generic working from 1 April 2014 the modernised Environmental Health team has adapted well to the challenges of these changes in work practice. The service has also maintained its high performance in delivering the Council’s statutory duties in respect of high risk Food Safety requirements. Wirral Council is one of only four of the thirty six Metropolitan Boroughs to achieve 100% for high risk food inspections (A-C Rated) with Wirral being the twelfth largest out of the thirty six Metropolitan Authorities.

6. 2014- 2015 BUDGET OPTION TO TRANSFER BIRKENHEAD KENNELS TO THE CHARITY FRIENDS OF BIRKENHEAD (FOBK)

All the legal complications associated with the transfer contract, lease agreement and TUPE transfer have now been overcome. Wirral Council and FOBK have now agreed a transfer date of 1December 2014. Although there has been some delays associated with the complex nature of this transfer both parties have remained fully committed to making

this new partnership successfully work. FOBK have now opened their pet shop which is operating from the kennels and all proceeds will be re-invested in to improving the welfare of the dogs that come in to our care. FOBK have also invested in new vans, IT and communications which are ready for the 1 December 2014. Although the delayed transfer will reduce the savings that can be achieved in 2014-2015 this shortfall will be met from within budget. For 2015 onwards this new partnership will deliver a direct annual saving of £40,000 through the transfer of four staff and service responsibilities and provide opportunities to improve the welfare of the dogs at the kennels. The new arrangements will also manage out the existing uncontrollable overspends which are associated with the staffing budget.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Tony Smith
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Children And Family Services
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Julia Hassall, Director Of Children's Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. CHILDREN'S SPECIALIST SERVICES

Following a comprehensive case file audit programme during the summer, Children's Social Care is continuing to prioritise practice improvement. A new quality assurance framework has been launched which gives a clear structure to auditing within the service, and continuous learning. A two day external review of Social Work assessments was undertaken in October. The quality of assessments was examined in detail alongside Managers and learning was taken from this process to help improve key areas.

Children's Social Care is being redesigned and proposals are being consulted upon. The redesign principles include a focus on: the child's journey and voice, the role and function of the manager including their oversight, decision making and accountability, team size, performance and practice and the interface with targeted services. As well as consultation with staff members, consultation with children and families is taking place.

2. WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Weekly LSCB bulletins continue to be sent out highlighting key developments and activities relating to safeguarding, to support professionals to enable Wirral's children and young people to feel safe and be safe. Posters illustrating learning from national / local serious case reviews are displayed in a range of settings.

The MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) has been fully operational since September 2014; a workshop in November reviewed progress, and made recommendations for further improvements in practice.

Continuous learning about how to detect, respond to and prevent child sexual exploitation (CSE) is taking place following national inspections and findings from reviews. Four briefings have taken place on Wirral's new practice guidance; the Leaders Board considered practice in October; training on CSE was delivered for members on 18 November and two workshops took place on 24 November with key professionals to challenge practice and further develop the work programme.

3. TARGETED SERVICES

The Early Years Service continues to prioritise and strengthen working arrangements, information sharing and practice improvements between the Council and key partners. Systems are now in place for Children's Centres to receive data on target groups of families, enabling a more focused approach to be taken to service delivery. Target Tracker, a web based system used in a lot of primary schools, has been procured to enable Children's Centres to track children's developmental progress.

A successful partnership with the Registry Office has now been forged. Registry Office staff now register families with Children's Centres when they register the birth of a baby, a pilot is being planned to offer a registry service for the registration of births in Seacombe Children's Centre once a week from 1st April 2015.

Jobcentre Plus and the Children's Centre staff have been working closely with a training provider to increase access to training and support for parents looking to return to the workplace. A successful pilot this summer is now being rolled out across Wirral, and Liverpool and Sefton. The training has also been made available to the existing volunteers, giving them a progression route into employment.

4. SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS

Following submission of a business case to Wirral Cabinet and to Cheshire West and Chester Executive during November, a decision to proceed with the development of a new joint company to deliver schools traded services has been approved. The services to be delivered by the new company include outdoor education, music services, specialist curriculum support and catering and cleaning. The next steps involve establishing a joint implementation team and preparing a plan that sets out the key priorities, timescales and tasks to be carried out.

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Stuart Whittingham
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Highways And Transport
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Smith, Head Of Environment & Regulation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. MAINTENANCE PROGRAMMES FOR 2014/15, INCLUDING THE POTHOLE REPAIR FUND

The highway maintenance part of the Council's Capital Programme is now completed with the exception of one scheme at Kings Parade, New Brighton which requires preparatory work to the surface this year ahead of surface treatment early in 2015/16, and a number of footway treatments which are underway.

The programme of pothole repairs is continuing with approximately 2,000 potholes having been filled already, and there are now four crews working; one in each of the four Constituency Areas. Details of the streets being treated and the numbers of pothole filled or to be filled have been published on the Council's website, and this will be updated in January when we submit our quarterly progress report to the Department for Transport (DfT).

2. HIGHWAY SERVICES CONTRACT

Contract performance targets have been successfully achieved for the second quarter of the year, and I am impressed that the level of complaints attributable to the term contractor's activity in the first six months has dropped from 38 last year, under the old contract, to 14 during the same period this year.

The contractor and ourselves have prepared well to deliver the highways winter gritting service, and with the contractor using the same driver resources used in the previous contract, familiarity with gritting routes, equipment and procedures with a few improvements to arrangements, has meant that the service has been as effective as in recent years. The construction of the new salt storage dome at the Cleveland Street depot is progressing and should be available for operations from February 2015.

3. MAJOR SCHEME SUBMISSION – DOCK BRIDGES

The technical appraisals and outline business case for the replacement of two of the Docks Bridges are now complete, and recommendations have been made to the Board of our key partner, Peel Ports, and a report will be presented to my Cabinet colleagues at our meeting on 15 January 2015, in order to approve the recommended option and the Council's funding contribution to the project, prior to the submission of the full Major Scheme Business Case to the approval body in May 2015.

4. LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND

Merseytravel are to report to partners, including ourselves, in the near future regarding their proposals for an LSTF revenue programme for 2015/16. Although the Liverpool City Region (LCR) bid to the DfT was unsuccessful, the ambition is to continue to operate an LSTF revenue programme throughout Merseyside using the £1.6m contingency fund which was provided across the lifetime of the LSTF project, as well as any underspend which is returned from partner authorities. Given the success of the Wirral element of the programme I am keen that we maintain an active role in any 2015/16 programmes to maximise benefits for Wirral residents.

5. LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH DEAL

Wirral have recently submitted a programme of schemes as part of the Sustainable Transport Enhancements Programme (STEP). £13.8m of funding is available for the first 2 years of the 6 year growth deal, with £41.4m available to the Liverpool City Region over the entire programme. Partner authorities have submitted detailed programmes for the first 2 years and indicative programmes for the latter 4 years.

Wirral have submitted schemes totalling £1.7m out of the £13.8m available for the first 2 years and overall, partner authorities have requested £19m of funding against the £13.8m. Merseytravel will be carrying out a prioritisation exercise to evaluate the cost benefits of the proposals prior to reporting their recommendations to the Local Enterprise Partnership.

6. STREET LIGHTING STRATEGY DELIVERY

The project to convert almost 7,000 of Wirral's higher energy burning street lights to LED lanterns with remote monitoring capability is now underway. Specialist support to assist in developing the £4.3 m value project specifications have been appointed, and I am also pleased that the Council has secured an interest free loan of almost £2.5 m for the project, which will reduce the revenue budget impact of repaying the capital borrowing by approximately £100,000k. The project is expected to be carried out, and completed, within 2015/16.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING 08 DECEMBER 2014

SUBJECT:	Policy and Performance Committee Chairs' Reports
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	Policy and Performance Committee Chairs
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Ann McLachlan (Governance & Improvement)
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Members of the Council with an update on the work carried out by the Policy and Performance Committees. The report includes contributions from each of the Committee Chairs. Members of Council are requested to note the contents of this report.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Policy and Performance Committees were established as part of the constitutional changes agreed by Council on 30 April 2013. There are three committees aligned to the Council's Directorates and a fourth Coordinating Committee which is responsible for corporate oversight and call-ins.

2.2 The committees are responsible for discharging the Council's scrutiny function. Formal meetings include performance management, budget monitoring and policy updates as standing items. Each committee has also developed a work programme which includes a combination of officer reports and scrutiny reviews conducted by smaller groups of committee members.

3.0 COORDINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT

3.1 There has not been a regular meeting of the Coordinating Committee since the last Council meeting. A decision was made during the last committee cycle to move the Coordinating Committee meeting to the end of the Policy and Performance committees, rather than hold it at the beginning. This will enable the Coordinating Committee to better reflect on the work of all committees.

3.2 There have been meetings concerned with the call-in of a decision on Early Years provision and the future of Children's Centres. The committee met and then re-convened to hold the hearing on 12th Nov. Over this year it has been difficult to accommodate all the requested call-in hearings within the agreed time limit and I think this is something which will need to be addressed when the review of the constitution takes place.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin

4.0 FAMILIES & WELLBEING CHAIR'S REPORT

- 4.1 The Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance committee agreed to establish a task and finish panel to look in detail at the Future Council proposals which fall within the remit of the committee. During September and October, the Panel met on six occasions to progress this review, with three sessions taking place in locations involved in the proposals.
- 4.2 It was testing to complete the work within the tight timescale, but this was achieved. I would like to thank all members, officers and staff who gave up their time to support the work and the Scrutiny Support Officer Alan Veitch who facilitated the work with his usual efficiency. As a result of the work a report was compiled by the panel, submitted and debated by the full committee, before it was referred to Cabinet for consideration.
- 4.3 In addition, we have held a meeting of the newly established Health and Care Performance Panel at which we followed up the recommendations that were made in our report into standards at Wirral University Teaching Hospital. At the next meeting of the Panel, we will follow up on our report on standards in care homes.
- 4.4 At the next Attainment Sub-group, we have agreed to address the theme of Early Years provision as well as monitoring school performance.
- 4.5 Cllr Clements and I have been attending a series of Joint Scrutiny meetings across the Cheshire and Merseyside authorities to look at the proposals for future delivery of care by Clatterbridge Cancer Centre. A verbal update will be provided to the next committee meeting in December.
- 4.6 The Vice-chair, spokespersons and myself have agreed to work with officers to identify areas that would benefit from pre-decision scrutiny and so develop the future agenda of the committee.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin

5.0 REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENT CHAIR'S REPORT

- 5.1 Since the last meeting of Council, we have been busy reviewing the budget proposals for 2015/16. Of the seventeen budget proposals out for consultation, eleven are from the Regeneration and Environment Directorate. The review panel chose to prioritise six options for more detailed examination based on the level of saving being proposed, the anticipated level of public interest and the impact of the saving if delivered.
- 5.2 A series of question and answer sessions provided the review panel with the opportunity to meet the key officers behind the proposals. It was clear from these sessions that due to year on year rounds of saving proposals and budget consultations, it is harder for officers to put forward cost savings without a significant impact on service provision.
- 5.3 The results of this exercise were reported to Committee on 4th November and this report and the outcome of discussions were referred on to Cabinet scheduled for 9th December. I would like to thank the officers involved and the Members of the review panel for their input into this scrutiny process which has

provided Members with an opportunity to contribute and highlight any concerns in advance of decisions being taken.

5.4 In terms of the work programme, the Committee is receiving a number of reports at its December and February meetings as the basis for considering potential task and finish work in the New Year. These include:

- Monitoring the highways contract
- Review of street cleansing performance
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Work Programme
- Dangerous dogs
- Investing in Wirral's infrastructure.

Councillor Mike Sullivan

6.0 TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES CHAIR'S REPORT

6.1 The Committee has met once since last Full Council. The main purpose of this meeting was to discuss the reports produced following two separate Task and Finish panels, looking at budget options for Community Libraries and Over Seventies Council Tax Discount. As Chair I felt that the task and finish panels worked in a consensual and productive way and I am proud of the scrutiny work produced for both Budget Options.

6.2 The Task and Finish panel's findings were presented to Committee on 5 November 2014 as follows:

- Community libraries – it was recommended by the majority of the panel that local consultation should be carried out to determine preferred opening arrangements with Constituency Committees also having a role in deciding on the future of libraries in their area.
- Over 70s Council Tax discount – it was acknowledged that Wirral is the only Council still operating this scheme and if it is discontinued, consideration should be given to how the impact can be mitigated on those affected.

6.3 There are a number of items included in the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. The Committee has requested a report on Council Tax debts and Sundry Debtors and this is scheduled for February 2015. The report will detail what the Council does in terms of collection and debt recovery, including details on fair debt arrangements. An officer report on the development of the Council's ICT Strategy (currently being refreshed) is also due to be presented to Committee in February. The Committee has also requested a report in the New Year on the further implementation of the Future Council project. A task and finish review of the Council's approach to implementing guidance around the filming of committee meetings is scheduled for the New Year.

6.4 I would like thank all the Committee members for their participation and input and look forward to continuing our work together in the future.

Councillor Janette Williamson

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 N/A

8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 N/A

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 N/A

10.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

10.1 N/A

11.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

11.1 N/A

12.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

12.1 N/A

13.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 N/A

14.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality? (c) No because of another reason which is:
The report is for information to Members and there are no direct equalities implications.

15.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 N/A

16.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 N/A

17.0 RECOMMENDATION

17.1 Members are requested to consider the contents of this report and whether they have any questions for the Chairs of the Policy and Performance Committees.

18.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

18.1 To update Members on the progress with Policy and Performance Committees.

REPORT AUTHOR: Michael Callon
Transformation and Resources
telephone (0151) 691 8379
email michaelcallon@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council – Revisions to the Constitution	30/04/13
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	14/10/13
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	16/12/13
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	10/03/14
Scrutiny Annual Report to Council	14/07/14
Council – Reports from Policy and Performance Committee Chairs	20/10/14

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

27 NOVEMBER 2014

SUBJECT:	CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2016
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with a refreshed Corporate Plan for the period 2015-2016 for consideration and referral to the Policy meeting of Full Council on 8 December 2014.
- 1.2 The Corporate Plan for 2013-2016 was agreed by Council on 5 March 2013 following extensive consultation with residents, partners and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 The Corporate Plan provides the organisation with a clear vision, set of priorities and is the basis upon which a performance framework will be developed to monitor progress towards the defined objectives. The report further contains the current financial position of the organisation for the same period.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan is the key policy document of the Council and as such provides a robust approach to the Council's business planning; ensuring that the Council's vision, priorities and spending decisions are based on sound evidence, thorough analysis and understanding of community needs.
- 2.2 The plan clearly articulates the ambition for the organisation and borough, and provides a framework for the achievement of a series of priorities designed to drive further improvement at all levels of the organisation.
- 2.3 The priorities contained within the Corporate Plan will be underpinned and supported towards delivery through the development and implementation of directorate plans and subject to regular and robust monitoring.
- 2.4 A performance management framework is in place for the three year corporate plan which allows information about services and outcome for Wirral residents

to be reported so that we can make decisions about the best use of our resources.

- 2.5 Directorate plans will be developed following the approval of the updated Corporate Plan for 2015-16 and the performance management framework will be updated to reflect revised measures and targets. The Corporate Plan and directorate plans will be robustly performance monitored and managed by officers and reported to Cabinet and the appropriate policy and performance committees on a regular basis.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The Corporate Risk Register will be completed in line with the new Corporate Plan to ensure that any risks to delivering the objectives are understood and mitigating actions are put in place as appropriate.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 As outlined, the Corporate Plan is the organisation's key policy document and drives all other business planning processes and is therefore vital for the Council's development in the coming year. Therefore no other options were considered.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The content of the Corporate Plan 2013-2016 was subject to extensive consultation with residents, partners, staff and other stakeholders throughout 2012.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

- 6.1 None arising as a direct result of this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 The Corporate Plan makes reference to working closely with voluntary, community and faith groups for the benefit of Wirral residents and communities and this partnership approach will continue to be a key priority for the Council.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 8.1 The Corporate Plan is designed to inform the budget setting process for the coming financial year.
- 8.2 Specific financial implications are set out in the financial position which accompanies the Corporate Plan.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Legal implications relating to the actions set out in the Corporate Plan will be addressed by directorates as appropriate.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Yes.

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/chief-executives>

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None arising as a direct result of this report.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None arising as a direct result of this report.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 Cabinet are requested to consider the contents of the Corporate Plan and Financial Position Statement as provided as appendices to this report and refer to the Policy meeting of Full Council on 8 December 2014.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 The Council is required to produce a Corporate Plan which provides a robust approach to the Council's business planning; ensuring that our vision, priorities and spending decisions are based on sound evidence, thorough analysis and understanding of community needs.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan 2015-2016

Appendix 2 – Financial position

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Cabinet Meeting	Date
Corporate Plan 2014-16	02/12/13
Corporate Plan 2013-16	18/02/13

This page is intentionally left blank

Corporate Plan: Refreshed for 2015-16



OUR PLACE

Wirral is a unique place, home to a growing population of over 320,000 people, including 196,300 people of working age and over 8,755 businesses providing employment for 94,500 people. The Wirral peninsula extends to 60 square miles, with 25 miles of coastline. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty, packed full of spectacular scenery, with a rich mixture of culture and heritage.

Strategically located between the economic centres of Liverpool and Chester, Wirral benefits from an infrastructure that presents significant opportunities for development.

Wirral has many examples of excellent housing, schools and a high quality environment; however there are unacceptable levels of inequality which exist within the borough, particularly in relation to life expectancies.

There is a strong contrast between the East and West of the borough. Wirral's neighbourhoods range from some of the most deprived in the country, around St James Church in Bidston, to one of the most affluent, or least deprived, in South West Heswall less than six miles away. 23 areas in Wirral fall into the highest 3% in England in terms of levels of child poverty, with a total of 57 areas in the highest 20%. This results in serious quality of life issues and health inequalities, including a completely unacceptable difference in life expectancy of up to 10 years for females and 12.4 years for males depending on where a person lives in Wirral.

A combination of low income and poorer property standards have resulted in households in Wallasey and Birkenhead having the highest rates of fuel poverty in Wirral. The affordability of housing in the borough will also need to be addressed to narrow the inequality gap for individuals who are unable to take that first step on the housing ladder.

Population projections have identified that Wirral's demographic will alter considerably by 2033, with those aged 65 and above expected to increase by 24,600 people, to almost a third of the local population. The rise in the number of older people over the next two decades will force Wirral to adapt to new challenges.

25

MILES OF
COASTLINE

60

SQ MILES

8,755

BUSINESSES

94,500

JOBS

320,000

PEOPLE

LEADER'S FOREWORD



This is a time to be excited about the future of Wirral.

Despite the unparalleled financial challenges before us, we have huge opportunities at our finger tips. Over the coming year we will overcome our challenges and we will grasp those opportunities. This Corporate Plan sets out how we will do it.

Over the past two years we have achieved a great deal together. Wirral Council's response to previous challenges and the scale of our improvement has been hailed as the fastest turnaround of any Council in the country, and has been championed by the Local Government Association as an example of best practice. Our progress is also reflected in our recent external audit report which highlights that significant progress has been made and confirms that we now have appropriate arrangements in place to manage our financial risks and challenges.

We can now look forward together with a renewed and justified confidence that we can continue to improve our services and also our residents' quality of life. Wirral's communities are its strongest asset

- they are vibrant, engaged and vital to the future of this borough. Crucially, we will seek to work with local people in decision making and service design and delivery.

Due to the Governments's continued austerity policies, our budget challenge remains extremely serious. Despite making savings of £151 million since 2010 we still require further savings in the region of £70 million before 2018, including £18 million this coming year.

It is an inescapable fact that, by 2017, our Government grant will have reduced by 57%. A reduction in funding of that magnitude means we have to radically transform the Council on an unprecedented scale. We have to change the way we deliver our services - critically evaluating everything we do and finding new, innovative solutions with our partners and communities.

We will continue to uphold and deliver on our pledge to reduce the running costs of this Council, including continuing to streamline our services, reducing bureaucracy and management costs. This includes investing in IT systems; a complete reshaping of our administrative and process-based work, enabling further work to evaluate the most appropriate way to provide services in future. Centralised, targeted new functions will cover income and debt, governance and compliance and commercialisation and change.

Our commitment to deliver more efficient but high quality services is also illustrated by our investment in new technology to provide LED Street Lighting. Cheaper to operate, better for the environment

and, crucially, brighter – this investment will see long term savings in this area without switching off the street lights on the borough’s highways.

Our priorities are clear – protecting the vulnerable, reducing health inequalities and driving economic growth. We will never invest diminishing resources in unnecessary bureaucracy when that money could be better spent on protecting the front line services which are working towards those vital goals. Our commitment to these priorities is evident in some of the flagship policies that we have supported over the last year, including:

- Supporting hardworking local residents by freezing Council Tax
- New investment in affordable housing
- Continuing to grow our economy and reduce unemployment through the Reachout employment project & our Health Related Worklessness Programme
- Attracting significant international support and investment through this year’s extremely successful Open Golf Championship – with a total economic benefit of around £76.3m to Wirral and the wider economy of the North West
- Offering support to Wirral’s most vulnerable residents who are impacted by the Government’s welfare reforms.

In spite of the budget cuts which continue to be imposed upon us, we will strive to address the absolutely unacceptable levels of inequality that exist within Wirral. I am determined that we must never, and will never, lose focus on our commitment to do all we can to tackle the disparities that exist

– in particular in terms of economic achievement, child poverty and aspiration and improving people’s health and well being. I am proud that Wirral Council pays the ‘Living Wage’ and I am determined to extend this commitment to our contractors and Wirral employers to enable Wirral to become a ‘Living Wage’ borough.

Our ambitious, but achievable, plans to grow our economy underline the importance of how we must punch above our weight on a regional and national level. As Chair of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, I have worked hard to ensure that Wirral plays a key role in working with the other local authorities in the North West to drive forward economic growth and support for the entire North of England.

Using our influence in the region, we will continue to promote Wirral’s interests, and build a strong case for why we should have greater devolved powers, budgets and decision making from Westminster.

These are challenging times for all of us, councillors, staff and communities, but together I am confident that we can continue to make excellent progress towards a better, healthier and fairer Wirral for all our residents. This Corporate Plan provides the blueprint for the next stage in our work towards becoming an excellent council.



Cllr. Phil Davies, Leader of the Council.

OUR VISION

This refreshed Corporate Plan will provide the framework to enable a robust approach to the Council's business planning; ensuring that our vision, priorities and spending decisions are based on sound evidence, thorough analysis and understanding of community needs. Crucially, it will ensure that the priorities identified in the Corporate Plan will be underpinned by a sustainable budget for the final year of the plan and can be delivered within resources available to us. We pledge to support the vision and serve our residents, by further improving our organisation and becoming the outstanding Council that the people of Wirral deserve.

Our priorities are situated at the heart of our Corporate Plan vision and are underpinned and updated in accordance with our continuous and extensive consultations with local residents:



PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE IN OUR BOROUGH

It is of the utmost importance that we safeguard our vulnerable people and deliver our services with empathy at all times. By working together across the Council and agency boundaries, we will ensure that our systems and procedures are designed, so that we can promptly identify and mitigate problems before they develop.



DRIVING GROWTH IN OUR ECONOMY

Through our desire for economic growth, we will continue to seize the unprecedented opportunities that are within our grasp and will continue to capitalise on exciting regeneration projects, which will transform our economy and promote Wirral as a borough where businesses prosper.



TACKLE HEALTH INEQUALITIES

To reduce the levels of child poverty and tackle the health inequalities that exist in our communities, we will embrace our Council's leadership role on the public health agenda.

Our vision is:

“Wirral will be a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, where employers want to invest and local businesses thrive, and where good health and an excellent quality of life is within the reach of everyone who lives here”

OUR APPROACH

Wirral Council will be one organisation working in collaboration with our partners wherever we can. At all times we will be focussed on outcomes for residents and not on organisational distinctions. We are committed to learning from past mistakes and will continue to identify and deal with issues in a prompt and effective manner, so that they are not repeated in the future.

The Council continues to make strong progress to improve and transform every aspect of its operation; from corporate governance arrangements and service delivery models to organisational design.

We have received positive external feedback that we remain on the right track and have put in place a strong foundation to achieve financial stability and respond to the challenging financial situation that local government continues to face.

The framework set out in this Plan is designed to further drive improvements in our services and how

we operate to ensure that we are a Council that works efficiently and effectively.

Using our role as the leader of public services in the borough, the Council will work with our partners and residents to ensure that these principles support and drive a change in relationship between the Council and residents. Rising demand for many of our services including social care, housing and debt advice, combined with the scale of reductions to our budget, is forcing us all to re-evaluate the way we do business.

We will continue to strengthen our public health role and shape services to meet local needs, tackle inequalities and influence the many factors that affect our residents health and well being. We will take an evidence-based approach to improving public health and protecting our residents to ensure that we create the right environment for healthy lifestyles. There is a good evidence base that shows how Council services can have a positive impact on





health. This highlights the importance of healthy places and healthy people who are able to take advantage of opportunities arising from education and employment.

We will support children to have the best start in life and target the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their families with intensive support. We will work with schools to ensure that pupils have access to a safe, healthy school environment where they can achieve the best educational outcomes and where schools promote healthy behaviours.

We will help people find good jobs and stay in work and ensure they have access to safe travel. We will deliver on a range of housing initiatives to achieve warmer and safer homes for our residents which will help tackle respiratory illnesses and prevent accidents in the home

We will ensure that our residents have access to green and open spaces and leisure services that support behaviour changes and encourage active lifestyles.

We will demonstrate strong civic and community leadership through a strengthened role for local members. We will build on the assets already in our communities and ensure local residents are empowered to take a leading role in tackling issues in their communities. Innovative approaches to services that are delivered in partnership with citizens are essential.

We must significantly reconfigure our business and organisational arrangements over the next three years in order to continue to provide services that are good value for money. Where appropriate, we will adopt a business - focussed approach to generating income and explore all opportunities to deliver our services differently.

Changing the way we work will ensure that even in times of unprecedented financial challenges we are able to prioritise the safety of our most vulnerable residents, through seeking new and innovative ways of providing services, and through capitalising on the huge opportunities for economic development which are within our grasp. In this way we will ensure that where you live is never a barrier to having and achieving high ambitions and enjoying an excellent quality of life.



WORKING TOGETHER

We recognise that, at a time of rapidly diminishing resources from central government, we must prioritise our efforts and make tough choices to ensure a sound financial base. While doing this we will never compromise our ambitions for Wirral and everyone who lives here - regardless of how strong their voices are.

We will do nothing alone that we could not deliver more efficiently and effectively with others and we will integrate our services wherever possible if it will improve standards for residents. Most importantly, we will capitalise on Wirral's strong physical, economic and community assets to ensure a positive legacy and a better future for this generation and the next.

We will be an inclusive Council, valuing the principles of equality and diversity in all we do. Our workforce is our most important asset and we will ensure that our organisational values of integrity, efficiency, confidence and ambition shape how the Council delivers services to Wirral residents.

We have implemented our Neighbourhood Working programme in the borough, and will



continue to develop this approach, empowering our Members, as community leaders, to use devolved powers and responsibilities to secure value for money from the public resources in their areas.

Our aim is to inspire local people to come together and find the right solutions to the issues and challenges in their local communities. This approach will not just deliver more cost effective services; it will deliver better outcomes for local residents.

The Wirral Public Service Board is well established to drive this work forward. The Board brings together senior representatives from Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue, Wirral Metropolitan College, Job Centre Plus, Health organisations and Magenta Living.

The Board aims to bring together the public sector to join up services to make them better for residents and to make the best use of resources. This important work will help to tackle the stark health inequalities that exist within Wirral.

We are working closely with partners and colleagues on the Health and Wellbeing Board to transform health and social care. The intention is to re-shape health services and social care in Wirral, whilst supporting people to take more responsibility for looking after their own health.

We are working closely with the other local Councils across Merseyside, and playing a key role in major partnership developments including the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. One of the aims of the Combined Authority is to gain more powers and funding from Government so we can attract more jobs and investment. The Combined Authority is already seeing successes and greater strategic working across the key themes to join up decision making across Transport, Logistics, Economic Growth and Skills.

The following sections outline what we will deliver during 2015-16 through working closely in partnership with key stakeholders and most importantly our communities.

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

We will continue to provide a clear leadership role within the City Region and Combined Authority and use this role to lobby for Wirral at a regional and national level. We will help to drive continued economic growth in Wirral's economy, prioritising job creation and skills by capitalising on our unique strengths, particularly in green technologies.

We recognise that it is vitally important to Wirral that the Council should be successful in driving local, regional and national economic growth. Wirral's ambitious aims for the economy underline the importance of how we must continue to punch our weight on a regional and national level.

We believe that there is a central role for Wirral and the Combined Authority in contributing to the national debate and discussion for greater devolution from the Government. Devolved budgets, resources and political powers will help to tackle entrenched problems of unemployment and poor skills; to secure better transport and rail infrastructure; and to harness our significant economic assets to create a Northern economy that can be truly competitive on a global scale.

Wirral's local environment and the economy are arguably the two biggest factors in driving the quality of life, health and levels of achievement for our residents. Every year, the Council invests huge resources in both maintaining and improving the local environment, and in stimulating the local economy – through helping our local businesses to succeed and expand, and encouraging businesses to start up or relocate in Wirral.

We will deliver on our transport schemes as part of the city region growth deal and maximise our future opportunities to strengthen Wirral's transport infrastructure and access to employment opportunities. We are determined that Wirral will be a place where businesses flourish and people have access to good jobs, and quality, affordable homes in a safe and clean environment.

Wirral's economy today has a total value of around £3.4 billion per year and is home to many international

businesses. Our tourism economy is now worth over £327 million, attracting over 7 million visitors each year, and increasing annually due to borough-wide investment and international marketing. We are at the forefront of developing significant projects in the borough which will drive further investment and increase jobs.

We have a strong track record in securing opportunities for investment in key growth sectors such as the offshore wind energy industry, low carbon economy, advanced engineering, technology and manufacturing services and in particular the automotive supply chain.

Wirral continues to play a key role with our Liverpool City Region partners in tackling youth unemployment. The City Region recently received the largest allocation across all City Deal areas, to deliver an employment support programme with an additional flexible budget to support young people into employment. We will inspire our young people to grasp these opportunities, helping to reduce poverty and securing a healthier economic future for all.

Growing our economy and reducing unemployment continues to be a key priority for us and our partners. Wirral has made significant progress in reducing worklessness in the borough, however current levels exceed regional and national averages with a significant majority attributable to residents with a health condition; specifically mental health. A number of activities aim to address this, including our Health Related Worklessness Programme, which is one of a suite of Government's Transforming Public Services Projects led by Wirral's Public Service Board.

We are extending our current worklessness support contract, so that we can continue to tackle unemployment. This has been made possible by using some funding from the Council's public health grant, recognising the role that public health can play in tackling inequalities and the many factors that affect our resident's health and well-being.

Economic regeneration continues to be a key priority for us. The successful New Brighton Marine Point development continues to go from strength to strength,

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

with current work moving it into its next phase. We are building on the revitalisation of Birkenhead Park to celebrate its distinction as the world's first publicly funded park and a major influence on the design of Central Park, New York. The two parks are closely linked, with good partnerships being established, and a number of exchange visits taking place.

During the coming year we will progress plans for the redevelopment of Birkenhead Town Centre. The key objective of these proposals is to enable the Town to re-establish itself as a principal retail destination for Wirral residents, and to increase the town's food and leisure offer.

Our regeneration projects are underway and will transform our economy, and our physical landscape and location are the envy of the country – proven by the numbers of visitors to Wirral rising at a faster rate than anywhere in the North West.

Wirral has a wealth of green and open spaces, and we are proud of our diverse range of historic parks, open spaces, coast and countryside sites. We have recently agreed our Parks and Open Space Strategy, following extensive consultation with our residents and partners. Our new Strategy sets out how, with input from staff, volunteers, Friends groups and other partners, Wirral's parks and open spaces will be well managed and provide a wide range of positive activities, supporting good health, improved life chances and an excellent quality of life, within reach of everyone who lives in or visits Wirral.

We are also transforming the way we deliver services at the most fundamental level – giving every Wirral community, every resident and every group the opportunity to almost design their own Council, in their own street. We will continue to transform our neighbourhoods through the development of quality mixed tenure housing schemes and protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents through targeted housing services.

Our approach to Neighbourhood Working continues to be integral to the design of our services and will enable

residents to direct Council funding and resources in their own community towards the areas that matter most to them.

This year, we will:

- Continue to deliver Wirral's ambitious investment strategy, focussing on key sectors and investments to drive economic growth within the borough
- Continue to develop, support and encourage the creation and accessibility of jobs through providing a supporting and enabling environment. There will be a specific focus, working with our partners on health related worklessness to support access to skills and employment
- Progress the plans with our partners to reinvigorate Birkenhead Town Centre through a comprehensive redevelopment programme
- Continue to grow Wirral's economy by working with and supporting businesses and creating environments and opportunities where the private sector wants to invest
- Continue to encourage and attract investment into Wirral by securing resources to support the delivery of key infrastructure that will enable the creation of jobs and unlock the substantial potential for economic growth
- Continue the development of a selective licensing scheme to drive up standards in the private rented sector
- Enable vulnerable people to achieve greater independence, quality of life and integration through the development, provision and continued funding and monitoring of supported housing services
- Prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, through early intervention and effective collaboration, thereby improving housing outcomes for Wirral's most vulnerable people

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE

The challenges we are facing, both in a financial and demographic sense, mean that we must change, we must adapt, and we must innovate to ensure that we continue to deliver services which are relevant to those who need them.

We have an ageing population, and more vulnerable adults needing our help. We have more children and young people needing our support, and we have growing levels of child poverty.

At the same time, the aspirations of the people we work with are, quite rightly, rising – as are their expectations of us. However, we have less money than ever to support them. Our challenges are clear – they are significant, but not unachievable.

Against these challenges the new Care Act will fundamentally change Adult Social Care Law and demand from 2015. The legislation places a duty on local authorities to promote a whole system approach, commissioning services co-productively with stakeholders. It also means commissioning for the care and support needs of the whole population to use resources to their best effect. We have made substantial progress to deliver our improvement plans for children's and adult social services to ensure that we have robust arrangements in place to manage our resources and transform services. We are working closely with our partners to meet shared objectives, including implementing new models to deliver services such as social enterprises and services provided from non-traditional settings. These new ways of delivering our services will make greater use of our community assets and delivering more support to people in their homes.

We will continue to fulfil our duties to safeguard those who are most vulnerable whilst targeting the resources we have to ensure we achieve maximum value for the Wirral pound. We recognise that our partners and communities also have an important part to play in the safeguarding and prevention of abuse.

We will provide clear and committed leadership, to effectively tackle child sexual exploitation and ensure that safeguarding professionals work together to provide a multi-agency response to identify and support all young people identified as being at risk of harm. The development of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub will also significantly improve intelligence gathering across partner agencies and the sharing of information to protect children and young people. Wirral's Safeguarding Children's Board plays a key role through their coordination and monitoring of multi-agency safeguarding activity.

We will also strengthen our safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable adults and ensure that a multi-agency approach is adopted to ensure that a wide range of agencies, services and people work together to safeguard adults at risk. The Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board will have statutory status from April 2015 and will continue to play an important role to coordinate safeguarding activity and seeks to ensure that all adults at risk in Wirral are able to live free from the fear of abuse, neglect, harm and exploitation.

We will continue to work with our partners and voluntary, community and faith organisations to further tackle child poverty and reduce the developmental gap that currently exists within parts of Wirral. In Birkenhead, The Foundation Years project is working closely with parents, families and partners within early years services to provide appropriate resources and training to ensure that children in this area have the best start in life; there are other excellent examples of innovative projects across Wirral that are having a real impact on child poverty in our communities.

We will continually adapt and find innovative solutions to make certain the financial restraints being placed on the Council do not impact on our residents' ability to live full lives and achieve their aspirations.

To do this we must adopt a new way of thinking – working with and supporting individuals and communities to become more resilient, thereby

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

reducing dependency, tackling loneliness and social isolation and supporting mental health and wellbeing. This will require residents, people using our services and also our workforce to think and work differently.

We will also shift our focus – away from professions and organisations and onto residents and communities. This means we will involve people who use our services in the design, delivery, commissioning and evaluation of the services they use.

We will put more emphasis on early intervention in order to reduce spending on crisis situations. We will utilise the Better Care Fund to continue to work with our partners in the NHS to integrate health and social care in a way which looks at the ‘whole person’ as opposed to individual elements of an individual’s care needs.

This will provide improved outcomes and experiences for individuals and communities, and will implement preventative and early intervention strategies to help care for people at home or in the community, without them having to rely on long or short-term care placements.

Our Vision 2018 approach will transform GP, primary care, community health, hospital and social care services in Wirral. It will mean:

- Community based health services operating seven days a week, including access to GPs, community nurses and social workers
- More hospital services in the community, with consultant led teams
- Health and social care professionals working together for people with ongoing needs: one assessment, one care plan, one key coordinator
- Specialist in-patient hospitalcare for those who need it
- Support for people to look after themselves and stay healthy

We will continue to focus on the redesign of our early intervention services for children, young

people and their families. We will continue to learn the valuable lessons from the intensive family intervention programme to ensure that we provide effective support to those most in need.

We will continue to work closely with schools and ensure that we work in partnership to deliver our priorities within available resources and achieve the best outcomes for our children and young people.

We will work with a range of partners from the public, private and voluntary and community sector to deliver the proposals for a new Youth Zone in Birkenhead. This will provide a state-of-the-art facility offering a variety of specialist and inclusive activities for young people throughout Wirral. We will also continue to target resources to provide a range of outreach support services to those who most need our support.

We will strive to ensure all residents, especially the most vulnerable, are given the tools to enable them to make the choices that are right for them and their families. We believe this will help to deliver healthier and happier outcomes for those who need our help the most.

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

This year, we will:

- Ensure that our safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable children and adults continue to strengthen
- Focus on our children and families, with partners, to ensure that children are ready for school; young people are ready for work and adult life and that children and young people feel safe and are safe.
- Transform our approach to Early Years and Children's Centres delivery
- Implement and embed our new model of delivery for children's social care, with an emphasis on the child's journey
- Review and reposition the Council's relationship with schools to ensure priorities are delivered, including closing the attainment gap
- Create a community interest company with Cheshire West and Chester Council to deliver sustainable services to schools and ensure resources are used effectively
- Implement our proposals to establish a local authority trading company for adult disability services
- Implement a new model for an all age disability service for children, young people and adults
- Maximise our opportunities, utilising Better Care Fund, to ensure sustainable and improved outcomes for older and disabled residents whilst also achieving greater value for money
- Review the assessment process for adult social care to embed the new Care Act responsibilities
- Implement our health and social care integration plans with our health partners as part of the vision 2018 approach
- Continue to deliver our transformation programme for leisure services
- Implement a new model for our early intervention and prevention services to ensure we manage demand efficiently and community based care effectively

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

TRANSFORMING THE COUNCIL

The work of the Wirral Improvement Board was essential in providing external challenge and support to the Council. Since its withdrawal in November 2013, we have continued to demonstrate our ability to transform and improve our organisation in accordance with the lessons that we have learnt.

The Council's external auditor has confirmed that Wirral Council now has proper arrangements in place for 'securing financial resilience and challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.' The 2013-14 Value for Money assessment has concluded that improvements have been made across all areas, demonstrating significant progress compared to the 2012-13 report.

Significant improvements have been made to strengthen our corporate governance arrangements. The Council's constitution has been completely overhauled to significantly strengthen governance and accountability. The Council's contract procedure rules and financial regulations have also been revised to ensure transparent and robust arrangements are in place.

We will now implement our new strategic commissioning approach to ensure that we improve outcomes for our residents and invest our resources in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way possible.

We will continue to ensure that Wirral Council becomes more efficient and streamlined, removing unnecessary bureaucracy wherever it exists. Our corporate support functions are in the process of being completely transformed and improved to deliver effective support to services across the Council.

The majority of our back-office services are currently undergoing a major transformation. These services are ones which you, as a Wirral resident, rarely see but which are essential to the running of the organisation – things such as finance, IT, human resources and procurement. We will make these functions as efficient

as possible, and ensure that they provide the best value for money.

A similar approach is being adopted for our internal business support, which is being transformed to maximise efficiencies, through the establishment of a new 'Transaction Centre'. The development of our Transaction Centre will enable all administrative and processing activity to be centralised, enabling generic working, integration and flexibility amongst teams. This new way of working will reduce overheads, provide leaner management structures and lead to shared systems, ultimately resulting in reduced transaction costs.

We will continue to work with our partners to support residents who are impacted by the significant changes in Welfare Reform. This will include developing services in response to the introduction of Universal Credit.

We will ensure that our organisational values of integrity, confidence, ambition and efficiency are integral to the culture and operations of the Council. We will work hard to make sure that even with vastly reduced resources, our workforce remains as committed to public service as ever and our focus on delivering the very highest level of performance never wavers.

We will develop a culture of responsibility, accountability and pride across the whole of the Council. We will be a confident organisation that is risk aware rather than risk averse. We will reduce demand for services and increase community resilience by focussing on building upon the great assets that exist at the heart of all our communities.

We have continued to invest in the development of our staff and have introduced a new training and development programme, to enable both our Members and Officers to further embrace change and innovation to drive our organisation forward.

Our staff structures and organisational systems will be stable and designed to ensure that Wirral becomes an organisation that is focussed on identifying innovative solutions, with a workforce that operates flexibly, has the right skills and delivers what residents need.

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER IN 2015-16

This year, we will:

- Continue to transform our corporate support services ensuring effective and fit for purpose functions
- Maximise efficiencies and deliver savings through the establishment of a new 'transaction centre'
- Implement our new approach to strategic commissioning and review our procurement processes to ensure that our contracts are best practice and deliver value for money
- Develop a robust transformation programme to plan and deliver future savings and deal with our financial challenges in 2015-18
- Develop the ways in which residents access Council services to ensure they are cost efficient, effective and make the best use of technology
- Continue to improve our governance arrangements in order to strengthen the Council's decision making processes through our programme of member development
- Embed our organisational values and create a culture of leadership and accountability through the development of a new workforce strategy
- Continue to support our residents who are impacted by the changes in welfare reform and roll out of universal credit
- Implement our new asset management strategy to maximise savings and efficiencies



HOW WE WILL DELIVER THIS PLAN

A performance management framework is in place which includes measures and targets subject to regular and rigorous review. This will form the basis of robust performance management and monitoring arrangements for the next year. The delivery of the Corporate Plan will be supported by key strategic policy documents including the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Commissioning Strategy. The Council's three Strategic Directors will develop plans that underpin the Corporate Plan and set out in more detail how the activities identified within the plan will be delivered together with the agreed resources required.



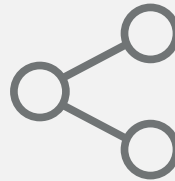
Delivering Differently:

For our services to remain efficient and effective, we must embrace alternative delivery models. Inevitably, we will commission more services than we provide in the future. This does not mean that we will simply 'outsource' services; we will remain committed to robustly assessing and evaluating the most appropriate and cost effective way of delivering our services. We will continue to utilise our influence to ensure that all of our partners and public services in the borough can work and develop together.



Income and Efficiency:

Every pound spent on bureaucracy and subsidies is a pound diverted from frontline services. To minimise this risk we will continue to streamline the way in which we operate and will aim to bring a commercial approach to the Council's businesses where it is appropriate.



Managing Demand:

We will seek to reduce the demand on specialist and costly Council services, by empowering and inspiring communities to improve their aspirations and be self-sufficient. We will continue to work in collaboration with our partners, such as the NHS, to ensure that the Council can make major savings through integrated services for people receiving support.



Customer Contact:

The Council spends millions every year on various forms of information, advice and guidance. To reduce the amount we spend, we will conduct a systematic review of all of our customer access channels, to enable us to focus on moving as many services as possible online, whilst also ensuring that we maintain face to face support for those who need it.



SUPPORTING PROGRAMMES



PEOPLE: Enabling the Council to define and deliver workforce requirements for the future; enabling people based change such as culture, up-skilling of staff and ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place.



TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION: Driving a strategic approach to the use of systems, data and information to support Council services.



ASSETS: Delivering the consolidated asset requirements of the services, enabling key service changes through the rationalisation and future proofing of the asset base.

This page is intentionally left blank

Corporate Plan: The Future Financial Position

1.0 Summary

The Corporate Plan provides an overview of Wirral's vision and priorities. The financial context is an essential component. It is imperative that the Council aligns resources available to the highest priority areas in the plan. It is also essential to demonstrate good financial management, understanding of the cost drivers and to adopt a risk-based approach to financial planning. This document provides an overview of the Council's financial position and the decisions that are required to ensure that the Council through its Corporate Plan makes the most of the financial resources available.

2.0 Introduction

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides an overview of the Council financial position and the strategy required to operate within the finance available. It provides the financial context to the Corporate Plan.

The Council sets a detailed budget for the forthcoming financial year but the annual process fits within financial plans for a longer timeframe to ensure decisions taken have due regard to future sustainability and are part of a more strategic approach to the future challenges. The Corporate Plan will operate within the financial environment relating to the period 2015/2018. Forecast net funding available over the 3 year period is £746 million against a current net spend forecast of £816 million. This is further broken down in Section 5.

The Council has already started to respond to a changing and challenging local government financial environment. This needs to continue and will impact on the shape and direction of the Council including the services it provides. This is recognised in the Corporate Plan. The MTFS provides the financial foundations to the Corporate Plan and highlights the resource constraints.

3.0 Background

The Council faces a difficult financial outlook. Reductions in central government funding (the main source of the Council's income) are expected to continue until at least 2017/18. There are also increasing financial demands to be met in the same timeframe. The Council will need to deal with an increasing budget deficit over the coming years if it does not take action to reduce expenditure or generate alternative sources of income.

For 2014/15 the overall net budget is just over £275 million and is forecast to reduce in the three year period to £239 million. These figures will be revised as decisions are taken with the current projection used to assist decision-making.

This update to the MTFS sets out how the Council will respond to the difficulties it faces whilst needing to prioritise resources to deliver the Corporate Plan.

4.0 2015/18 Financial Influences

The current MTFS covers the three year period 2014/17. It was agreed in February 2014 and sets out the anticipated levels of funding and financial pressures known at that time. This updated forecast to the MTFS takes into account changes that have been identified since February 2014 when the Council set its budget for 2014/15 and forecast for 2015/16 to 2016/17.

Forecasts of the Council's financial position over three years are kept under constant review as external circumstances change and decisions are taken. These are based on assumptions about inflation, financial pressures and levels of income such as Government grant.

The biggest influence on the Council's budget is the expected continuation of reductions in Government grant funding. Between 2010 and 2015 Government funding to local government will have been reduced by 33% in real terms. A further real terms reduction of 10% was confirmed in the most recent Spending Review which was in June 2013. There are no announced Government spending plans beyond 2016 but it is anticipated that austerity in public finances will continue for the medium term.

Provisional funding levels for 2015/16 and the announcement of the Spending Review demonstrate that further reductions in the Council's grant funding are going to take place. A reduction of 19% for 2015/16 is planned and if a similar level of reduction is repeated in 2016/17 and 2017/18 then the financial position of the Council will become even more challenging. In terms of income, the Council has limited ability to raise further income. The reduction in grants may be offset by the Council's share of any growth in real terms in business rate income and any growth in its Council Tax Base. However, it is important that unachievable income projections are not used to close real budget gaps.

Although costs have been contained the Council continues to face cost increases and unavoidable financial demands. The assumption is that inflation is absorbed within budgets and only specific contracts receive budgeted inflationary increases.

The inflationary challenges are one element of the financial pressures faced. The on-going rise in demand led pressures for example of an ageing population exacerbates the Council's financial position. There are also other unavoidable increases such as levy changes and pension increases over which the Council has little influence over the costs in some areas.

The Council will allocate its resources on its key corporate priorities. Our annual expenditure will be focused on those areas that are most important to us.

Our priorities for investment are as follows:

- Protecting the Vulnerable
- Tackling Health Inequalities
- Driving Growth in our Economy

In March 2014 the approved MTFs for 2014/17 reflected the financial projections for the Council based on the Spending Review 2013, indicative figures for 2015/16 and forecast the impact of further changes to local government finance in 2016/17. This forecast that the Council would have an overall deficit of £83 million for the period 2014/17.

The previous forecast gap has been updated for the Council's agreed budget saving options for 2014/17; from the updated assumptions for 2016/17 and the addition of the anticipated budget gap for 2017/18 to give a financial forecast for 2014/17. The revised position highlights a gap of £70 million for the period 2015/18.

Details	£m
Previous Forecast Funding Gap 2014/17	83
Less : Budget Savings Options 2014/17	41
Add : Revisions to Funding Gap 2015/18	28
Revised Forecast Funding Gap 2015/18	70

5.0 Overall Financial Projections

The analysis of all financial influences on the Council shows that the Council is facing a growing financial deficit from 2015/16 that is expected to reach £70 million by 2017/18.

	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	Total £m
Forecast Expenditure (including demographic changes)	275	277	264	816
Forecast Income (including reduced grants)	257	250	239	746
Funding Gap	18	27	25	70

6.0 2015/16 Financial Strategy

The Council MTFs 2014/17 outlined savings that led to a closing of the gap, moving closer to a balanced budget. The updated financial position builds on these efficiencies and savings in order to achieve the budget reductions required to balance the Council budget in 2015/16. This will lead the Council into a more radical refocusing of resources for the period 2016/17 to 2017/18.

The budget approach for 2014/15 followed a number of principles and the budget consultation has used a priority approach to assessed savings options under the following classification of savings:

- Being more efficient – Making sure that we deliver our services in the most cost effective way possible – streamlining processes, joining up our back office functions and not wasting money on administration that could be invested in services.
- Working together – working more in partnership with others in the public, community, voluntary and faith sectors, reducing duplication and delivering better outcomes for residents.
- Promoting Independence – moving away from the Council doing everything and instead encouraging self help and community empowerment and resilience.
- Targeting resources – we have to target our resources on those who need our help the most – this will mean cuts in some services – which we are trying to deliver in a way that is both fair and equitable.

The budget approach for 2015/16 has been focused on a series of changes to services without closing services that residents rely on. The following programmes have been used to classify and assess proposed savings:

Delivery Programmes

- Delivering Differently – Assessing the best means of delivering a service-choosing the most efficient and effective option.
- Managing Demand – Reducing demand and the costs of specialist, substantial services through empowering people and communities to help themselves.
- Income and Efficiency – By stopping subsidising chargeable services unless it helps up to meet another objective.
- Customer Contact – Moving Council customers away from expensive ways of contacting us and targeting those who need face to face support.

Support Programmes

- People – Enabling the Council to define and deliver workforce requirements for the future, enabling people based change such as culture, up-skilling of staff and ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place.
- Technology and Information – Driving a strategic approach to the use of systems, data and information to support Council Services.
- Assets – Delivering the consolidated asset requirements of the services, enabling key service changes through the rationalisation and future proofing of the asset base.

This prioritised approach reflects the priority of the Corporate Plan and the way we need to deliver services in the future.

7.0 2016/17-2017/18 Financial Strategy

The total financial resource of the authority and wider partners needs to be maximised, prioritised and channelled to the right areas and activities. All financial planning activity will be targeted towards ensuring that resources are matched to the priorities identified in the Corporate Plan, ensuring that statutory functions continue to be delivered and that enabling functions provide best value for money. Already the Council has examined and challenged the way services are delivered. It has looked for improvements in the effectiveness of services to produce savings. It has also challenged the methods of delivery and who delivers services to ensure that they are cost-effective and provide value for money.

The increasing deficit coupled with the ability of the Council to continue to get “the same for less” becomes increasingly difficult and the emphasis for future years will be on challenging services the Council continues to fund, integrating with partner organisations to get focus on the overall “public purse” and ensuring that efficient ways of working is at the heart of the organisation. Efficiencies alone will not resolve the funding gap. Difficult decisions on the range of services provided will need to be made and the Corporate Plan sets out the vision and framework for those decisions.

8.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 8.1 The financial challenge for the public sector is considerable. For Wirral Council this means a funding gap of £70 million over the next 3 years against an overall net expenditure of less than £240 million per annum.
- 8.2 The Council's resources will focus on protecting the vulnerable, tackling health inequalities and driving growth in the economy.
- 8.3 A step change in expectations on public funding is required to manage demand for services for a reducing level of finance and an increasingly older population with more complex needs.
- 8.4 The success of the Corporate Plan in this challenging financial context will depend on:
- A local approach to decisions and delivery; a more active community involvement; a return to communities finding their own solutions.
 - A focus on early help and prevention to support independence and reduce demand on the public purse in the longer term.
 - A focused and energetic approach to driving economic growth as the key to growing funding levels, improving well being and bringing individual and organisational financial stability and resilience.
- 8.5 The budget setting process for 2015/16 is the continuation of an ambitious realignment of resources and the financial strategy over the next two to three years will drive the prioritisation in order to achieve balanced budgets to best serve Wirral Council residents, communities and businesses.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

**CABINET
27 NOVEMBER 2014**

SUBJECT:	TRANSITIONAL PAY POLICY
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR: TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR A JONES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report recommends a change to the Council's Transitional Pay Policy.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to support employees through the financial impact of a reduction in their pay arising from the impact of organisational change or from the impact of other changes to their terms and conditions and pay.
- 1.3 The changes are recommended following a review of the policy in the context of significant organisational change and the consequent financial impact for some employees.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 It is good practice for Local Authorities and other large organisations to have policies in place to support organisational change and to mitigate any potential financial impact of change on employees.
- 2.2 The Council's Transitional pay policy is not designed protect an employee's previous level of pay. Its purpose is to support an employee through the financial impact of a reduction in their pay.
- 2.3 The policy is applied where employees are facing a reduction in salary through:
 - Redeployment or a move to a suitable alternative role following organisational change and restructuring.
 - Changes to employee terms and conditions.
 - Redeployment into lower graded post for medical/health reasons.
- 2.4 The current policy was agreed in November 2010. It provides a transition to a new role and/or grade and subsequent reduction in contractual pay for one year to a maximum protection of £2,000. This is applied on a pro-rata basis.
- 2.5 Since November 2010, 240 Council employees have received Transitional Pay.

- 2.6 It is appropriate that the Council's transitional pay policy meets the requirements of the organisation in a rapidly changing context.
- 2.7 The Council is currently consulting staff and Trade Unions on achieving £9.4m savings through remodelling of the workforce which was agreed by Council for 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 2.8 As an outcome of the remodelling work there is an impact on a number of staff which may lead to a reduction in their pay. Whilst the numbers of employees affected in organisational terms (approx 158 at this stage) is not high, the impact on some individual employees may be significant.
- 2.9 The terms of the policy have therefore been reviewed to ensure the policy continues to be reasonable and proportionate.
- 2.10 It proposed to amend the terms of the Transitional Pay policy to the following:
- £4,000 or 75% of the contractual pay loss, whichever is the greater, for a period of 12 months (applied on a pro-rata basis).**
- 2.11 The policy will be monitored and kept under review.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The Council's Transitional Pay Policy is a key policy in supporting and enabling organisational change. It is linked to redeployment and is integral to the Council's obligations to mitigate against potential redundancies by identifying suitable alternative roles. The Transitional Pay Policy supports employees by providing a transition in pay where employees are affected by organisational change.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are a wide range of options to support employees through organisational change and specifically a change in role and/or grade leading to a reduction in pay.
- 4.2 Given potential scale of loss in some services it was not considered that retaining the terms of the current Transitional Pay Policy was an appropriate option.
- 4.3 In considering options, the significant factors are the level of transitional pay and the period in which it is payable.
- Transitional pay should always be time limited to ensure that employees are not working alongside each other on different rates of pay for a prolonged and unreasonable period of time. This presents risks of extended inequality.
 - The cost of transitional pay will impact on potential savings.
- 4.4 The proposed option extends the existing financial provision of transitional pay, but retains the same broad principles which are well-established and applied. The addition of a 75% provision within the proposal also provides for some

assistance if, in future, any employees were to face a significant reduction in salary over and above the threshold of £4000.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The Trade Unions have been consulted and have welcomed the proposal for a change to the Transitional Pay Policy in response to concerns on the potential financial impact on some employees arising from organisational remodelling.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

6.1 N/A

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

7.1 N/A

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

8.1 Based on numbers of staff impacted in remodelling work undertaken to date, application of the existing Transitional Pay Policy would cost £323k (including on costs).

8.2 At this stage based on the known changes, the proposed change in policy would cost an additional £140k (including on costs).

8.3 The costs shown in the report relate to those employees impacted by proposed changes to their roles in the remodelling proposals out to consultation to date. It should be noted that a revised policy would apply to remodelling work which is still to be completed, and to all situations in future where transitional pay applies under the Council's 'day to day' business.

8.4 The cost of transitional pay will be met from the Remodelling reserve for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

8.5 The projected cost of any future transitional pay should be factored into the business case for any organisational change or restructure which has an impact on staff.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes, EIA is available at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-april-2014>

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 N/A

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 N/A

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 That Cabinet recommends to Council on 8 December 2014 that the terms of the Council's Transitional Pay policy is amended from the current level of a maximum of £2,000 of loss of contractual pay for 12 months to:

£4,000 or 75% of the contractual pay loss, whichever is the greater, for a period of 12 months (applied on a pro-rata basis).

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 To ensure that the principles of Transitional Pay Policy are reasonable and appropriate in the changing context of the organisation and subsequent impact on employees.

REPORT AUTHOR: Chris Hyams
Head of Human Resources and Organisational
Development

telephone 0151 691 8590
Email chrishyams@wirral.gov.uk:

APPENDICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Employment and Appointments Committee	11 November 2010

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SPECIAL CABINET 27 November 2014

SUBJECT:	PROPOSED MERGER OF THE WIRRAL AND LIVERPOOL CORONER AREAS and CORONER SERVICES
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	Head of Legal & Member Services
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Adrian Jones
KEY DECISION	Yes

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides details of proposed merger of the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Services arising from the retirement of HM Coroner for Wirral, Mr Christopher Johnson, on 31 December 2013.
- 1.2 From 1 January 2014, both Wirral and Liverpool Councils agreed to operate a joint coroner service on an interim basis pending a decision being taken in relation to the merger of both the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas. The interim arrangements were duly endorsed by the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor/Ministry of Justice, and have ensured that both Councils, but in particular Wirral Council, had in place effective coronial arrangements that are adequately resourced to meet all legal duties and obligations.
- 1.3 This report includes the business case for the proposed merger of both coroner areas thereby creating a single "Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area" and the "Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Service".
- 1.4 Approval and agreement is sought in respect of the business case and in turn to the proposal that the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas and Services merge to create the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area and Service.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Council has legal and statutory obligations regarding the provision of a robust and appropriate Coroners Service on the Wirral. Should provisions be inadequate this would lead to reputational damage for the local authority, and more importantly it would impact upon bereaved families and the legal process for investigating unexplained deaths. These same obligations apply in relation to Liverpool City Council.

- 2.2 It is the responsibility of a local authority to submit suitable proposals regarding any possible changes to the Coroners Services. All proposals, and subsequent changes, should adhere to the aspirations of the Chief Coroner for England and Wales, and have his support.
- 2.3 Ultimately the decision whether to adopt any proposal(s) is that of the Ministry of Justice and Lord Chancellor, based on recommendations made by the Chief Coroner stemming from any current national service aspirations or policy objectives.
- 2.4 Any proposal viewed by the Chief Coroner as lacking a sound business case and/or failing to meet the wider central policy objectives for coronial services would not receive his support.

Background

- 2.5 Mr Christopher Johnson was appointed HM Coroner for the Wirral Area (Senior Coroner) on 20 December 1988 following the retirement of Mr Rex Taylor on 29 September 1988.
- 2.6 Mr Johnson was the acting HM Coroner for Wirral between 30 September and his permanent appointment on 20 December 1988.
- 2.7 Mr Johnson as HM Coroner for Wirral (part-time), retired on 31 December 2013, after serving 25 years in the post.
- 2.8 The Wirral Coroner Service operated from the Ground Floor, South Annexe, Wallasey Complex. However, the service used both Wallasey and Birkenhead Town Halls as required, particularly for holding inquests.
- 2.9 As a result of Mr Johnson's retirement, the Council must request authority from the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor to appoint to the vacant post, or suggest an alternative option within the statutory and legal framework, accounting for any government policy and/or aspirations.
- 2.10 Under the formal guidance issued by the Chief Coroner, and the requirements of the Coroners and Justice Act, 2009, a local authority must inform the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Chief Coroner when a Coroner retires. This is intended to enable the Chief Coroner to consider the options available.
- 2.11 The work of the Coroner is 'business critical', and robust and appropriate arrangements must be in place to ensure business continuity. Should this not be the case the local authority could be in breach of current legislation, possibly leading to reputational damage and intervention by the Ministry of Justice.
- 2.12 Any future proposals, prior to any formal ratification by the Ministry of Justice and the Lord Chancellor, therefore need the full support and endorsement of the Chief Coroner.

Legal Framework

- 2.13 The provision of a Coroner's Service is a legal and statutory function of a local authority. It has no discretion and must provide the necessary resources,

funding and support to enable the Coroner(s) to discharge their statutory responsibilities.

- 2.14 The role of HM Coroner is statutory with all deaths referred following a defined and formal legal process which ensures parity, and issues surrounding equality are considered within this process.
- 2.15 The primary legislation under which the Coroner's Service operates is the Coroners Act 1988 and the Coroners Rules 1984. More recently the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 came into force, setting out a number of changes to modify and standardise the Coroners Services in England and Wales.
- 2.16 Coroners are Independent Judicial Officers ('Crown employees'), and are not employed by the local authority. The local authority cannot review performance, enforce practices, procedure or policy, or invoke any disciplinary procedures. Coroners fall under the guidance of the Chief Coroner, and answer to the Ministry of Justice, and ultimately the Lord Chancellor.
- 2.17 Under the 2009 Act, a local authority is responsible for the appointment of Coroner(s) within their area. This includes payment of salaries and any expenses incurred through holding the office of HM Coroner. There are considerable costs associated with the operational needs of the service (such as mortuary and toxicology fees), which the local authority must also fund.
- 2.18 The local authority must fund the service in its entirety regardless of the costs. It is difficult to forecast with absolute certainty expenditure for either the service pre-31 December 2013 that was based on single coroner area or any potential new service model (whether based on the proposed merged service or an alternative). Whilst there is historic evidence regarding caseload, it is not possible to predict the exact make-up, type and complexity of the deaths referred; therefore costs can vary hugely irrespective of whichever operating model is implemented.
- 2.19 However, following the introduction of the new Coroners and Justice Act 2009 coronial services nationally remain subject to considerable change. New requirements and burdens, revised practices and procedures, and greater central guidance all impact upon the services and will continue to do so going forward.

Background to the proposed merger

- 2.20 With regards to the position following Mr Johnson's retirement (post 31 December 2013), normally a recruitment exercise would be undertaken by the Council for a Senior Coroner for the Wirral Area to be appointed. However, under the Coroner and Justice Act 2009, the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor's Department/Ministry of Justice required the Council to first consider whether the Wirral Area should be amalgamated with another Coroner Area before a permanent Senior Coroner appointment is made.
- 2.21 The issue of amalgamation arose following the Luce Review 2003 (which reported on 4 July 2003). The terms of reference of the Review was wide and considered arrangements for the identification of the deceased, ascertaining causes of death, the need for further public investigation, the qualifications of

those investigating death, the support and other services needed, including post-mortem examinations, and the possibility of introducing a so-called "medical examiner" system.

2.22 The Review resulted in a number of recommendations being made, which included:

- the 136 coroners' districts in England and Wales (in 2003) should be replaced by about 60 coroner areas broadly linked with police authorities;
- rebasing the system on predominantly full-time coroners;
- the appointment of a statutory medical assessor (medically qualified) for each coroner's district (now area), to support the coroner, but also to audit and support death certification by doctors;
- new more flexible procedures for inquests;
- fuller conclusions from inquests, with a stronger bias towards narrative and preventive findings; and
- a new, statutory recognition of the role of coroners' officers, including training and specialisation.

2.23 This policy direction has been reinforced by the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and the appointment for the first time in 2012 of a Chief Coroner for England and Wales. The Chief Coroner's aspirations include the reduction in Coroners areas nationally from the current 96 to 75.

2.24 The Coroners and Justice Act 2009 changed the name of "coroner's district" to "coroner area"; the HM Coroner for a coroner area is now the "Senior Coroner" and a "Deputy Coroner" is now either an "Area Coroner" and/or an "Assistant Coroner".

2.25 Importantly, the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 requires the approval/consent of both the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor to first be obtained before any appointment of a Senior Coroner can take effect. Following discussions with the Lord Chancellor's Department and Ministry of Justice, the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor are unlikely to give their consent until the issue of amalgamation of coroner areas is fully considered.

2.26 Coroners and Justice Act 2009 seeks to give effect to some of the recommendations of the Luce Review. In particular, the intention behind Schedule 2 of the Act is to move towards fewer (but larger) coroner areas which are supported by a full-time Senior Coroner. This approach may lead to greater economies of scale, through sharing of staff and resources and will enable full-time Senior Coroners to focus entirely on their coronial duties, thus develop their skills and experiences more fully.

2.27 The formal guidance issued by the Chief Coroner states that should a Coroner retire, or a post become vacant, the local authority must consult with the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor (via the Ministry of Justice) to seek guidance on what may happen to any vacant area.

2.28 Under the 2009 Act, when two or more existing Coroner areas merge or combine the new area cannot consist of *part* of a local authority area, it must

consist of a *whole* local authority area (or in some cases more than one local authority area).

- 2.29 The Council must therefore explore and evaluate the merits of the Wirral Area being merged with another Coroner Area before it can consider whether to appoint a permanent Senior Coroner for the Wirral Area. This assessment requires a business case to be developed which explores and evaluates the possible options available. A detailed business case has been developed proposing the merger of the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas to create a single coroner area to be known as the "Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area". The supporting service would be known as the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Service". The business case is set out at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.30 Consideration has also been given to the possible amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area with the Cheshire, Warrington Coroner Area.
- 2.31 The Council will be required to consider whether amalgamation is appropriate and justify whatever decision it reaches.
- 2.32 If amalgamation is favoured, the Ministry of Justice will undertake formal targeted consultation before a final decision on the issue of amalgamation is taken by the Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor's Department and Ministry of Justice. Consultation will be for a period of six weeks and will commence on 8 December 2014 subject to approval by Cabinet and Council of the attached business case proposing merger.
- 2.33 If amalgamation is not favoured, the Council will be required to set out its rationale to the Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor's Department and Ministry of Justice, who may or may not accept the Council's position. The operation of the interim arrangements (see below) has been positive and well received - the Council must bear this in mind when reaching its decision.

Interim Arrangements

- 2.34 Until the issue of amalgamation is addressed, the Council agreed to put in place appropriate interim arrangements to ensure that an effective coroner service was maintained after Mr Johnson retired on 31 December 2013.
- 2.35 From 1 January 2014, the Council appointed, with the consent of Liverpool City Council, the Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor and Ministry of Justice, Andre Rebello as the Assistant Coroner for the Wirral Coroner Area. Mr Rebello was already appointed as the Senior Coroner for Liverpool and is highly regarded both nationally and locally.
- 2.36 It was agreed that the interim arrangements would be remain in place until such time that a permanent Senior Coroner appointment is made that covered the Wirral Coroner Area.
- 2.37 The key features of the interim arrangements are as follows:

- i. Mr Andre Rebello undertakes full operational control of both the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Areas.
- ii. The existing Liverpool Council Coroner Offices situated at Gerard Majella Courthouse, Liverpool (previously St Georges Buildings, Liverpool), be the designated address for both the Coroner Services for both Liverpool and Wirral.
- iii. All 10 Coroner's Officers employed by Merseyside Police operate from the Liverpool Council Coroner's Offices (resulting in Wirral Coroner's Officers relocating from Bromborough Police Station).
- iv. The IRIS Case Management Systems operated by both Councils be aligned and reconfigured.
- v. The Liverpool Council Coroner Administrative Support Team undertakes and delivers all administrative functions and tasks. (There are no staff implications arising for Wirral Council in connection with this).
- vi. If requested by families living on the Wirral, inquests relating to Wirral residents be undertaken at Birkenhead Town Hall.
- vii. The cost of the Coroner's Service be apportioned on a pro rata basis between Liverpool and Wirral Councils based on the number of deaths that have occurred within each geographical area during the operation of the interim arrangements (current ratio is 38:68 between Wirral:Liverpool).

2.38 Mr Rebello is supported by six assistant coroners who are called upon as required to ensure matters are dealt with in a timely manner.

2.39 Under the interim arrangements the identity of the Wirral Coroner Service and its operation/presence within the Borough has continued.

2.40 Whilst the interim arrangements have proved to be very successful, this has however only been possible through additional time and effort being expended by Andre Rebello and all members of the current Coroner's Administrative Support Team.

2.41 The table of statistics set out at Appendix 2, clearly demonstrate that Wirral cases are being dealt with in a timelier manner and that older cases have been addressed expeditiously. For example, as at 31 December 2013, there were 116 inquests outstanding between 0 and 24 months old; however those outstanding inquests have been reduced to a total of 4 during the 10 months of the interim arrangements being operational.

2.42 During the interim arrangements Andre Rebello has introduced effective working practices to the manner in which Wirral coronial services are delivered. Inquests have been dealt with more expeditiously, there is a lower post mortem rate (which is a key cost driver), there has been a significant shift in emphasis onto ensuring the needs of bereaved families are prioritised and met, and a

more robust approach taken to ensure public funds are utilised effectively. Andre Rebello has had an excellent open and transparent working relationship with Liverpool City Council for many years; and that relationship has been extended equally to Wirral Council.

- 2.43 Wirral has also, during the interim arrangements, benefited from further savings in not having to incur the same level of expenditure on the provision of a coroner service as it did prior to 31 December 2013. The savings to Wirral Council (using latest full year figures for the previous Wirral Coroner Service and actual costs of the interim arrangements) for 2014/15 financial year are anticipated to be in the region of £70,000.
- 2.44 In summary, the interim arrangements have been proven to be more robust, resilient and cost effective than the previous service. If the proposed merger is not approved, Wirral Council would need to invest more resources into Wirral's Coroner Service to ensure it was capable of meeting the demands on and needs of the service. For example, Wirral Council (and Liverpool Council) would need to invest in a new area coroners for their respective areas in any event as there has been a noticeable trend for such appointments to be made in order to support the increasing demands on senior coroners in busy inner city areas. The cost of a new area coroner is in excess of £111,000. Under the proposed merger only one area coroner would be needed.
- 2.45 Whilst the retirement of Mr Johnson is the key driver for changes to the Coroner's service in Wirral, there are other considerations. These are, in broad terms, as follows:
- a) The drive nationally to reduce the number of Areas from 96 to 75, and any proposed options for Wirral should be seen to support this desire.
 - b) The retirement offers a unique opportunity which may not occur again for many years due to the tenure of Coroners. Coroners in post before the 2009 Act have 'tenure for life' (no retirement age), and those appointed after the 2009 Act came in to force must retire at 70.
 - c) There is the opportunity to review and modernise the service delivery model, ensuring it is fit for purpose now and in the future.
 - d) As far as is possible within the constraints of the service requirements demonstrate value for money and seek economies of scale.

New arrangements for one Coroners Area

- 2.46 Since January 2013, when the Chief Coroner began to exert influence over the services nationally, some 21 Coroners Areas have merged into 10 new jurisdictions. These include Shropshire, Dorset, Cumbria and Derbyshire; and prior to 2013 Cornwall, Gloucestershire and Norfolk all moved to a single Coroner. This trend will continue as Coroners' posts become vacant.
- 2.47 Taking all these factors into account and in particular the views of the Chief Coroner and his aspiration to see larger Areas, on the retirement of the Wirral Coroner, the preferred option, which would receive central support, is that of a merger between Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas to form a single Coroner's

jurisdiction to be known as the “Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area” (this would of course be subject to the outcome of the consultation).

2.48 It is proposed, subject to approvals and the outcome of consultation, that the merger to create the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area and a single Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Service would take effect on 1 April 2015.

2.49 There is the statutory requirement to have one ‘Senior Coroner’ in a Coroner Area, supported by Area and/or Assistant Coroners. The Chief Coroner’s Guidance states the preferred option is to appoint Senior Coroners from the existing areas rather than holding a competitive selection process as this removes any risk of a claim for compensation for ‘loss of office’, which could be very costly for a local authority.

2.50 Any possible merger can be complex from a procedural and operational perspective; however, the impact is often far greater on the back office function and management arrangements rather than on service users and stakeholders. The proposal however does not have such a dramatic impact. No staff employed by Wirral are affected by the proposal, save that management would need to take account of the different operating model.

2.51 In short, the proposals outlined in the business case seek to formalise and make permanent the interim arrangements, whereby:

- a. Andre Rebello is appointed the Senior Coroner for the proposed Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area;
- b. Both Councils have equality of position;
- c. Liverpool City Council is appointed the Lead Authority in relation to the coroner service (which shall be governed by an overarching legal governing agreement between both Councils);
- d. The coroner service shall operate from the Jerard Majella Courthouse, Boundary Street, Liverpool (save that Birkenhead Town Hall shall be used to hold Inquests upon request); and
- e. The costs of the service shall be apportioned in accordance with an agreed formula (review annually) based on the number of deaths that occur within Wirral and Liverpool.

2.52 The interim arrangements have demonstrated that the impact upon bereaved families or the public has been positive. Currently, the contact between a Coroner / their office, and the next of kin / family is by telephone, post and/or email. Face-to-face contact generally only takes place at the formal inquest. Therefore, the physical location of HM Coroner or any administrative function is not critical. However, the proposal as outlined in the business makes it clear that any bereaved families living on the Wirral that request inquests be heard on the Wirral shall have that request met. Birkenhead Town Hall would be used for such inquests.

2.53 There would be little impact upon key stakeholders such police, undertakers, hospital trusts, etc.

- 2.54 Contact with the Police is usually by telephone and email. As is presently the case, face-to-face contact is very limited, except for the very complex and difficult cases.
- 2.55 On occasions some Undertakers, who are based near to Coroners' offices, do collect paperwork in person, but this is infrequent as undertakers are spread across both boroughs. The use of electronic communications such as email remains the norm as it is cost effective, timely and reliable.
- 2.56 Any merger is not linked to those locations where the deceased are taken pending Post Mortems, and where Police ID's / family viewings take place. Current arrangements would remain unchanged.
- 2.57 In summary, the impact on the public and stakeholders of the proposed merger is small. The interim arrangements have enabled requisite infrastructure and operational changes to be made thereby reducing the impact of the proposed merger further.
- 2.58 The Business case attached at Appendix 1 provides extensive details, information, statistics and cost information to assist the Council reach an informed decision with regards to the proposed merger.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The Council has an obligation to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to meet all legal duties and obligations. The Council must consider the issue of merging with another coroner area to determine the most effective way of delivering and meeting the needs of the resident of the borough. The Council must ensure whatever arrangements are implemented they must be sufficiently robust and resilient to mitigate identified risks.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Consideration has also been given to the possible amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area with the Cheshire, Warrington Coroner Area and details have been set out in the business case at Appendix 1.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor's Department and Ministry of Justice have been consulted and engaged throughout the process and discussions have taken place with the Lord Chancellor's Department and Ministry of Justice.
- 5.2 The Ministry of Justice will undertake targeted consultation for a period of 6 weeks commencing on 8 December subject to Cabinet and Council approval of the proposed merger and business case set out at Appendix 1.
- 5.3 A final decision on the proposed merger will take place after the consideration of the consultation responses.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 All stakeholders as determined by the Ministry of Justice shall be consulted.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 The costs of the proposed merger are set out in the business case. The proposed merger will result in savings for both Wirral and Liverpool Councils on the assumption Liverpool and the Wirral would need to appoint an area coroner in any event.

Expenditure	Liverpool 2013/14	Wirral 2012/13	Projected Full Year Cost of Merged Service
Coroner	£132,472	£144,821	£157,057
Office Costs			
Area Coroner	£111,300	£111,300	£111,300
Fees for Assistant Coroners	£25,600	£6,700	£32,300
Admin Staff Salary Costs	£84,125	£30,084	£121,029
	£117,750	£13,200	£117,750
Inquest Accommodation	£0	£0	£8,000
IT	£19,312	£2,454	£22,633
Post Mortems	£270,054	£171,728	£348,397
Mortuary	£177,271	£103,200	£280,471
Toxicology	£157,855	£0	£234,625
Removals	£45,605	£0	£65,942
Jurors	£0	£4,337	£3,000
Transport	£0	£2,005	£1,600
Internal Recharge	£0	£13,968	£2,500
Total	£1,141,798	£603,797	£1,506,604

Wirral Previous Arrangement	-	Liverpool Previous Arrangement	-	Wirral & Liverpool Combined Previous Arrangement	-	Liverpool & Wirral New Arrangement	-	Saving (anticipated)
£603,797 (includes costs of an area coroner)		£1,141,798 (includes costs of an area coroner)		£1,745,595 (includes costs of an area coroner)		£1,506,604		£238,991*

* Minus any accommodation costs.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 All legal implications are set out in the main body of the report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality.

No - there are such issues arising.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

12.1 That Cabinet:

- a. Approves and agrees the business case set out Appendix 1;
- b. Agrees that the business case be subject to consultation by the Ministry of Justice.
- c. Endorses any recommendations of the Chief Coroner for England and Wales, and any decision by the Lord Chancellor regarding a merging of the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner areas.
- d. The Head of Legal & Member Services be authorised to undertake any necessary actions, if permission is formally granted, to implement the requirements of any statutory instrument or Order to combine the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas.
- e. Following formal guidance issued by the Chief Coroner regarding the appointment of Coroners, and subject to the outcome of consultation

and the Lord Chancellor making the Order, it is recommended that the current Senior Coroner for the Liverpool Coroner Area (and the current Assistant Coroner for Wirral), Andre Rebello, be appointed as Senior Coroner for the new single jurisdiction to be known as the “Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area”.

- f. The Head of Legal & Member Services be authorised, in consultation with both relevant Cabinet Members for Wirral and Liverpool Councils and the City Solicitor for Liverpool City Council, to undertake a joint recruitment exercise (in accordance with the requirements of the Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor and Ministry of Justice) for a full-time Area Coroner, if permission is formally granted to combine the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas.
- g. The Head of Legal & Member Services be authorised, in consultation with both relevant Cabinet Members for Wirral and Liverpool Councils and the City Solicitor for Liverpool City Council, to undertake a joint recruitment exercise (in accordance with the requirements of the Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor and Ministry of Justice) for two further assistant coroners, if both Wirral and Liverpool Councils agree the business case set out at Appendix 1.
- h. That the current interim arrangements approved and operated since 1 January 2014 continue until such time that the Council addresses the issues of amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area and a permanent Senior Coroner is appointed to cover Wirral;
- i. Authorises the Head of Legal and Member Services to undertake all necessary steps required to progress the issue of amalgamation of the Wirral Coroner Area in accordance with the directions of the Chief Coroner, Lord Chancellor and/or Ministry of Justice.
- j. Recommends that Council endorses the business case as set out at Appendix one to this report and the actions detailed above.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 To ensure that the Council discharges its legal obligations and provides an effective Coroner Service for Wirral residents.

REPORT AUTHOR: Surjit Tour
Head of Legal & Member Services

telephone (0151) 691 8569
email surjittour@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Business Case for Merger of the Wirral & Liverpool Coroner Areas

Appendix 2 - Wirral Inquest Statistics

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

Luce Review 2003

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	2 December 2013
Council	2 December 2013

This page is intentionally left blank

**ALTERATION OF CORONER AREAS UNDER SCHEDULE 2 OF THE CORONERS
AND JUSTICE ACT 2009**

BUSINESS CASE FOR MERGERS

NAMES OF CORONER AREAS THAT ARE PROPOSING TO MERGE

- Liverpool
- Wirral

PROPOSED NAME OF NEW AREA

- Liverpool and Wirral Area

INFORMATION ON AREAS THAT PROPOSE TO MERGE

- Please provide key details in the table as follows:

Coroner area	Liverpool	Wirral	Liverpool and Wirral
Geographical area covered	Liverpool	Wirral	Liverpool and Wirral
Local authority/ies that fund(s) coroner area and %	Liverpool City Council 100%	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council 100%	Liverpool City Council (62%)* Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (38%)* (* precise percentage to be determined by an agreed formula and reviewed annually – see paragraph 50 below).
Relevant authority (formerly lead authority)	N/A	N/A	Liverpool City Council
Police Force(s) in area	Merseyside Police	Merseyside Police	Merseyside Police
Transport links	Large geographical area M62 John Lennon Airport Main Line Station (Lime Street) Mersey Tunnels Mersey Ferry Area: 11,184	Large geographical area A41, A51 M53, M56 Mersey Tunnels Birkenhead Train Station Mersey Ferry Area: 15,700	Large geographical area – main arterial roads and motorways: M53, M56, M62 A41, A51 John Lennon Airport Main Line Station (Lime Street) Birkenhead Train Station

Coroner area	Liverpool	Wirral	Liverpool and Wirral
	<p>Hectares</p> <p>Population: 469,700</p>	<p>Hectares</p> <p>Population: 320,200</p>	<p>Mersey Tunnels Mersey Ferry</p> <p>Area: 26,884 Hectares</p> <p>Population: 789,900</p>
Major hospitals in area	<p>Royal Liverpool University Hospital</p> <p>University Hospital Aintree</p> <p>Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital</p> <p>Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital</p> <p>Liverpool Women's Hospital</p> <p>The Walton Centre for Neurology & Neurosurgery</p> <p>Marie Cure Hospice</p>	<p>Arrowe Park Hospital</p> <p>Clatterbridge Hospital</p>	<p>Royal Liverpool University Hospital</p> <p>University Hospital Aintree</p> <p>Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital</p> <p>Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital</p> <p>Liverpool Women's Hospital</p> <p>Arrowe Park Hospital</p> <p>Clatterbridge Hospital</p> <p>The Walton Centre for Neurology & Neurosurgery</p> <p>Marie Cure Hospice</p>
Prisons in area	<p>HMP Liverpool</p> <p>HMP Altcourse</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>HMP Liverpool</p> <p>HMP Altcourse</p>
Other state detention facilities in area	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>
Courtrooms/inquest venues	<p>Gerard Majella Courthouse (dedicated inquest facility)</p>	<p>Birkenhead Town Hall</p>	<p>Gerard Majella Courthouse (main location and dedicated inquest facility).</p> <p>Birkenhead Town Hall if requested by</p>

Coroner area	Liverpool	Wirral	Liverpool and Wirral
			<p>bereaved families living on the Wirral.</p> <p>It is recognised that Wirral residents will have emotional ties to the Borough and some families may prefer to have an inquest heard on the Wirral rather than at Gerard Majella Courthouse.</p> <p>It is recognised that any new proposal must be capable of meeting the emotional needs of all families in Liverpool and on the Wirral.</p>
Office/staff accommodation – location and capacity	<p>1FTE x Chief Clerk 1FTE x Senior Coroner's Clerk 1FTE x Coroner's Clerk</p> <p>Located at Gerard Majella Courthouse</p>	0 Admin Staff	<p>1FTE x Chief Clerk 1FTE x Senior Coroner's Clerk 2FTE x Coroner's Clerk</p> <p>Location – Gerard Majella Courthouse Liverpool only.</p>
Coroner's officers' employer	<p>6 FTE</p> <p>Merseyside Police</p>	<p>4 FTE</p> <p>Merseyside Police</p>	<p>10 FTE</p> <p>Merseyside Police</p>
Name of senior coroner	André Rebello (Senior Coroner)	André Rebello (Assistant Coroner)	André Rebello (be appointed as Senior Coroner in accordance with Chief Coroner Guidance No.14).
Number of area coroners	None	None	1 x Full-time Area Coroner
Number of assistant coroners	6	6	8

Coroner area	Liverpool	Wirral	Liverpool and Wirral
	(appointed by Liverpool City Council)	(same persons as appointed for the Liverpool Coroner Area and appointed for the Wirral Coroner Area pursuant to the interim arrangements).	(includes current assistant coroners for the Liverpool Coroner Area). All assistant coroner vacancies shall be subject to an open recruitment exercise.
Number of deaths reported in the previous calendar year	2,838 (2012) 2,986 (2013)	1,578 (2012) 1,622 (2013)	It is assumed that the caseload will be similar to the total number of cases of the two existing areas combined (approx 4,600 a year).
Inquests held in the previous calendar year	622 (2012) 550 (2013)	282 (2012) 203 (2013)	It is assumed that the caseload will be similar to the number of cases of the two existing areas combined (approx 850 a year).
Post mortem rate as % of reported deaths in 2012	30% (2012) 28% (2013)	36% (2012) 33% (2013)	It is assumed that the caseload will be similar to the number of cases of the two existing areas combined.

1. It would be helpful if you would also attach maps of the area showing the current position and the position in the event of a merger. Both maps should show details of for instance inquest venues, hospitals, prisons and transport links.

- A map of the current Liverpool Coroner Area is attached.



Liverpool Coroner
Map_A4 V2.pdf

- A map of the current Wirral Coroner Area is attached.



Wirral Coroner
Map_A4.pdf

- A map of the proposed merged Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area is attached.



Liverpool and
Wirral_A4.pdf

SENIOR CORONER APPOINTMENT

Why are you seeking a merger now (i.e. which area's senior coroner is stepping down, when and why)?

2. The Wirral Senior Coroner retired on 31 December 2013.
3. Interim arrangements were introduced from 1 January 2014 whereby the Liverpool Senior Coroner was also appointed the Assistant Coroner for the Wirral Area until such time that the possibility of a merger of the Wirral Area with another is determined.
4. The key features of the interim arrangements are as follows:
 - i. Mr Andre Rebello undertakes full operational control of both the Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Areas.
 - ii. The existing Liverpool Council Coroner Offices situated at Gerard Majella Courthouse, Liverpool (previously St Georges Buildings, Liverpool), be the designated address for both the Coroner Services for both Liverpool and Wirral.
 - iii. All 10 Coroner's Officers employed by Merseyside Police operate from the Liverpool Council Coroner's Offices (resulting in Wirral Coroner's Officers relocating from Bromborough Police Station).
 - iv. The IRIS Case Management Systems operated by both Councils be aligned and reconfigured.
 - v. The Liverpool Council Coroner Administrative Support Team undertakes and delivers all administrative functions and tasks.
 - vi. If requested by families living on the Wirral, inquests relating to Wirral residents be undertaken at Birkenhead Town Hall.
 - vii. The cost of the Coroner's Service be apportioned on a pro rata basis between Liverpool and Wirral Councils based on the number of deaths that have occurred within each geographical area during the operation of the interim arrangements.
5. There are currently six assistant coroners appointed:

Nicholas Rheinberg

(who is also Senior Coroner for Cheshire and an Assistant Coroner for several other coroner areas).

Alan Wilson

(who was also appointed the full-time Senior Coroner for Blackpool and Fylde in April 2014).

Martin Fleming

(who was also appointed the full-time Senior Coroner for West Yorkshire West in October 2014).

Anita Bhardwaj

(who is also a solicitor in HM Courts and Tribunal Service, currently administering family justice in the North West).

David Lewis

(who is also an Assistant Coroner in North Wales (East and Central) and Head of Regulatory Law at Weightmans Solicitors).

Simon Holder

(who is also a practising barrister at St Johns Building Barristers Chambers, Liverpool).

6. The assistant coroners are a key support to the Senior Coroner and are used to help manage the workload when additional capacity is required to support the Senior Coroner. However, this support is subject to the availability of the assistant coroners; and their availability invariably fluctuates depending upon the demands of their respective substantive employment roles.
7. Whilst the interim arrangements have proved to be very successful, this has however only been possible through additional time and effort being expended by Andre Rebello and all members of the current Coroner's Administrative Support Team.
8. Andre Rebello is highly regarded by the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor; and is recognised nationally as a leading figure in the provision of coronial services.
9. During the interim arrangements Andre Rebello has introduced effective working practices to the manner in which Wirral coronial services are delivered. Inquests have been dealt with more expeditiously, there is a lower post mortem rate (which is a key cost driver), there has been a significant shift in emphasis onto ensuring the needs of bereaved families are prioritised and met, and a more robust approach taken to ensure public funds are utilised effectively. Andre Rebello has had an excellent open and transparent working relationship with Liverpool City Council for many years; and that relationship has and will be equally extended to Wirral Council.
10. Wirral has also, during the interim arrangements, benefited from further savings in not having to incur the same level of expenditure on the provision of a coroner service as it did prior to 31 December 2013. The savings to Wirral Council (using latest full year figures for the previous Wirral Coroner Service and actual costs of the interim arrangements) are anticipated to be in the region of £70,000.
11. However, the continuation of the additional time and effort being expended by Andre Rebello and the support team under the current resource model is not sustainable or viable under a merged service. Additional resources are required on a permanent basis, namely a full-time area coroner, an additional full-time coroner's clerk and two more assistant coroners, to support Andrea Rebello and the Coroner's support team to ensure the current level of service is maintained and sufficiently resilient following any merger.
12. An area coroner is a full-time judicial office holder who will share in the discharging of coronial duties, including being on-call for matters that often require immediate action, the direction of investigations and the conduct of inquest hearings.
13. Should the proposed merger not proceed, both Councils would need to invest in a new area coroner for their respective areas in any event as there has been a noticeable trend for such appointments to be made in order to support the increasing demands on senior coroners in busy inner city areas.

14. Two of the current assistant coroners have recently secured full-time jurisdictions elsewhere and therefore will have very limited capacity to provide assistance. Given the substantive roles/employment of assistant coroners, it is considered appropriate that an additional two assistant coroners also be appointed to help deliver the merged coroner service.
15. The identified additional resources will help enable the Senior Coroner to manage and balance both workloads and capacity as well as ensure there is sufficient resilience within the service.
16. If the proposed merger was not proceeded with, the consideration of this initiative has revealed the need for both Councils, but particularly Wirral Council, to invest more resources into their respective Coroner Services to ensure that the operating model was more resilient and effective. Wirral's previous coroner worked part-time and the operating model adopted by the previous coroner was neither sustainable nor considered capable of meeting the challenges and demands of a modern coroner service in the future. The costs would therefore rise if the status quo was maintained; whereas the merger proposed will deliver savings to both Liverpool and Wirral Councils.
 - How do you propose to appoint the senior coroner for the new merged area – (i.e does the relevant authority propose to appoint one of the senior coroners from the affected areas or to hold an open competition)?
17. As stated in the guidance of 1 May 2014 provided by the Chief Coroner, we would propose that the Senior Coroner for Liverpool, Andre Rebello, be appointed as the Senior Coroner for the merged area.
18. This option would meet the Chief Coroner's aim to not displace existing Coroners and negate the potential risk of any claim for compensation for loss of office by Andre Rebello should he not be successfully appointed.
19. Andre Rebello has extensive local knowledge having worked in Liverpool for many years. The working relationship between him and both local authorities is excellent with great cooperation and shared desire to provide a robust and customer focused coroner service.
 - Are all affected senior coroners aware of and content with this approach?
20. Whilst there are no other senior coroners directly affected other than Andre Rebello, the proposed merger is based upon careful consideration and detailed discussions between both local authorities.
21. The proposals are appropriate, deliverable and meet the needs of the Coroner Service now and in the future for both Liverpool and Wirral Areas.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED MERGER ON SERVICE DELIVERY

- What will be the impact of the proposed merger on service delivery?
22. The interim arrangements, as detailed above, have proved to be successful in that the services provided has been very positive, efficient and cost effective. (To maintain this standard and service delivery, will require additional resources as

the current level of resources and additional time and effort expended by the Andre Rebello and the Coroner's Administrative Support Team is not sustainable going forward).

23. The centralisation of the service provides a robust and effective environment for the Coroner's office staff. Moreover, it has provided proven economies of scale of operations, efficiencies and has allowed for the introduction of standard working practices and levels of service throughout both Coroner Areas. These achievements/outputs will continue to be delivered on a more sustainable and resilient basis with the additional resources proposed.
24. The interim arrangements and merger allows for a full time Senior Coroner, adequately supported, to be available at all times; whereas the Wirral Area was previously serviced by a part-time Senior Coroner.
25. The proposed appointment of a full-time Area Coroner and the use/appointment of eight assistant coroners under the merged service provide greater resilience and support to the Senior Coroner.
26. The turn round time for inquests completed within 3 months has improved and numerous cases over twelve months old have been completed in relation to Wirral. This has however only been achieved through the dedication, efforts and commitment of Andre Rebello and the Coroner's Administrative Support Team. The merger seeks to maintain and build upon the improvements that have been made whilst recognising that that will only be possible with the additional resources required as outlined within this business case.
27. The interim arrangement has resulted in a reduction in the post mortem rate in Wirral in the first 6 months of 2014.
28. The proposed merger will be based on the interim arrangements and is subject to the additional resources required being provided. The impact on current service delivery will be positive given the proven effectiveness of the interim arrangements and the first hand knowledge and understanding that has been gained from such arrangements.
29. The merger proposes that inquests be heard in the Gerard Majella Courthouse, Liverpool, which is a dedicated inquest facility that is considered better able to meet the needs of bereaved families than Birkenhead Town Hall. Gerard Majella Courthouse is a purpose built court and has excellent facilities to cater for all the needs of the service and the families.
30. However, it is recognised that families on Wirral should have the opportunity to have an inquest held on the Wirral. The merger seeks to ensure that the needs of all families are met. Accordingly, where a Wirral family specifically requests that an inquest be heard on the Wirral, the inquest shall be heard at Birkenhead Town Hall.
31. The impact on other key stakeholders (such as police, undertakers, hospital trusts, etc.) would now be negligible (if not nil) as all necessary changes, such as contact information, new processes/arrangements, have been made as part of the interim arrangements.
 - What will be the impact of the merger on associated services – such as post-mortem examinations, and mortuary provision?

32. There will be no change to the location of the post mortem examinations, arrangements for Police identification and family viewings, and where the deceased are taken / stored will be no different to the arrangements prior to the introduction of the interim arrangements on 1 January 2014. These arrangements would be unaffected by any formal merger.
- How will the relevant local authority administer the new coroner area?
33. The services and staff management arrangements will be managed by Liverpool City Council, as the nominated Relevant Authority.
34. The Coroner Service will formally sit with Liverpool City Council and operate under current arrangements with additional support as outlined in this business case.
35. The Senior Coroner and Coroner's staff shall be employed by Liverpool City Council. However, both Councils shall agree service outputs, service level and delivery, particularly where there are (or potential) costs implications arising or material changes being proposed.
36. Both Liverpool City and Wirral Councils will enter into a legally binding governing agreement that clearly sets out the provision of the service, accountability, responsibilities, monitoring arrangements and financial arrangements.
- How will administrative governance be achieved between the relevant local authority and other funding local authorities?
37. Both Liverpool City and Wirral Councils will enter into a legally binding governing agreement that clearly sets out the provision of the service, accountability, responsibilities, monitoring arrangements and financial arrangements.
- How will the affected local authorities manage budgets?
38. Any merger would not affect the budget management arrangements of the service. Each Council shall manage its respective budgets and the financial costs of a merged service shall be apportioned in accordance with the agreed arrangements stated within the governing legal agreement.

IMPACT OF MERGER ON THOSE WORKING IN / WITH THE SERVICE

- What will be the impact of the merger on:
 - Coroners
39. The Senior Coroner for the new area will have a considerably larger geographic area and increased caseload as he will be required to absorb any cases that would have been referred to a Wirral Coroner. However, the interim arrangements have shown that that workload is manageable and a merged service viable and sustainable providing additional resources (as outlined in this business case) are provided.
40. The employment of a full-time Area Coroner and use of eight Assistant Coroners are essential to ensure the service remains viable and resilient. The merged area

will continue to be supported by the six existing Assistant Coroners with two further assistants and a new full-time Area Coroner recruited to (through open competition). There will be an enhanced support team at the central administrative hub (as outlined in this business case).

- Coroners' officers

41. All 10 coroner's officers are employed by Merseyside Police. Wirral based Coroner's officers prior to the introduction of the interim arrangements operated out of Bromborough Police Station; however, they transferred to the Liverpool Coroner's Office on 1 January 2014 (and are now operating from Gerard Majella Courthouse). This has enabled them to have direct access to the Senior Coroner and the administrative support staff which was not the case previously.

42. Under the interim arrangements, the coroner's officers access to the IRIS System for Wirral matters through the Liverpool Council IT network. This is the main tool for case management and has greatly improved the efficiency of how deaths are reported, recorded and managed.

43. Most contact on a day-to-day basis is by telephone, and electronic communication, though some face to face contact is required in large and/or more complex cases. The Coroner's officers are settled in the interim arrangements and the merger will have no further impact upon them.

- Other staff in the coroner's offices

44. The current administrative support staff working within the Coroner's office have been operating under the interim service since 1 January 2014.

45. Adjustments have been made to address the additional work and further additional administrative support will ensure that there are sufficient resources available to meet the needs of a merged service.

- Pathologists

46. There is no anticipated impact on pathologists as post mortem examinations will take place in the existing locations; although it is noted that there are increased pressures due to the limited availability of Pathologists (a national issue facing all Coroners).

- Others?

47. Funeral directors: in some cases, funeral directors collect paperwork from the Coroner's offices. Those based on the Wirral will be affected by the Coroner's office being based in Liverpool. However, the use of electronic notifications and communications such as email is the normal mode of communication as it is secure, fast and reliable. This practice will continue, thereby mitigating the impact.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS OF MERGER

- What will be the impact of the merger on resources in terms of:
 - Costs of delivering the service
 - Accommodation for staff
 - Inquest accommodation

- IT - IRIS
- Any other costs / savings?

48. Please find attached the financial schedule that details current and proposed cost implications.

49. Liverpool City Council as the Relevant Authority shall operate the merged coroner service and Wirral Council shall reimburse Liverpool City Council a proportion of the costs upon an agreed basis.

50. The current ratio of deaths between Wirral and Liverpool is 38:62 respectively. The total operating cost of the merged coroner service will be reviewed and agreed by both Councils initially and reviewed annually thereafter. The cost of the service will be apportioned using the above ratio which shall also be reviewed annually to ensure both Councils contribute fairly and appropriately to maintain an effective service. Any financial adjustments required will be made by both Councils as necessary to ensure this is achieved.

51. Details of the funding arrangements and how liabilities are determined and paid will be set out in the governing agreement to be entered into between both Councils.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- Are you aware of any legal issues that need to be resolved before a merger can go ahead (in addition to the Lord Chancellor making an order under Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act)? If so please give details.

52. Both Councils will need to confirm their agreement to the business case and a formal governing legal agreement entered into should the merger be approved.

VIEWS OF THOSE AFFECTED BY MERGER

- Do all affected local authorities support the merger? Please provide details.

53. There are no other local authorities affected.

- Have the local authority councillors / cabinets approved the merger? Please provide details.

54. Formal reports are to be considered by the Cabinets of both Councils in November/December 2014.

- What is the view of affected coroners and their staff?

55. The Coroner and all staff affected are supportive of the merger.

56. The interim arrangements have demonstrated that a merged service is not only viable and sustainable but also more efficient and cost effective (subject to the additional resources outlined in this business case are provided).

- How will bereaved people be affected by the merger – eg travelling to inquests, being able to contact coroners' offices?
57. It is considered that the impact on the public will be limited given that the interim arrangements have been in place since 1 January 2014. The overwhelming comments of the public using the current service are very positive. This has only been achieved as a result of the additional time, effort and commitment of Andre Rebello and the Administrative Support Team; and the careful consideration and attention given to meeting the specific needs of residents in both boroughs.
58. The vast majority of contact between the coroner's office and the next of kin/families is via telephone, post or email, and face-to face contact generally only occurs when the formal inquest takes place. Therefore, the location of any central support or administrative function in Liverpool is not critical. One key issue is the need for there to be the option to hold an inquest within the borough of Wirral should a family request it – which the merger can meet.
59. The new central administration function will operate from Gerard Majella Courthouse, Liverpool, which is a dedicated facility. This building has recently been refurbished and has enough additional space to accommodate any additional resources that will be needed to manage the combined caseload of the existing areas.
60. This centralisation of the support function will continue to provide robust, uniform and appropriate support for the work of the Senior Coroner, and offer economies of scale of operations and seek to introduce standard working practices and levels of service.
- Have you sought the views of other affected stakeholders - such as police authority and constabulary, hospitals, prisons, GPs, faith groups and funeral directors? Please provide details.
61. No formal consultation is required on either Councils part as formal consultation will be undertaken by the Ministry of Justice on behalf of the Lord Chancellor.
62. The statutory functions and the way in which the Senior Coroner and Assistant Coroners discharge their responsibilities will not change as a result of any merger, and the impact on the service users and stakeholders will be minimal given that the interim arrangements have been in place since 1 January 2014. Save that, the support of a new Area Coroner and additional Assistant Coroners will ensure that the Senior Coroner is properly supported and the service more resilient.
- What are the views of other stakeholders?
63. To be ascertained as part of the consultation. However, there has been no opposition to the introduction or operation of the interim arrangements.
- What impact will the merger have in terms of disability, gender and racial equality?
64. Coroners conduct all investigations of deaths referred to them taking into account disability, gender and racial equality as part of their statutory role.

65. Travelling to (and the associated cost/time) the Coroner's offices in Liverpool is a factor that must be considered. The interim arrangements have not however revealed any specific concerns and nor have any issues been raised.

RISKS AND MITIGATING ACTIONS

- Please provide details of any risks identified and mitigating action (to be) taken.

RISK	MITIGATING ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of operations, or systems and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim arrangements have been successful and any operational issues have been addressed. Review and ensure robust practices, procedures and processes are in place to effectively manage the expected workload of any newly created area. Appropriate planning and resources are required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient capacity to deliver the merged service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional support through a F/T Area Coroner, two further Assistant Coroners and enhance the Administrative Support Team to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet the demands upon the service and provide sufficient resilience.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagreement between Liverpool and Wirral Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the governing legal agreement is clear and detailed so as to ensure all parties understand and accept their respective responsibilities, duties and obligations.

ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S)

- Please describe other options considered, in addition to the proposed merger, and the advantages and disadvantages for each option.

66. 1. Merge with Cheshire Area:

Advantages - Some economies of scale
Reduced cost
Adjoining boundaries

Disadvantages - Transport links not as effective
Access to Coroner's office in Chester is less convenient – no central operating hub.

Different Police Authority
Fewer assistant coroners

67. 2. Retain the existing two area structure in Liverpool and Wirral and appoint to the vacant Senior Coroner post in Wirral.
68. Whilst a simpler option, it would run counter to the views of the Chief Coroner and long standing central Government policy as it does not fit with the national drive to reduce the number of coroner areas in England and Wales.
69. Therefore it is seen as an option that would not be supported centrally. Retaining the existing structure also gives no opportunity to review and modernise service delivery, create uniformity or seek any efficiencies.

CONTACT WITH THE CHIEF CORONER'S OFFICE / MINISTRY OF JUSTICE / CONSULTEES

- Have you had previous discussions with the Chief Coroner on the proposed merger? (This is a requirement before MoJ can formally consult on the merger.) Please provide details of the discussion.
70. The interim arrangements have been discussed and agreed on the basis that it provides the opportunity for a merger to be considered. There have been communications with the Ministry of Justice and Chief Coroner's Office in relation to the exploration and formal consideration of a merger between the Wirral and Liverpool Coroner Areas.
- Have you had previous contact with MoJ on the proposed merger? Please provide details.
71. The interim arrangements as outlined herein have been approved and form the basis of the proposed merger.
- Are you happy for this business case in its entirety to be sent to all consultees? If not please provide details.

72. Yes

- Please list consultees for the consultation on the proposed merger – the organisation's name and the most appropriate email address - at **Annex A**. MoJ will remove email addresses from **Annex A** before sending the business case to consultees.

73. See completed list

- Further information on the merger process is available in the form of Chief Coroner guidance at: <http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/guidance-14-mergers-of-coroner-areas.pdf>.

List of consultees

Consultees

Chief Coroner:

His Honour Judge Peter Thornton QC

Elected Mayor and Local Councillors

All Wirral Councillors (see Councillor Schedule attached)

All Liverpool Elected Mayor and Councillors (see Elected Mayor and Councillor Schedule attached)

MPs

Wirral: Angela Eagle MP
The Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Alison McGovern MP
Esther McVey MP

Liverpool: Luciana Berger MP
Maria Eagle MP
Louise Ellman MP
Steve Rotheram MP
Stephen Twigg MP

Coroners/Assistant Coroners:

Nicholas Rheinberg
Alan Wilson
Martin Fleming
Anita Bhardwaj
David Lewis
Simon Holder

Other Local Authority Representatives from neighbouring coroner areas:

Eleni Woolford - North Wales (East and Central)
Timothy Date – Cheshire
Gary Broome – Manchester West
Rajan Paul – Sefton, Knowsley and St Helens

All Hospitals/Trusts:

Royal Liverpool University Hospital
University Hospital Aintree
Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital
Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital
Liverpool Women's Hospital
Arrowe Park Hospital
Clatterbridge Hospital
The Walton Centre for Neurology & Neurosurgery
Marie Cure Hospice

Liverpool Pathologists:

Forensic Pathology Unit	Dr C.P.Johnson
Royal Liverpool University Hospital	Dr T.R.Helliwell
University Hospital Aintree	Dr J.D.H.Sheard
Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital	Dr G.K.Kokai

Liverpool Superintendent Registrar:

Patricia Evans patricia.evans@liverpool.gov.uk

Funeral Directors:

National Association of Funeral Directors

David Barrington david@barringtonsfunerals.co.uk

Wirral Pathologists:

Arrowe Park Hospital Dr D.A.Agbamu
Countess of Chester Hospital Dr J.Elder

Wirral Superintendent Registrar:

Sue Johnstone suzannejohnston@wirral.gov.uk

Prisons:

HMP Liverpool
HMP Altcourse

Police

Merseyside Police contact – Superintendent Billings
National police representative from MoJ's Coroner Services Committee – Acting
Chief Constable Karen Manners

Coroner's Officers

Lesley Anne Rogers
Oliver Knaggs
Alby Howard Murphy
Clair Crilly
Pamela Robbins
Carole Metcalfe
Donald Johnson
Arthur Flower
Simon Knuckey
Jane Wear

Coroner's Admin staff

Jim Lewis
Vivian Hartnett
Linda Quilliam
Denise Sherman

Resource implications of the merger*Table A: Details of current Senior Coroners and Area Coroner/s (if applicable) in each existing coroner are*

Position (e.g. Senior Coroner, Area Coroner)	First name	Surname	Current salary (including National Insurance and pension contributions)	Long Inquest Payments (if applicable) or other additional payments	Proposed salary in amalgamated area (if applicable) (including National Insurance and Pension)
Senior Coroner	André	Rebello	2014/15: £157,057* (Projected)	2014/15: N/A	£157,057*
			2013/14: £132,476.00	2013/14: N/A	
			2012/13: £130,199	2012/13: N/A	
Senior Coroner	Christopher	Johnson	2014/15: £44,653 (9 mth Jan-Sep)	2014/15: N/A	
			2014/15: N/A	2014/15: N/A	
			2013/14: £86,056 (9 Months from April to Dec)	2013/14: N/A	
			2012/13: £129,129	2012/13: £15,692	
Payment to Liverpool for Wirral contribution to Coroners					

Table B: Office costs

Category	Liverpool	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2012/13 (Full year Costs)	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2013/14 (9 Months from Apr-13 to Dec-13)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 (9 Months from Jan-14 to Sep)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 Projection for 12 Months	Liverpool & Wirral
Fees for Area Coroner	£0 (However, any future Coroner Service would need to include an Area Coroner, therefore true cost needs to include £111,300)	£0 (However, any future Coroner Service would need to include an Area Coroner, therefore true cost needs to include £111,300)	£0	£0	£0	£111,300 (estimated pa)
Fees for Assistant Coroner(s)	£25,600.00 In 2013/14 Apr-Sep 2014 £10,300	£6,700	£4,997 (2013/14 Deputy Coroner Allowances Costs Apr-Dec)	£4,400	£6,700	£32,300 (estimated pa - (Liverpool 2013/14 Costs plus Wirral 2014/15 12 Month Projection)
Salary costs of Coroner's officer(s) <i>(including National Insurance and pension contributions)</i>	All costs are met by Merseyside Police and they will not be affected by the proposed merger. The ten Officers from the two existing Coroner areas are already based in Liverpool	All costs are met by Merseyside Police and they will not be affected by the proposed merger. The ten Officers from the two existing Coroner areas are already based in Liverpool	All costs are met by Merseyside Police and they will not be affected by the proposed merger. The ten Officers from the two existing Coroner areas are already based in Liverpool	All costs are met by Merseyside Police and they will not be affected by the proposed merger. The ten Officers from the two existing Coroner areas are already based in Liverpool	All costs are met by Merseyside Police and they will not be affected by the proposed merger. The ten Officers from the two existing Coroner areas are already based in Liverpool	All costs are met by Merseyside Police and they will not be affected by the proposed merger. The ten Officers from the two existing Coroner areas are already based in Liverpool

Category	Liverpool	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2012/13 (Full year Costs)	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2013/14 (9 Months from Apr-13 to Dec-13)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 (9 Months from Jan-14 to Sep)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 Projection for 12 Months	Liverpool & Wirral
Salary costs of administrative staff (including National Insurance and pension contributions)	£84,125.00 In 2013/14 £91,812.00 Projected for 2014/15	£30,084	£20,771 (Coroners Clerk 2013/14 Costs Apr- Dec 2013)	£21,819	£30,936	£121,029 (based on proposed Administrative Support Team)
Staff accommodation	Projected costs for the Courthouse 2014/15 (Part Year) £107,113 Full Year estimate £117,750	£13,200 (Admin Buildings Charge for 2012/13)	£13,200 (Admin Buildings Charge for 2013/14)	£13,200 (Admin Buildings Charge)	£0	Full Year estimate £117,750
Inquest accommodation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	£8,000 (Estimated pa for Birkenhead Town Hall)	£8,000 (Birkenhead Town Hall)

Category	Liverpool	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2012/13 (Full year Costs)	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2013/14 (9 Months from Apr-13 to Dec-13)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 (9 Months from Jan-14 to Sep)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 Projection for 12 Months	Liverpool & Wirral
IT costs	Annual Recharge 2013/14 £19,312 Proposed 2014/15 £19,202	£2,454	£3,908 (2013/14 costs Apr-Dec)	£2,957	£3,321	£22,633 (Liverpool 2013/14 Costs plus Wirral 2014/15 12 Month Projection)
Post mortem/Pathologist costs etc	2013/14 £270,504 Apr-Sept 2014 £101,469	2012/13 £171,728	2013/14 £129,221 (Apr-Dec)	2014/15 £72,439 (Jan-Sep)	£77,893	£348,397 pa (Liverpool 2013/14 Costs plus Wirral 2014/15 12 Month Projection)
Other costs?	2013/14 Mortuary Fees £177,271 Toxicology £157,855.00 Removal Contract	2012/13 Mortuary & Toxicology Fees £103,200	2013/14 (Apr-Dec) Mortuary Fees £61,673	2014/15 (Jan-Jun) Mortuary £68,742 Toxicology £71,394 Removal Contract	 Mortuary £103,200 Toxicology £76,770 Removal Contract	 Mortuary £280,471 Toxicology £234,625 Removal Contract

Category	Liverpool	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2012/13 (Full year Costs)	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2013/14 (9 Months from Apr-13 to Dec-13)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 (9 Months from Jan-14 to Sep)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 Projection for 12 Months	Liverpool & Wirral
	£45,605 Apr-Sept 2014 Mortuary Fees £68,584 Toxicology £74,310 Removal Contract £26,491	Jurors & Witness £4,337 Transport £2,005 Internal Recharges £13,968	Jurors & Witness £11,118 Transport £1,101 Internal Recharges £2,437	£18,913 Jurors & Witness £2,192 Transport £21 Internal Recharges £2,437	£20,337 Jurors & Witness £3,000 Transport £1,600 Internal Recharges £2,437	£65,942 Jurors & Witness £3,000 Transport £1,600 Internal Recharges £2,500 (Liverpool 2013/14 Costs plus Wirral 2014/15 12 Month Projection)
TOTAL	2013/14 £898,022 2014/15 (Apr to Sep) £509,918	£347,676	£248,426	£278,514	£334,194	£1,349,547

Category	Liverpool	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2012/13 (Full year Costs)	Wirral – Previous Arrangement 2013/14 (9 Months from Apr-13 to Dec-13)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 (9 Months from Jan-14 to Sep)	Wirral – New Arrangement 2014/15 Projection for 12 Months	Liverpool & Wirral
Total Table A and Table B	2013/14 £1,030,498 2014/15 (Apr-Sep) £653,414	£492,497 (£129,129 of basic costs plus £15,692 additional)	£334,482	£323,167	£397,838	£1,506,604

NOTE:

Mortuary, Pathology and Toxicology Fees are estimated as they are paid in arrears and dependent upon receipt of invoices. Accommodation costs for the Courthouse are yet to be determined.

Wirral – Previous Arrangement	Liverpool – Previous Arrangement	Wirral & Liverpool Combined – Previous Arrangement	Liverpool & Wirral - New Arrangement	Saving (anticipated)
£603,797 (includes costs of an area coroner)	£1,141,798 (includes costs of an area coroner)	£1,745,595 (includes costs of an area coroner)	£1,506,604	£238,991*

* Minus any accommodation costs.

COST COMPARISON

Expenditure	Liverpool 2013/14	Wirral 2012/13	Projected Full Year Cost of Merged Service
Coroner	£132,472	£144,821	£157,057
Office Costs			
Area Coroner	£111,300	£111,300	£111,300
Fees for Assistant Coroners	£25,600	£6,700	£32,300
Admin Staff Salary Costs	£84,125	£30,084	£121,029
	£117,750	£13,200	£117,750
Inquest Accommodation	£0	£0	£8,000
IT	£19,312	£2,454	£22,633
Post Mortems	£270,054	£171,728	£348,397
Mortuary	£177,271	£103,200	£280,471
Toxicology	£157,855	£0	£234,625
Removals	£45,605	£0	£65,942
Jurors	£0	£4,337	£3,000
Transport	£0	£2,005	£1,600
Internal Recharge	£0	£13,968	£2,500
Total	£1,141,798	£603,797	£1,506,604

Breakdown of Proposed New Employee Costs				
Proposed Coroners Costs	Gross	NI	Super	Total
Senior Coroner	127,038.00	14,101	15,918	157,057
Area Coroner	90,000.00	9,100	12,200	111,300
Coroner Support Team	97,897.00	10,867.00	12,266.00	81,029.00
TOTAL	314,935.00	34,068	40,384	389,354
Area/Assistant Coroners - Proposed Costs	Assume the same level of expenditure as 2012-13			
Transport	Assume the same level of expenditure as 2012-13			
Supplies and Services	Assume the same level of expenditure as 2012-13			

ELECTED MAYOR and COUNCILLOR SCHEDULE

WIRRAL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL			
Name	Email Address	Name	Email Address
Councillor Ron Abbey	ronabbey@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Anita Leech	anitaleech@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Tom Anderson	tomanderson@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Ann McLachlan	annmclachlan@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Bruce Berry	bruceberry@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Moira McLaughlin	moiramclaughlin@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Chris Blakeley	chrisblakeley@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Chris Meaden	chrismeaden@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Eddie Boulton	eddieboulton@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Dave Mitchell	davemitchell@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Alan Brighthouse	alanbrighthouse@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Bernie Mooney	berniemooney@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Phillip Brightmore	phillipbrightmore@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Christina Muspratt	christinamuspratt@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Chris Carubia	chriscarubia@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Steve Niblock	steveniblock@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Pat Cleary	patcleary@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Tony Norbury	tonynorbury@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Wendy Clements	wendyclements@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Matthew Patrick	matthewpatrick@wirral.gov.uk

Councillor Jim Crabtree	jimcrabtree@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Tracey Pilgrim	traceysmith1@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Matt Daniel	matthewdaniel@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Cherry Povall	cherrypovall@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor George Davies	georgedavies@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Denise Realey	deniserealey@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Phil Davies	phildavies@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Louise Reecejones	louiserecejones@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Bill Davies	billdavies@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Lesley Rennie	lesleyrennie@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Paul Doughty	pauldoughty@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Denise Roberts	deniseroberts@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor David M Elderton	davidelderton@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Les Rowlands	lesrowlands@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Gerry Ellis	gerryellis@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor John Salter	johnsalter@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Steve Foulkes	stevefoulkes@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Harry Smith	harrysmith@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Leah Fraser	leahfraser@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Tony Smith	tonysmith@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Phil Gilchrist	philgilchrist@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Walter Smith	waltersmith@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Jeff Green	jeffgreen@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Chris Spriggs	christinespriggs@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Robert Gregson	robgregson@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Jean Stapleton	jeanstapleton@wirral.gov.uk

Councillor Pat Hackett	pathackett@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Michael Sullivan	mikesullivan@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor John Hale	johnhale@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Adam Sykes	adamsykes@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Paul Hayes	paulhayes@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Joe Walsh	joewalsh@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Andrew Hodson	andrewhodson@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Geoffrey Watt	geoffreywatt@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Kathy Hodson	kathyhodson@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Stuart Whittingham	stuartwhittingham@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Mike Hornby	mikehornby@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Irene Williams	irenewilliams@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Treena Johnson	treenajohnson@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Jerry Williams	jerrywilliams@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Adrian Jones	adrianjones@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Mrs Pat Williams	patriciawilliams@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Chris Jones	christinejones@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Steve Williams	stevewilliams@wirral.gov.uk
Councillor Stuart Kelly	stuartkelly@wirral.gov.uk	Councillor Janette Williamson	janwilliamson@wirral.gov.uk

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

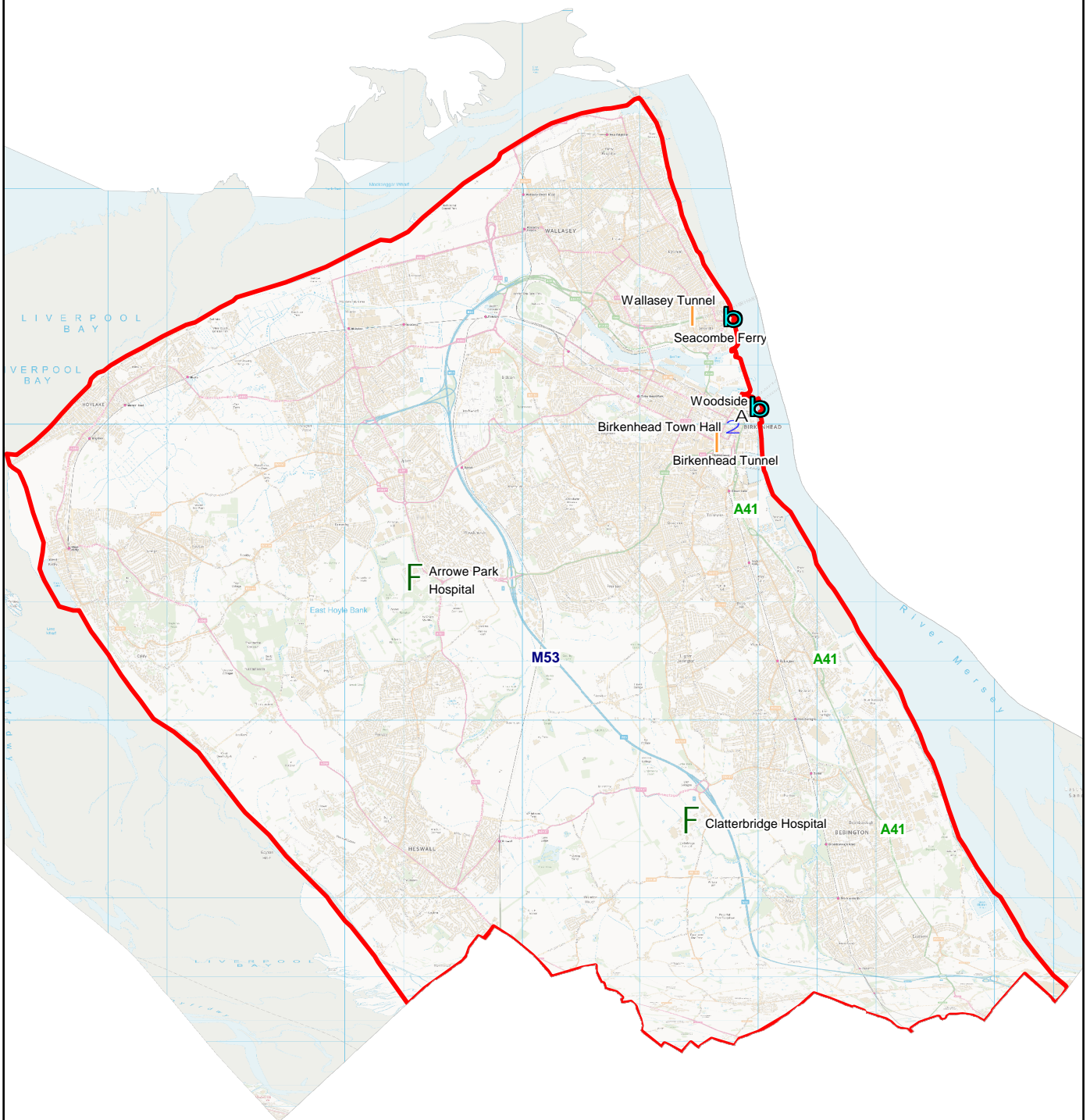
Name	Email Address	Name	Email Address
Mayor Joe Anderson	mayor@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Barry Kushner	barry.kushner@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Louise Ashton-Armstrong	louise.ashton-armstrong@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Barbara Mace	barbara.mace@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Mary Aspinall	mary.aspinall@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Colin McAlley	Colin.McAlley@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Christine Banks	christine.banks2@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor John McIntosh	john.mcintosh@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Daniel Barrington	daniel.barrington@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Richard McLinden	richard.mclinden@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Tim Beaumont	tim.beaumont@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Gary Millar	gary.millar@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Peter Brennan	peter.brennan2@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Peter Mitchell	peter.mitchell@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Laurence Brown	Laurence.Brown@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Timothy Moore	timothy.moore@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Debbie Caine	Debbie.Caine@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Jake Morrison	jake.morrison@liverpool.gov.uk

Councillor Joanne Calvert	joanne.calvert@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Kevin Morrison	Kevin.Morrison@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Helen Casstles	helen.casstles@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Steve Munby	stephen.munby@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Peter Clarke	peterdclarke060@yahoo.co.uk	Councillor Barbara Murray	barbara.murray@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Tony Concepcion	No e-mail.	Councillor Stephanie Navarro	stephanie.navarro@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Jane Corbett	jane.corbett@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Nathalie Nicholas	nathalie.nicholas@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Michelle Corrigan	michelle.corrigan@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor James Noakes	james.noakes@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor John Coyne	john.coyne@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Mark Norris	mark.norris@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Nick Crofts	nick.crofts@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Ann O'Byrne	ann.o'byrne@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Thomas Crone	Thomas.Crone@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Rachael O'Byrne	rachael.o'byrne@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Martin Cummins	martin.cummins@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Lana Orr	lana.orr@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Alan Dean	alan.dean@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Eryl Owen	eryl.owen@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Adele Dowling	b.dowling@virgin.net	Councillor Frank Prendergast	frank.prendergast@liverpool.gov.uk

Councillor Brian Dowling	brian.dowling@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor John Prince	john.prince@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Andrew Foxley	Andrew.Foxley@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Abdul Qadir	abdul.qadir@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Beatrice Fraenkel	beatrice.fraenkel@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Steve Radford	northwestliberalparty@hotmail.co.uk
Councillor Ian Francis	ian.francis@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Irene Rainey	irene.rainey@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Roy Gladden	rbgladden@gmail.com	Councillor Mary Rasmussen	mary.rasmussen@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Roz Gladden	roz.gladden@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor James Roberts	james.roberts2@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Claire Glare	claire.glare@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Laura Robertson-Collins	laura.robertson-collins@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Dave Hanratty	dave.hanratty@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Liam Robinson	liam.robinson@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Joseph Hanson	joseph.hanson@liverpool.gov.uk ; jhanson6@hotmail.co.uk	Councillor Anna Rothery	anna.rothery@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Cheryl Harrison	Cheryl.Harrison@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Wendy Simon	wendy.simon@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Sue Heron	Sue.Heron@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Nick Small	nick.small@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Lynn Hinnigan	Lynn.Hinnigan@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Emily Spurrell	emily.spurrell@liverpool.gov.uk

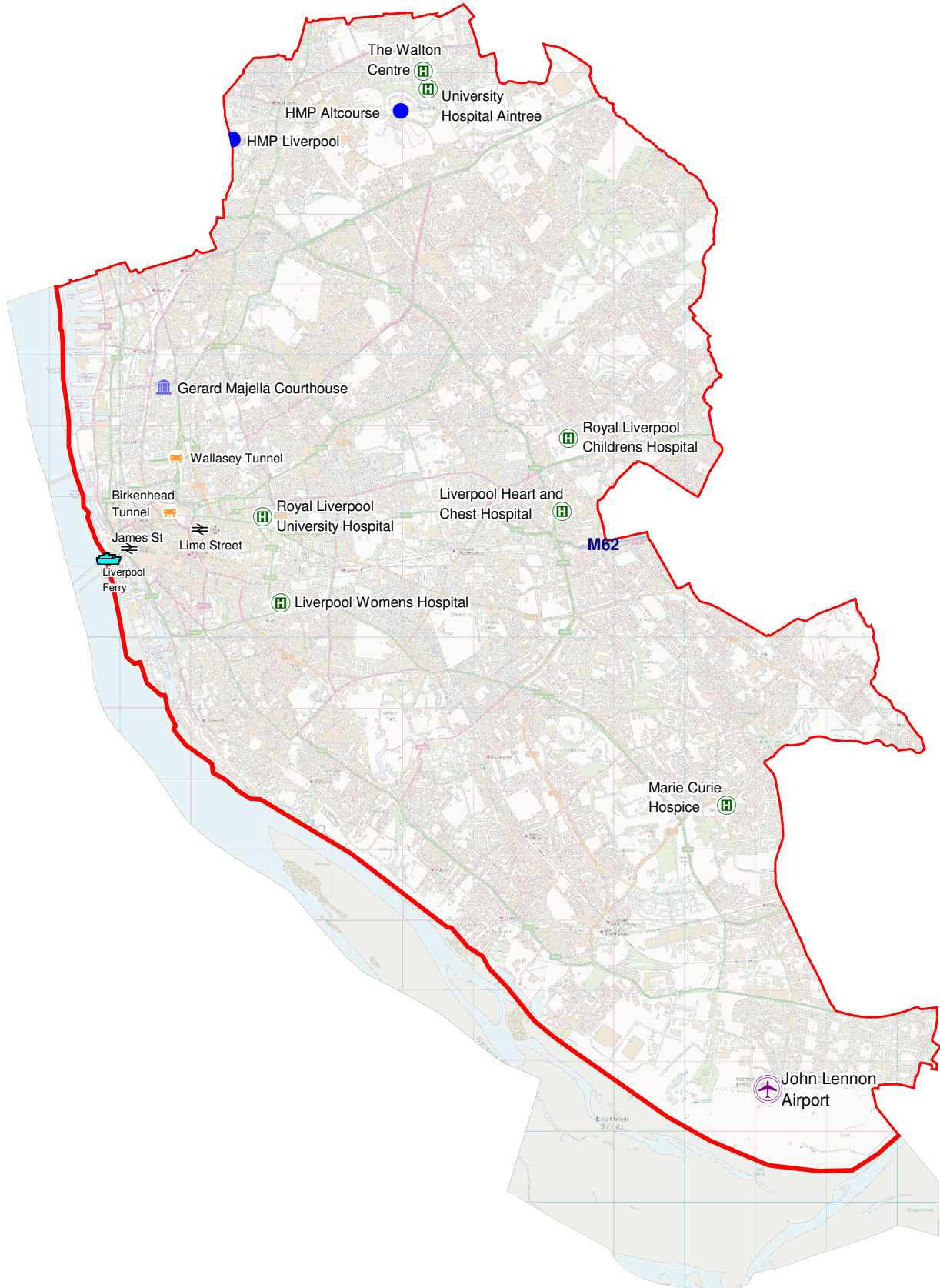
Councillor Ruth Hirschfield	ruth.hirschfield@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Colin Strickland	colin.strickland@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Frank Hont	frank.hont@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Sharon Sullivan	sharon.sullivan@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Dan Hughes	dan.hughes@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Ged Taylor	ged.taylor@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Patrick Hurley	cllr.patrick.hurley@gmail.com	Councillor Pam Thomas	pamela.thomas@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Sarah Jennings	sarah.jennings@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Hayley Todd	hayleytodd@tiscali.co.uk
Councillor Ian Jobling	ian.jobling@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Alan Walker	alan.walker@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Rosie Jolly	rosie.jolly@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Pauline Walton	pauline.walton@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Bill Jones	william-jones5@sky.com	Councillor Richard Wenstone	Richard.Wenstone@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Erica Kemp	erica.kemp@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Hazel Williams	hazel.williams@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Richard Kemp	richard.kemp@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Jeremy Wolfson	jeremy.wolfson@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Malcolm Kennedy	malcolm.kennedy@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Hetty Wood	hetty.wood@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Janet Kent	janet.kent@liverpool.gov.uk	Councillor Gerard Woodhouse	gerard.woodhouse@liverpool.gov.uk
Councillor Doreen Knight	doreen.knight@liverpool.gov.uk		

Wirral Coroner Area



This page is intentionally left blank

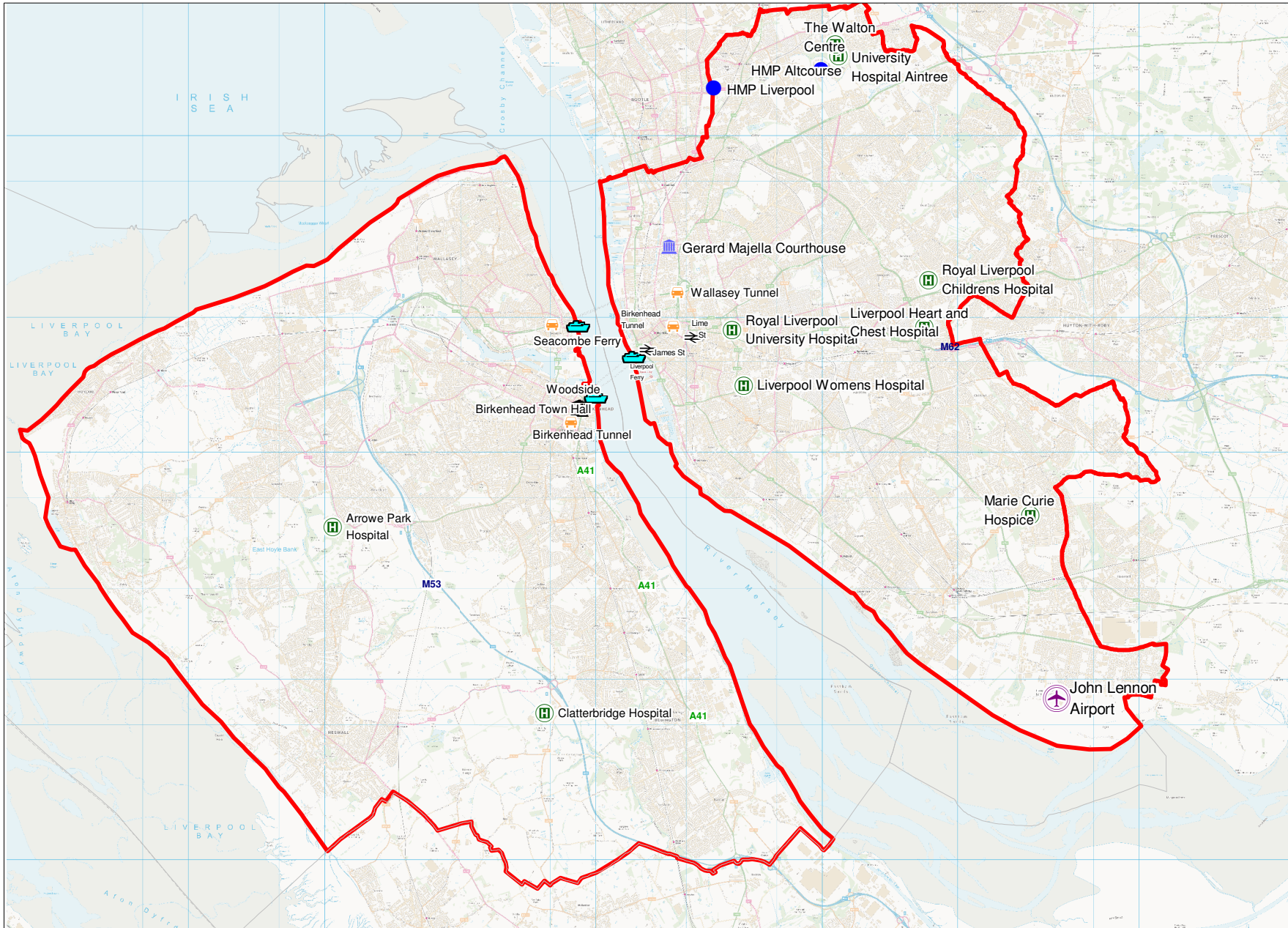
Liverpool Coroner Area



This page is intentionally left blank

Liverpool and Wirral Coroner Area

Page 139



This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL

Time Taken to Conclude Inquests

	Up to 1 Month	1 to 3 Months	3 to 6 Months	6 to 12 Months	Over 12 Months	
2007	25	113	98	36	18	290
2008	28	105	94	26	19	272
2009	17	71	104	44	11	247
2010	30	62	89	59	12	252
2011	34	51	95	52	27	259
2012	29	32	113	65	27	266
2013	20	34	93	74	33	254
2014	100	49	19	29	38	235
(To 31/10)						

	Up to 1 Month	Up to 3 Months	Up to 6 Months	Over 6 Months	Over 12 Months	Totals
2007	9%	39%	34%	12%	6%	100%
2008	10%	39%	35%	10%	7%	100%
2009	7%	29%	42%	18%	4%	100%
2010	12%	25%	35%	23%	5%	100%
2011	13%	20%	37%	20%	10%	100%
2012	11%	12%	42%	24%	10%	100%
2013	8%	13%	37%	29%	13%	100%
2014	43%	21%	8%	12%	16%	100%

**Inquests
Outstanding
at Year End**

2007	52
2008	64
2009	98
2010	104
2011	105
2012	126
2013	116
2014	39

Inquests Outstanding	As at 31/12/13	Still O/S as at 31/10/14		Deaths Reported	Post Mortems	Post Mortem Rate
Over 2 Years	11	2	2007	1788	716	40%
Over 18 Mths	11	1	2008	1621	639	39%
Over 12 Mths	11	0	2009	1737	665	38%
Over 6 Mths	28	0	2010	1681	615	37%
Over 3 Mths	27	1	2011	1501	463	31%
Up to 3 Mths	28	0	2012	1578	569	36%
	116		2013	1622	535	33%
			2014	1349	301	22%
			(To 31/10)			

CABINET

6 NOVEMBER 2014

91 CAR PARKING SCRUTINY REVIEW

Councillor Stuart Whittingham introduced a report by the Chair of the Car Parking Scrutiny Panel that provided background information on the report of the Car Parking Scrutiny Review. The report had been approved by the Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee and referred to the Cabinet for further consideration. Attached to the report was the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Final Report, dated September 2014.

The Cabinet noted that a Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel, consisting of seven Members, had been set up in November 2013. The membership of the Panel was Councillors Paul Doughty (Chair), Jim Crabtree, Anita Leech, Jerry Williams, Leah Fraser, Steve Williams and Alan Brighthouse.

Councillor Paul Doughty was in attendance at the meeting and guided the Cabinet through the Panel's Final Report setting out the key elements, answering Members' questions and informing that he considered that the Panel had provided broad recommendations that would, hopefully, help the Cabinet to agree a progressive and convenient Car Parking Strategy as the outcome of the review had been to inform a coherent; evidence based Car Parking Strategy that considered revenue, users' requirements and the local economy.

It was reported that the review had been conducted over a number of meetings with the assistance of appropriate Council officers between January and July 2014. Information had been provided as requested by the Review Panel to allow detailed question and answer sessions to be carried out. The Panel had also considered town centre economic viability and the effect that the harmonisation of charges had on usage and the policies of similar sized authorities with similar competition from larger commercial and retail offers.

The Final Report had been presented to the meeting of the Policy and Performance - Regeneration and Environment Committee held on 22 September 2014 and the Cabinet had regard to the outcome which was detailed in the report (Minute No. 13 refers) as follows:

'At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Paul Doughty introduced the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Final Report, which had been undertaken by a Task and Finish Panel that he had chaired and which also comprised Councillors Alan Brighthouse, Jim Crabtree, Leah Fraser, Anita Leech, Jerry Williams and Steve Williams.

The detailed report set out the context for the Review and its scope and methodology. It recognised that the pressures on retail and commercial centres were many and varied and that a Car Parking Strategy should be supportive of the economic sustainability of each of the centres. Following research and discussion of the approach taken by other, similar local authorities, the Panel

had proposed a number of 'Objectives' and 'Principles' to provide a guiding framework for any future Strategy and considered that they were in full harmony with the Council's Corporate Plan. Councillor Paul Doughty highlighted the Panel's findings, which had resulted in a range of recommendations for consideration, related to pricing, technology and demand based decision making. It had not been the role of the Panel to formulate a Car Parking Strategy but it was hoped that its recommendations would provide a suitable framework. Councillor Doughty thanked the Members of the Panel and the support officers for the considerable work they had undertaken. He also drew the attention of the Committee to a minor error in Table 1.2 of the Review and circulated a correction.

A Member referred to considerable increased parking charges, particularly in Heswall and West Kirby and expressed a view that such increases were detrimental to the local economy. He also commented that it was not acceptable to charge Medical Centre patients for parking at West Kirby Concourse. As locations for increased parking charges were not specified in the Review, he could not support its recommendations.

The Chair indicated that the Review made no such recommendation and anticipated that the detail of any future Car Parking Strategy prepared by officers would be subject to consultation. He commented also that there had been cross party involvement in the Panel and he commended its recommendations.

Resolved (12:2) –

- (1) That the Scrutiny Review and its recommendations be endorsed.**
- (2) That the Review be referred to the Cabinet for approval.'**

Councillor Stuart Whittingham thanked the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Panel and everyone involved in the Review for the Final Report. He proposed that, because of the potential budget implications, that the Cabinet note the content of the Car Parking Scrutiny Review Final Report and it be considered in detail at the same time as the Cabinet considered the Council's budget options.

Councillor Phil Davies informed the Cabinet that he considered it refreshing to see the recommendations that the Scrutiny Review Panel had made and he welcomed the Panel's proposals around looking at demand and the viability of shopping centres.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham addressed the Cabinet about the present cost of living crisis because wages had not kept up with prices and that, coupled with the rise in zero hours contracts, meant that many people were not feeling the benefits of any recovery in the economy. It was noted that this cost of living crisis was also having an adverse effect on local businesses in Wirral's shopping areas.

As an authority the Council was committed to supporting local town centres in its administrative area and Members were very aware that Christmas was an important

time for both families and local businesses. With this in mind, Councillor Stuart Whittingham requested the Cabinet to support the following recommendations to the Council as they constituted a change to the Council's budgetary framework:

'That

- (1) from Tuesday, 9 December until the end of December 2014 the Council cuts the cost of parking in Council owned car parks by introducing free parking after 3pm;
- (2) on Boxing Day and New Year's Day the Council provides free all day parking in Council owned car parks; and
- (3) Officers be instructed to evaluate any change in usage in Council owned car parks compared to previous years.

Councillor Whittingham told the Cabinet that he believed that if these recommendations were agreed by the Council, they would go some way to easing the burden on families and help support local businesses at this important time of year. The financial impact could be met from existing approved budgets.

Councillor Phil Davies reported that if the Council was to agree these recommendations, residents and local businesses would welcome the announcement. The proposals provided a real lifeline to some businesses that were operating on the margin

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet will give consideration to the recommendations set out in Car Parking Scrutiny Review Final Report at the same time as it gives consideration to the Council's budget options for 2014/15; and**
- (2) Council be RECOMMENDED to agree: That**
 - (a) from Tuesday, 9 December until the end of December 2014 the Council cuts the cost of parking in Council owned car parks by introducing free parking after 3pm;**
 - (b) on Boxing Day and New Year's Day the Council provide free all day parking in Council owned car parks; and**
 - (c) officers be instructed to evaluate any change in usage in Council owned car parks over the time periods set out in (a) and (b) above, compared to previous years.**

This page is intentionally left blank

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (CHIEF EXECUTIVE)

Monday, 24 November 2014

Present: Councillors P Davies JE Green
AR McLachlan L Rennie
G Davies P Gilchrist
AER Jones

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor George Davies, seconded by Councillor McLachlan, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Phil Davies take the Chair of this Panel.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

3 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE, HEAD OF PAID SERVICE (INCLUDING RETURNING OFFICER AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER)

Further to minute 4 of the Employment and Appointments Committee (27/1/14) the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development presented a report on recruitment process for the appointment of a new Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service.

The report gave details of issues for consideration and decision, including:

- Appropriate salary for the role
- Role of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer
- Requirements of the role as defined in the Job Description and Person Specification
- Proposed selection process and timetable
- Interim arrangements

With regard to the salary for the role, appendices to the report gave comparative data for Chief Executive salaries and population size; by

workforce size and across different types of local authorities. The workforce size data had become less relevant for comparative purposes. This was because Councils of similar scope and size in terms of population and community chose to organise differently in terms of the way they employed people to deliver the work e.g. commissioning, outsourcing models. There was therefore wide variance in the 'per fte' figure.

Comparative salary data for Chief Officers reporting to Chief Executives in North West Authorities was also attached as an appendix, as applicants for the Chief Executive role at Wirral were likely to come from the next tier of Chief Officers. The Council therefore needed to consider the tier two salaries compared to Wirral's Chief Executive salary to ensure that it attracted suitable candidates.

The Chair introduced the external advisors for the Panel, Martin Denny from the Local Government Association and David Slatter from Penna Recruitment Consultants.

Mr Slatter said that with regard to the salary range there were two points that needed to be addressed, first, the need for it to be at a level to attract quality candidates, and secondly that it was at a level to retain in post the appointee for, he suggested at least five years. He recommended a range of between £155,000 to £175,000, although an appointment did not necessarily have to be made at the top of the range. Mr Denny concurred with the need to set a suitably salary range to attract quality candidates.

Responding to a query from Councillor Gilchrist, the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development stated that the figures for salaries of senior officers (appendix 3) showed these as percentages of the current Chief Executive salary and would not be fixed that they would automatically increase based on a higher Chief Executive salary. There were no recommendations to alter these salaries.

In respect of comparative data and the ratio of average salaries to the Chief Executive's (appendix 8), Wirral's lowest salary was £14,736 p.a. as an employer which paid the living wage, this was higher than some other authorities which paid at the starting point of the Local Government pay scale from £13,500. This data was provided by every Local Authority in their published Pay Policies.

Councillor Green commented that with oncosts of approximately 22 per cent the Council would, with the proposed salary increase, be looking to spend near enough £1m for a five year appointment for one person. He suggested that the market could be tested first to see what sort of candidates applied on the current salary level.

Councillor McLachlan commented upon the need to attract the best possible candidates and the need to pitch the salary at the appropriate level as was the case in other parts of the public sector.

The Leader of the Council stated that it was hoped to attract not just Strategic Directors but also serving Chief Executives from elsewhere. He referred to the comparative data of neighbouring authorities all of which were paying higher salaries and the need to listen to the expert advisors to the Panel. Councillor Green's suggestion would only lead to a delay in the recruitment process.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development responding to comments and questions – the salary scale had not been reviewed for the last three Chief Executives including at one time a spot salary of £130,000.

It was moved by Councillor Green and seconded by Councillor Rennie, that –

“A new Chief Executive be sought on the current salary grade.”

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor McLachlan, that –

“Wirral Council is the ninth largest metropolitan authority in the country. The current salary of the Chief Executive is not sufficiently competitive given the size and scope of the authority.

Given the external advice from the Local Government Association and Penna Plc, acting recruitment consultants, this Panel recommends to Council, at its meeting on 8 December 2014, that:

- (i). the salary range for the Chief Executive be agreed between £155,000 - £175,000 per annum; and
- (ii). the final salary for the Chief Executive be agreed (within the salary range) by the Employment and Appointments Panel as part of the recruitment process.”

The amendment was put and carried (4:3).

The substantive motion was then put and carried (4:3).

Resolved (4:3) –

(1) Wirral Council is the ninth largest metropolitan authority in the country. The current salary of the Chief Executive is not sufficiently competitive given the size and scope of the authority.

Given the external advice from the Local Government Association and Penna Plc, acting recruitment consultants, this Panel recommends to Council, at its meeting on 8 December 2014, that:

- (i). the salary range for the Chief Executive be agreed between £155,000 - £175,000 per annum; and**
- (ii).the final salary for the Chief Executive be agreed (within the salary range) by the Employment and Appointments Panel as part of the recruitment process.**

Further recommendations were then put and carried unanimously and the Panel –

Resolved (unanimously) –

- (2) That the job description and person specification, be approved.**
- (3) That the proposed process and timescales for appointment of a new Chief Executive (who shall also be appointed as the Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer) as outlined in appendices two and eleven to the report, be approved.**
- (4) That this Panel recommends to Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014 that David Armstrong be appointed to the position of Acting Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, with effect from 1 January 2015 until the newly appointed Chief Executive takes up the position, and as Deputy Chief Executive from 8 December to 31 December, 2014.**
- (5) That this Panel recommends to Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014, the appointment of Surjit Tour, Head of Legal and Member Services, as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, and that Joe Blott, Strategic Director: Transformation and Resources is appointed as Deputy Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, both effective from 1 January 2015 until the newly appointed Chief Executive takes up the position.**

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES)

Monday, 24 November 2014

Present: Councillors P Davies JE Green
AR McLachlan L Rennie
G Davies P Gilchrist
AER Jones

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor Adrian Jones, seconded by Councillor McLachlan, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Phil Davies take the Chair of this Panel.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

3 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER

The Chair announced that it was proposed to put the recruitment process on hold for the appointment of new Director of Resources until a new Chief Executive had been appointed to enable him/her to have an involvement in the process.

Responding to comments from Members the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development stated that it was intended to have a new Chief Executive appointed by Council on 24 February, 2015.

The Strategic Director of Transformation and Resources assured the Panel that the proposed Acting Section 151 Officer would be able to focus wholly on the financial arrangements of the Council.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor McLachlan, it was –

Resolved –

- (1) That the process for the recruitment of a Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer be put on hold until a new Chief Executive has been appointed.**
- (2) That this Panel recommends to Council at its meeting on 8 December 2014 that:**
 - (i). Tom Sault, Head of Financial Services, be appointed as Acting Section 151 Officer, and Jenny Spick, Finance Manager, as Deputy Acting Section 151 Officer.**
 - (ii). Mike Zammit, Chief Information Officer, be appointed as Acting Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO).**

MATTERS FOR NOTING

CABINET – 9 OCTOBER 2014

61 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 (MONTH 5) - REVENUE

The Leader of the Council introduced a report by the Director of Resources which set out the revenue position for 2014/15, which at Month 5 (August 2014) showed a projected General Fund overspend of £3.19 million (1.3% of the net revenue budget). This was an improvement compared with a projected overspend reported at month 4 of £3.68 million. The report also provided further details of the measures being undertaken to address the General Fund overspend as requested by the Cabinet when it considered the Month 4 report at its 11 September 2014 meeting (Minute No. 46 refers).

The Cabinet noted that the projected overspend originated in the main from the Families and Wellbeing Directorate. Adult Social Services were currently projecting a £2.7 million overspend. This was mainly due to slippage or non-delivery of in-year savings and demand pressures. The Children's area of the Directorate was also forecasting an overspend of £543,000. This was mainly due to non-achievement of in year transport savings as well as the costs of external residential placements. It was noted that a series of management actions were taking place within the Families and Wellbeing Directorate to help compensate and/or limit any variances.

Appended to the report was the Revenue Monitoring and Reporting Timetable 2014/15, the General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/15 agreed by the Council on 25 February 2014, Monitoring Full Details, Growth and Risk, Income and Debt and Accounts Receivable.

The Leader informed that there were ongoing pressures within the two Departments and that officers were working hard to address the particular issues and keep within budget. It was both difficult and challenging within the Departments because the pressures being faced were demand led.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet notes that at Month 5 (August 2014), the full year forecast projects a General Fund overspend of £3,189,000; and**
- (2) Cabinet notes the risks relating to non delivery of savings as detailed within the report and the continued requirement for mitigation and actions to be identified.**

62 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 (MONTH 5) - CAPITAL

The Leader of the Council introduced a report by the Director of Resources which set out the capital position for 2014 to Month 5 (August 2014) and the Cabinet noted that, at this stage of the year, no variances had, as yet, been identified which would impact on the forecasted year end outturn.

The report provided information which outlined the 2014/15 Capital Programme and the sources of funding. Appended to the report were the Revised Capital Programme and Funding and Capital Receipts.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the spend to date at Month 4 of £9.8 million, with 42% of the financial year having elapsed be noted;**
- (2) the revised Capital Programme of £60.5 million be agreed; and**
- (3) the Capital Programme be amended to include the Flood Risk Management works funded by Grant (£15,000) referred to in paragraph 3.28 of the report.**

CABINET – 6 NOVEMBER 2014

79 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 (MONTH 6) - REVENUE

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Director of Resources which set out the revenue position for 2014/15, which at Month 6 (September 2014) showed a projected General Fund overspend of £2.69 million (1% of the net revenue budget). It was noted that this was an improvement compared with a projected overspend reported at month 5 of £3.19 million.

The Cabinet also noted that the projected overspend originated in the main from the Families and Wellbeing Directorate. Adult Social Services were currently projecting a £2.7 million overspend. This was mainly due to slippage or non-delivery of in-year savings and demand pressures. The Children's area of the Directorate was also forecasting an overspend of £545,000. This was mainly due to non-achievement of in year transport savings as well as the costs of external residential placements. It was noted that a series of management actions were taking place within the Families and Wellbeing Directorate to help compensate and/or limit any variances.

Appended to the report was the Revenue Monitoring and Reporting Timetable 2014/15, the General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/15 agreed by the Council at its meeting on 25 February 2014, Monitoring Full Details, Growth and Risk, Income and Debt and Accounts Receivable.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Cabinet notes that at Month 6 (September 2014), the full year forecast projects a General Fund overspend of £2,688,000; and**
- (2) the Cabinet also notes the risks relating to non-delivery of savings as detailed within the report and the continued requirement for mitigation and actions to be identified.**

80 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2014/15 (MONTH 6) - CAPITAL

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report by the Director of Resources which set out the capital position for 2014 to Month 6 (September 2014) and the Cabinet noted that a number of variances had, been identified which would impact on the outturn (Table 2). The report provided information which outlined the 2014/15 Capital Programme and the sources of financing.

The Cabinet noted, in particular, that the re-profiling of the Capital Programme following a half year review, plus previously agreed changes had reduced the borrowing requirement for 2014/15 by £8.8 million. The slippage would result in a one-off financing saving in 2014/15 of £800,000. Consequently, Councillor Phil Davies thanked everyone who had been involved with this. The full budget would be required in 2015/16 when the re-profiled expenditure occurred.

Appended to the report were the Revised Capital Programme and Funding and Capital Receipts.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the spend to date at Month 6 of £12.7 million, with 50% of the financial year having elapsed be noted; and**
- (2) the revised Capital Programme of £46.7 million be agreed.**

92 YOUTH EMPLOYMENT GATEWAY (YOUTH CONTRACT UNDERSPEND)

Councillor Pat Hackett introduced a report by the Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment that informed Members of the outcome of a Liverpool City Region (LCR) bid that had successfully secured £5.9m of funds from the national Youth Contract Underspend Programme to support young people into sustainable employment. The report provided an overview of the Programme and the opportunity for the Council to deliver activity to reduce youth unemployment in Wirral.

The Cabinet was informed that Knowsley Council was the accountable body for these funds across the city region and delegated authority was sought for the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Member Services to accept funds from Knowsley Council, commence a competitive procurement procedure and subsequently appoint a supplier to deliver this Programme on Wirral on behalf of the Council.

The Strategic Director proposed that the call-in period for this report be waived to enable the procurement procedure to commence at the earliest opportunity and enable delivery on Wirral to start in this financial year. The Chief Executive agreed that the decision proposed was reasonable in all the circumstances and that it be treated as a matter of urgency in accordance with Standing Order No. 35(10)(a).

The Cabinet noted that it was a requirement of the funding that the Council secured additional European Union funds to add to the Programme. Authorisation was sought

for the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, to submit a bid and, subject to a successful application, accept the funds.

Appendix 1 to the report contained commercially sensitive information regarding a future competitive tendering process, the disclosure of which was not considered to be appropriate. Accordingly, it was deemed to be exempt from disclosure under paragraph 3, Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). Appendix 1 was attached to the agenda at Item No. 24. – Exempt Appendix – Youth Employment Gateway - (Minute No. 97 refers)

Councillor Phil Davies informed the Cabinet that he was pleased that the outcome had been to successfully attract £5.9m of funding from the national Youth Contract Underspend Programme with additional money from Europe. This outlined the strength of the City Region. He also reported that he had signed a growth deal with the Minister the previous day.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) the investment of £5.9m from the national youth contract Underspend Programme to deliver activity to reduce youth unemployment across the Liverpool City Region be welcomed;**
- (2) on receipt of a finalised funding offer letter from Knowsley Council authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Member Services to finalise and accept the grant agreement offer on behalf of the Council;**
- (3) the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment be authorised to commence a competitive procurement procedure and subsequently accept the most economically advantageous tender to select a supplier to deliver the Youth Employment Gateway programme in Wirral;**
- (4) the call-in period for the recommendations in this report be waived to enable the procurement procedure to commence at the earliest opportunity and enable delivery of the Youth Employment Gateway programme in Wirral to commence this financial year; and**
- (5) the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment be authorised to submit a bid for European Union's funds, namely European Social Fund and Youth Employment Initiative, to seek additional funds for the Youth Employment Gateway Programme and, subject to a successful application, accept the funding offer letter in consultation with the Head of Legal and Member Services.**

FAMILIES AND WELLBEING POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

9 SEPTEMBER 2014

16 COUNCIL REFERRAL - NOTICE OF MOTION 'BECOMING A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY COUNCIL'

The Chair advised that at the meeting of the Council held on 14 July 2014 (minute 17 refers), the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor T Anderson and seconded by Councillor T Smith was referred by the Mayor to this Committee for consideration.

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillor Anderson had been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion. In accordance with Standing Order 7 (5), any recommendation from the Committee in relation to the Notice of Motion would be referred to the Council. Any debate at Council should take place upon the recommendation of the Committee and there should be no separate debate upon the motion itself.

Councillor Anderson asked the Committee to support the Motion for this Authority to become a “dementia friendly” Council and offers its support to the Alzheimer’s Society.

Members gave their full support to the Motion and indicated that it was vital that all officers and Members undertake the appropriate training to enable them share best practices.

BECOMING A ‘DEMENTIA FRIENDLY’ COUNCIL

Council:

1. Recognises that dementia is becoming a serious issue in society and is alarmed that one in three people over 65 will be diagnosed with dementia.
2. Applauds the great work that the Alzheimer’s Society is doing in aiming to get 1 million people trained as a ‘Dementia Friend’ by the end of the year.
3. Notes Dementia Friends is a national programme that takes a maximum of 1 hour educating people on dementia and its effects.

Council believes that this is a worthy programme and the Council can play its part.

Therefore Council requests the Chief Executive to:

- a. Encourage Council staff to become Dementia Friends (and to undertake relevant training as soon as practicably possible).
- b. Write to the Alzheimer’s Society requesting advice on how best to assist them in rolling out training across Wirral.
- c. Allow for Council property, where suitable, feasible and within reason, to be used free of charge by those delivering Dementia Friends Training.
- d. Encourage all Elected Members to become a ‘Dementia Friend’.

- e. Invite key Council staff members to become 'Dementia Friend Champions' thereby enabling the roll out of Dementia Friends Training referred to.

The Motion was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Council be advised that the Families and Wellbeing Policy and Performance Committee fully supports the Notice of Motion in relation to Becoming a Dementia Friendly Council; and**
- (2) the Chief Executive be requested to implement a training programme for all staff and elected members.**

Council – 8 December 2014

Motions

The following motions have been submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 7(1) and are listed in the order received.

1. THE CORPORATE PLAN'S IDEALS IN PRACTICE

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

In the light of the Council considering and approving the updated Corporate Plan, it should recall the pledges and assurances made in the previous one. In so doing, it should ensure that the ideals of the Plan accord with what occurs in practice.

It should take stock of whether it fulfilled its obligations in key areas of direct impact on the children attending The Lyndale School, their parents and their carers.

The Corporate Plan 2014-2016 assured our citizens that...

'Wirral will be a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected.'

This latest Plan restates this as...

'It is of the utmost importance that we safeguard our vulnerable people and deliver our services with empathy at all times.'

The previous Plan stated...

'We must be recognised as a receptive Council that listens, responds and engages...' (page 8)

Council notes that the proposed refresh of the Corporate Plan states that...

'our vision, priorities and spending decisions are based on sound evidence, thorough analysis and understanding of community needs.'

Council recalls that the SEN Improvement Test, when set out in full without editing, states...

'Decision makers should make clear how they are satisfied that this SEN improvement test has been met, including how they have taken account of parental and independent representations which question the proposer's assessment'

Council, therefore, calls on the Cabinet to:

- (i). look at these pledges and commitments;
- (ii). question whether these were carefully and properly applied at all times during the consideration of the needs of the children at the Lyndale School;
- (iii). report to Council on how the SEN Improvement Test was properly applied.

2. NO FIRE STATION IN THE CENTRE OF GREASBY

Proposed by Councillor Tom Anderson

Seconded by Councillor Wendy Clements

Council acknowledges the overwhelming public opposition to a fire station on the site of Greasby Library.

Council notes that this concern relates to the specific site, not to the policy of merging of fire stations.

Council impresses upon Cabinet:

- (1) not to gift, sell, lease the land concerned at the centre of Greasby, because of the value it has for the community; and
- (2) to ask officers to work co-operatively with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in identifying and facilitating a more suitable site for operational purposes and to maintain the amenity of the local people.

3. GOVERNMENT'S FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE CUTS

Proposed by Councillor Phil Davies

Seconded by Councillor Adrian Jones

Council welcomes the announcement by the Leader of the Council to withdraw the Council-owned land in the centre of Greasby from consideration for a new fire station.

Given the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's obligation to maximise the protection of lives, and of property, it is inevitable that the location of Fire Stations may, from time to time, conflict with local preferences particularly where such structures may detract from the established scenic value of the MFRA's preferred locations.

The Government's devastating and unfair cuts to MFRA's budget have resulted in the unavoidable need to cut the number of Fire Stations in Wirral. The Fire and Rescue Authority's preferred location of a single Fire Station on a site in the centre of Greasby was based on its assessment of life saving response times. However, this would result in the loss of a much loved local green space.

The Council is asked to continue to work with the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority to identify an alternative site in the greater Greasby area.

4. SELECTIVE LICENSING SCHEME

Proposed by Councillor George Davies
Seconded by Councillor Bernie Mooney

Council welcomes the introduction of Selective Licensing of private landlords in four designated areas of the Borough. The four areas are known as Super Output Areas as identified by Government data.

The anticipated success of this scheme will enable us to move into other areas, where there is a similar shortage of good quality affordable homes.

Council therefore seeks the support of all parties in ensuring that Selective Licensing is endorsed and championed to raise the standard of private rented accommodation for all Wirral residents.

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL VACANCIES – 15 DECEMBER 2014

Outside Bodies

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Wirral Metropolitan College Governing Body (Nomination)

Julia Hassall (appointed for 4 year term to 23 October, 2018) in place of David Armstrong

NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING AND ENGAGEMENT

Magenta Living – Governance and Membership Committee

The Council is requested to appoint one Member to this new Committee of Magenta Living following approval of the new Magenta Living Group structure by Council at its meeting on 20 October, 2014 (minute 48 refers)

[The relevant appendix to the report on the new Group structure is attached for information]

SUPPORT SERVICES

West Kirby Charities

Mr David Stevenson - Term expired on 30 October, 2014
(To be re-appointed until 30 October, 2018)

This page is intentionally left blank

Magenta Living – Proposed New Group Structure

Heads of Terms

This Agreement is dated

2014

Between:

- (1) **Wirral Partnership Homes Limited trading as Magenta Living**, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with registered number 04912562 whose registered office is at Partnership Building, Hamilton Street, Birkenhead, Wirral CH41 5AA (“**Magenta Living**”); and
- (2) **Wirral Borough Council** of the Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey CH44 8ED (“**the Council**”).

1. Background

Magenta Living has been reviewing its existing governance arrangements and structure.

The operating environment for Magenta Living has changed dramatically from when it was first formed in 2005. Magenta Living secured a loan facility with the Royal Bank of Scotland and has spent around £170m since transfer to bring its homes up to decent homes standard and delivering the 89 promises made at transfer to make its estates more sustainable places to live. Its existing loans will be paid for over the thirty year life of the current business plan.

(a) Future Challenges

Whilst Magenta Living’s current business plan is strong, there are a number of upcoming challenges to its revenue streams in the future including:

- with the continued ‘right to buy’ and selective demolition of non-sustainable homes the organisation needs to be able to build more replacement homes to ensure it continues to have the economies of scale to continue to deliver high quality services. Magenta Living had 13,087 homes at transfer and this has reduced to 12,133 homes as at 31 March 2014.
- reduced public subsidy to build new affordable housing will require housing associations to look at raising funding in other ways to provide the ‘subsidy’ for social and affordable rent schemes
- with continuing reforms to welfare spending there will be reduced support to rent payers and potentially reduced income which will need to be offset with income from other sources in order for Magenta Living to carry on providing the services presently being delivered

- working in more deprived neighbourhoods at a time when competing pressures have resulted in publicly funded services being withdrawn Magenta Living will have to identify new sources of funding in order to provide wider services to support its communities.

(b) Developing a Group structure

The solution being proposed will be for Magenta Living to carry out a wider range of activities some of which will be commercial ventures in order to create revenue surpluses to provide the subsidies required for Magenta Living to continue to manage and build social rented homes for the future. This will require changes to our current governance structure.

Should Magenta Living fail to adapt it will reduce in size and be less relevant. The size of the organisation will reduce given its lessened circumstances and potentially be a takeover target for other organisations.

As it stands Magenta Living is a charitable stock-holding RP company through which the majority of the Group's activities are routed. In the existing structure there are two existing non-charitable commercial trading company subsidiaries. A development subsidiary, WPH (Developments) Ltd, a tax-efficient procurement vehicle to secure design and build services for Magenta Living's development programme. The second is WPH (Building Services) Ltd, a general commercial trading company that carries out non-charitable commercial building maintenance works too risky for Magenta Living to carry out itself, or where there are tax implications if it does so directly. This trading company is currently dormant following the Building Services business, which had at transfer been externally trading, being brought into the main company (Magenta Living).

In order to be able to respond to the new operating environment it will be necessary for Magenta Living to set up a new group structure which will allow a wider range of activities to be undertaken, which will produce revenue to help fund new housing and social housing services. This will allow the creation of other trading ventures 'ring fenced' from the social housing business.

As part of considering strategically its future direction and identifying potential business, revenue and funding streams, Magenta Living is keen to ensure that its corporate structure is flexible enough to enable it to develop and implement these strategies, should they prove viable, and to respond to other opportunities that may arise in the future.

This Agreement sets out the heads of terms for the proposed new Group structure and governance arrangements.

For illustration purposes we have used the name 'New Magenta Housing Group' for the new registered RP which will head the group. This is not the chosen name for the new group it is a working title for this document; a new name will be considered by the board in due course.

2. Philosophy

The philosophy of the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will be to uphold the values and approach that Magenta Living has developed since transfer in 2005. The 'New Magenta Housing Group' will be formed to allow Magenta Living to carry on as it does now as a social landlord with other companies /partners in the new group able to undertake many more diverse activities. This will strengthen and make both Magenta Living and the new group stronger and more resilient at a time of great change.

The 'New Magenta Housing Group' values will be based on consensus, trust, respect for stakeholders, an approach to working in partnership and resolving issues together for the greater good.

The 'New Magenta Housing Group' will be a registered provider with the HCA and as such it will adopt and reinforce the values of Magenta Living as an organisation with a strong social purpose.

It will recognise and value the existing relationship with stakeholders in particular its tenants and Wirral Council and will continue to strive to maintain a strong working relationship based on agreement and co-operation.

3. Proposals

(i) New Group structure

Magenta Living proposes to establish a new group structure, in order to be able to provide a wider range of services. Magenta Living will become a member of a new group which will have a newly registered RP (working name: 'New Magenta Housing Group') at its head. This will allow Magenta Living to continue to provide social and affordable housing as it does now – a diagram of the proposed structure is set out in Appendix 1 attached to this Heads of Terms document.

We want the 'New Magenta Housing Group' to be registered with the Homes and Communities Agency (the "Regulator"), as Magenta Living currently is. Having a Registered Provider at the head of the Group will have a number of significant benefits for the Group and for Magenta Living including:

- Releasing the Magenta Living Board from being directly accountable to the Regulator for its compliance with the Regulatory Framework, and instead putting this responsibility on to the Group Board. This would free up the Magenta Living Board from much of the administration associated with regulatory compliance and enable it to focus on delivering excellent services to customers.

- Ensuring the whole of the Group operates within the “regulated” environment, which would give comfort to other organisations dealing with the Group, especially funders. This may make it easier for the other members of the Group to raise their own funding over time.
- It may also have a positive effect on Magenta Living’s own funding situation. This would include access to new funds on competitive terms, particularly where the Group structure facilitates other Group Members to deliver diversified activities that either funders or the Regulator may prefer to see delivered outside Magenta Living itself. This would reduce Magenta Living’s risk profile, improving its “covenant” and therefore making it more attractive to funders.
- It would also be more attractive to other Registered Providers looking for a group to join rather than one headed by a non-registered organisation.

The alternative of having a non-registered organisation at the head of the Group would mean that the Regulator has no overview of any of the Group’s activities carried out outside Magenta Living. These activities would not, therefore, be subject to the same rigorous risk management expectations as they would if “New Magenta Housing Group” was registered. Amongst other things, the Regulator would impose stringent restrictions on Magenta Living funding non-social housing activities carried on by the Group, including requiring Magenta Living to get the HCA’s consent to apply any of its funds outside its own organisation, even where these are furthering Magenta Living’s own charitable objects. In effect, this removes some of Magenta Living’s Board’s freedom to use its own money as it sees fit, and instead gives this power to the Regulator. Within the Group, this could reduce Magenta Living’s status and influence, arising out of its position as the principal asset-holder (and, therefore, de facto controller of the Group’s purse strings). It could also impact on the Group’s ability to meet its ambitions to grow and prosper for the benefit of residents in the Wirral. However, if the “New Magenta Housing Group” is a Registered Provider, it will be simpler for Magenta Living to fund other members of the Group to carry out the diversification and growth aims, where Magenta Living either cannot or does not want to carry them out itself.

As the Regulator will only register stock holding RPs, the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’ will require some units of stock. It is proposed that it would own only one or two social housing properties, transferred up to it from Magenta Living, and managed on its behalf by Magenta Living.

Going forward, the Group wishes to put in place other subsidiaries alongside Magenta Living, to deliver diversified, non-social housing, activities. Future subsidiaries could include:

- A company building homes for sale
- A company managing and building homes for market rent

The aim of these companies would be to generate surpluses to be used for the benefit of the group including building further social rented homes or provide wider services for tenants and residents.

Further subsidiaries may be added which provide a wider range of services which would be outside the scope of a social housing landlord. These could include care services, supporting social enterprise or community and environmental services. The social landlord's day to day operations would be ring fenced from these new business activities.

The key advantage of the proposed new Group arrangement is that it will allow the Magenta Living board to focus on the excellent delivery of its social and affordable housing portfolio and remove the burden of responsibility of overseeing and managing the non-social housing aspects of the Group's activities.

(ii) Ensuring the Group has the right skills to manage more diverse activities

The Regulator has recently issued consultation on a new Regulatory Framework for registered providers (May 2014). It is keen to learn lessons from recent high profile failures in the sector. The consultation document states a revised Governance and Viability Standard will be introduced and that *"Registered providers need to ensure that they have suitable skills to reflect the range of activities they undertake..."* (para 3.18)

The 'New Magenta Housing Group' board will be recruited solely on the basis of skill and experience, to oversee the Group's strategy, direction and regulatory compliance. The 'New Magenta Housing Group' board will not need to have the same level of detailed technical and operational knowledge as Magenta Living's board about the management of the social housing (although it will be advantageous for some of 'New Magenta Housing Group's' board members to have this). The Group board will recruit board members with wider commercial, charitable and social enterprise experience to manage all aspects of the Group's current (and potential future) activities as successfully as possible.

(iii) Management arrangements

Initially any staff working for the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will have a dual role. Specifically the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive will work to the "New Magenta Housing Group" Board. Their performance will be overseen by – and they will be line managed by – the Group Board. However, their duties and responsibilities will continue to be owed to Magenta Living and any future members of the group. Because both the "New Magenta Housing Group" and Magenta Living are Registered Providers, the Regulator will expect the Group Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive to act in the best interests of both organisations to enable them to continue to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Framework. This will include dedicating

an appropriate proportion of their respective time to meeting the needs of Magenta Living (as the “core” of the Group’s assets and activities).

The Regulator will expect that the Group Chief Executive will have the appropriate skills and expertise to act as the Chief Executive of a group comprising the diverse businesses that it includes. The group board will carry out an assessment of the suitability of the current chief executive of Magenta Living to fulfil this post.

(iv) Group governance arrangements

The ‘New Magenta Housing Group’ and Magenta Living boards will need to comprise individual board members with skills and expertise appropriate to the activities that that organisation will be carrying out. It is proposed that the boards should comprise:

- **‘New Magenta Housing Group’ board** – The current National Housing Federation good practice guidance states that boards should ideally be 9 and the group board will therefore be a self-appointing board of up to 9, consisting of members with the following skills/experience: housing, commercial, business, finance, governance, charity and risk management. The Group board members will be appointed on the recommendation of the Governance & Membership Committee.
- The **Chair’s Group** is intended to be the forum through which Magenta Living is engaged directly with and influences Group-wide issues overseen by the Group Board. It will be chaired by the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’ chair. It is intended to be a small and focussed Group populated solely by the Chairs of the various companies in the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’, who will continue to be appointed in accordance with the constitutions of their respective Group members. This means that, in Magenta Living’s case, the Chair of Magenta Living will continue to be appointed by the Magenta Living Board as it currently is. The Chair’s Group will be consulted on strategic and Group-wide issues and its support on a particular decision would be seen as crucial for the implementation of that decision by the Group Board.

The **Governance and Membership Committee (GMC)** will include three representatives from the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’ board, one representative from the Council, a tenant representative and a representative from the Magenta Living board. The nomination from the Council may be any sitting councillor, officer or council nominated board director from the Magenta Living board. A mechanism for the selection of the tenant representative will be agreed with the company’s tenant company members.

Appointments to the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’ board will be overseen by the GMC.

On the set up of the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’, Magenta Living together with a representative from the Council and a representative from the tenant company

membership will oversee the appointments to the shadow board of the 'New Magenta Housing Group'.

The GMC's role is also to support Group Members in the recruitment of their boards. The detail of its remit will involve it working closely with boards of any Group Members (which choose to avail themselves of its support) to identify in conjunction with them what skills they need and how these could be resourced. For Magenta Living, responsibility for recruitment continues to rest with the Board itself (and the Council for council nominations). The Magenta Living Board will identify the skills needed and then to ensure that people appointed to the Board have those skills. It will be a decision for the Magenta Living Board as to whether it wants to draw on the support of the GMC, which could help the Magenta Living Board to identify and recruit potential candidates, drawing on the benefits of doing this across the Group rather than on a board-by-board basis. The GMC will not appoint people to the Boards; the Boards themselves will continue to have the power to appoint their own board members as they do now. Boards will have discretion to reject any candidates recommended by the GMC but the aim would be that the GMC will have worked closely with the Boards to identify their needs and what they want from their Board Members, and therefore it will only propose candidates for appointment who it is confident will be acceptable to the Boards. If Magenta Living decides not to work with the GMC to recruit its board members, Magenta Living's board will continue to do so as it currently does.

- Magenta Living board will continue as at present – board of 12, consisting of 4 Independent Board Directors, 4 Tenant Board Directors and 4 Council Board Directors, appointed by the Council or elected, in the case of Independents and Tenants. The Magenta Living board members will comprise people with the following skills/experiences: social housing, asset management, human resources, customer service.
- it is proposed that, subject to compliance with company law and the requirements of the Regulator of social housing, Magenta Living will retain its existing committees (for example, its internal audit committee) and will have the power to continue to appoint committees of its own in the future. Alternatively, Magenta Living may instead choose to participate in Group committees, in which case these will be constituted in such a way as to ensure Magenta Living (and its interests) are appropriately and adequately represented.

(v) Future Governance changes

(a) Safeguarding the Group

The circumstances in which the Regulator will use its regulatory powers to directly intervene in a Registered Provider include where a Registered Provider's actions or

inactions threaten the ongoing compliance (of itself or its' Group) with the Regulatory Framework, or its own (or its' Group's) viability. In practice, this may occur where there has been – or is likely to be – a material breach by a Registered Provider or a member of its Group of the Regulatory Framework, of its charitable status, company law or of its funding documents, or where a Registered Provider's solvency is in jeopardy.

Within a group structure, the Regulator agrees that it is pragmatic for it not to regulate directly any Registered Providers within the group other than the organisation at the head of the group (the 'New Magenta Housing Group'). Instead, it expects the Registered Provider organisation at the head of the group (the 'New Magenta Housing Group'). to ensure that the other Registered Providers comply with the Regulator's expectation. The HCA's current consultation on revised regulation states: *"The Regulator expects that, where the Parent company of a group is a registered provider it should look to maintain not only its own but also the on-going viability and compliance with Regulatory Standards of all the registered providers within the group. This requirement (to support and assist their subsidiaries) does not change that, instead it enhances it, giving additional protection to the social housing, making clear that if appropriate the Parent must step in to help ensure compliance of all registered providers in the group."* (para 3.52)

On this basis, to reflect the requirements of the Regulator as part of the new Group structure arrangements, 'New Magenta Housing Group' will have "step-in" rights, which in exceptional cases could be used to remove and appoint the board members of Magenta Living. The Regulator will expect these rights to be included within Magenta Living's Articles of Association to ensure that the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will have adequate control of Magenta Living to enable it to step in and "steady the ship" if any serious issues were to arise with Magenta Living, as required by the proposed revised Governance and Financial Viability Standard (as set out above). This will allow the Regulator to step back and only regulate the Group via the 'New Magenta Housing Group'.

As well as fulfilling the requirements of the regulator, company law requires the group parent to be able to control the Magenta Living board via the step-in rights, in order for the group to function as a group for accounting and tax purposes. The test that company law will apply to confirm whether Magenta Living and the "New Magenta Housing Group" are in a group structure or not is whether the "New Magenta Housing Group" is a member of Magenta Living and either controls all of the votes at member level (which will not be the case here) or it has the ability to appoint and remove Magenta Living's board, if necessary (which will be the case here, via the step-in rights). Unless this test is met, the "New Magenta Housing Group" and Magenta Living will not be considered a "group" for company law purposes and may not achieve the tax and other benefits that will flow from being part of the same Group.

Whilst the step-in rights have to be unrestricted constitutionally to satisfy company law and the Regulator, it is usual in group structures for the head of the group to agree (in the Group Membership Agreement) that it will only exercise these step-in rights in certain, extreme, circumstances (for example, in the face of financial or

regulatory default by Magenta Living, giving rise to any of the circumstances in which the Regulator would have the ability to intervene directly into the Registered Provider, as summarised above), or at the invitation of the Magenta Living board. The inclusion of these provisions will give Magenta Living (and the Council) comfort that the the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will not exercise its step-in rights in bad faith or capriciously, and the Group and the Regulator comfort that the 'New Magenta Housing Group' has appropriate control over the Group. Furthermore, it is proposed in the present case that, if the "New Magenta Housing Group" does have cause to exercise its step-in rights at any time:

- It will give Magenta Living as much notice of its proposal to do so as it can, to give Magenta Living's board the ability to take any action needed to rectify the situation and mean that the "New Magenta Housing Group" does not need to exercise its step-in rights; and
- If the "New Magenta Housing Group" does have to exercise its step-in powers at any time, as soon as the situation has been rectified (and "normality" resumed), "New Magenta Housing Group" will "step out" of Magenta Living to enable its board to resume control;

Except where the "New Magenta Housing Group" has had to exercise its step-in rights as above, Magenta Living's board would continue to manage and oversee the organisation's activities and the delivery of its business plan, as it currently does, including:

- The ownership and management of Magenta Living's stock
- Implementation of its agreed business plans and budgets
- Housing and estate management, strategies, policy and execution, including:
 - Maintenance modernisation and improvement contracts
 - Day-to-day responsive repairs
 - Resident involvement
 - Rent collection including arrears
 - Tenancy conditions including enforcement
- Commissioning programmes of works, improvements, acquisitions and developments.

(b) Future decisions on joining another group

Within a normal group structure, the decision as to whether to take that structure into a wider group at some future date would sit with the 'New Magenta Housing Group' Board (because it is that company that would become a subsidiary of the new larger Group). As part of any approach the 'New Magenta Housing Group' Board will have an obligation to consult the subsidiary RPs in the Group. The Regulator's consent

would be needed to take the 'New Magenta Housing Group' into a larger Group, and part of the Regulator's consideration would involve looking at whether the wider Group – particularly the RPs such as Magenta Living – would be in favour of the proposals, as well as the Council's views on the proposals.

The Regulator will not accept an arrangement by which Magenta Living has an absolute right of veto over any proposal to take the 'New Magenta Housing Group' into another Group in the future, because the Regulator needs to ensure that it has the ability to "rescue" the Group, should this be necessary, for example by directing the 'New Magenta Housing Group' to take it into a larger group structure (NB it is already the case that the Regulator has the power to direct Magenta Living to enter a group structure, should it choose to do so). However, Magenta Living will have a right of veto over such a decision in certain circumstances, where Magenta Living can demonstrate that it is not in its or the Group's best interests to join a wider group, based on objective criteria that are financial/business related.

(vi) Dispute resolution

The Group will have at its heart a commitment between all of its members to co-operation and consensus. Inevitably, however, from time to time there may be disagreement between group members, and the Group Membership Agreement will contain mechanisms to enable these to be resolved constructively before they escalate into formal disputes.

In relation to services provided by the 'New Magenta Housing Group' or other group members to Magenta Living, there will be a suite of safeguards giving Magenta Living the ability to terminate services provided by the 'New Magenta Housing Group' where these do not meet the relevant service standards, or where Magenta Living can demonstrate it can achieve greater value for money by purchasing them from another service provider.

Within many group structures, any formal disputes that may arise between the group members or with their holding company will be resolved by the Group Board (in effect, denying the group members a genuine right of recourse). However, recognising that the ethos of the 'New Magenta Housing Group', it is proposed that any disagreements between members of the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will be resolved:

- Locally, wherever possible, by agreement between the parties to the disagreement, in which case their decisions will be final;
- If this is not possible, via the Chairs (again, with any decision they reach between them being final), and if this is not possible, by reference to the boards of the two organisations (again, with any decision they reach between them being final); and
- If the disagreement still can't be resolved, either party to the dispute can refer it to an agreed independent external mediator, whose decision will be binding on the relevant Group Members.

And this will be reflected in the intra-group agreement between the Group and Magenta Living. Allowing for a party to a dispute to refer it to external mediation, and for any decision made by a mediator to be final and binding, is unusual in the sector, where it is standard practice for the “parent” board to have the final say on disputes. It is evidence of the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’s’ intended commitment to strong relationships between members founded on mutual respect, consensus and collaboration.

(vii) Magenta Living’s assets

It is proposed that all of Magenta Living’s current social housing assets (other than the two properties to be transferred up to the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’ set out in 3(i) above) will remain in Magenta Living. The Magenta Living board will retain control over those assets and will control how those assets are used (subject to Magenta Living’s business plan, which will be set by Magenta Living in consultation with the ‘New Magenta Housing Group’), which will be expected by the HCA as Regulator as it will not allow Magenta Living to fetter its discretion over how its assets are used.

The market rent subsidiary company may lease some homes from Magenta Living to let at market rent. Such arrangements would require agreement by the Magenta Living board.

As a charity and an RP, Magenta Living’s ability to use its funds for non-charitable / non-social housing purposes is strictly limited. It can only do so where there is a very strong business case and Magenta Living’s charitable assets (principally its money or its housing stock) would not be put at risk as a result of any on-lending. Magenta Living would therefore never be in a position where it was expected to fund risky activities or ones that it was not confident would be in accordance with the stringent investment criteria for charities laid down by the Charity Commission and the Regulator. In cases where Magenta Living is raising “borrowed money” secured against its social housing, and wants to invest this money in other group members’ commercial activities, this would also require the consent of the Regulator, which would require to see a strong business case in support of the proposals, that has been stress-tested extensively, to reduce any risks to the social housing assets

(viii) Timetable

The proposed target date for implementation of the new Group structure is in April 2015. In order to achieve this target date, a report to the Council’s Cabinet will be presented in the Autumn of 2014 and resolutions to amend the Articles of Association of Magenta Living will be put to Magenta Living company members in early 2015.

4. Heads of terms

This section sets out the key principles of the new Group structure and governance arrangements, to which the Council’s agreement is sought, both as a member of Magenta Living and under the Transfer Agreement for the transfer of the Council’s housing stock to Magenta Living.

(a) Changes to Magenta Living's Articles of Association to make it a subsidiary in the new 'New Magenta Housing Group'

The following changes will be made to Magenta Living's Articles of Association in order to make it a subsidiary of the new 'New Magenta Housing Group':

- the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will be a member of Magenta Living, and as a requirement of both the Regulator and of company law is not be capable of being removed as such by Magenta Living, its board or its members;
- a representative of the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will need to be present in order for a general meeting to be quorate (in the same way as a representative of the Council must be present, which would be unaltered);
- the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will be able to call a general meeting of Magenta Living (and the Council will continue to have this right);
- as set out above, the 'New Magenta Housing Group' will have the right to appoint and remove the Board Directors of Magenta Living ("step in rights");
- on a poll, the rights of the current members of Magenta Living will be slightly reduced from 33 1/3 % each for the Council, the Independent Members and the Tenant Members to 33% each, with the 'New Magenta Housing Group' having 1% of the total vote on a poll. These small changes ultimately have little consequence under company law, as voting rights of 25.1% are all that are needed to block a special resolution (and therefore, for example) changes to the Articles; and
- in addition to getting the requisite majority of the votes of the Council and the other members of Magenta Living, any resolutions to amend Magenta Living's Articles of Association, remove Board Directors (other than by the Council removing its nominees and replacing them from time to time) or wind up Magenta Living will require the 'New Magenta Housing Group's' prior consent before being validly passed in line with the requirements of company law.

(b) Appointment of the Group board

The Council will have input into the Group's governance arrangements, under the new Group structure arrangements the Council will:

- have the right to appoint one member to the Group's Governance & Membership Committee, which will have delegated responsibility for, amongst other matters, recommending candidates for appointment to the 'New Magenta Housing Group' board (and to other boards within the Group, should they choose to work with the GMC on their own board recruitment); and

- be notified of any vacancies arising on the 'New Magenta Housing Group' board, to enable it to nominate candidates for consideration by the Governance & Membership Committee for appointment to the Group board, subject to that candidate possessing suitable skills and experience for the vacancy.
- The nomination from the Council may be any sitting councillor, officer or council nominated board director from the Magenta Living board

(c) Other changes to Magenta Living's Articles of Association

Finally, some other minor changes may be required to Magenta Living's current Articles of Association in order to obtain the Social Housing Regulator, the HCA's consent. These changes will be kept to a minimum, but are likely to include, for example, the inclusion of the provision of social housing (as defined in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008) within Magenta Living's Articles of Association.

5. Agreement

By signing this Agreement, the Council and Magenta Living both confirm that the principles set out in this Agreement are acceptable, and that they will act in good faith to effect the new Group structure arrangements and amendments to Magenta Living's Articles of Association.

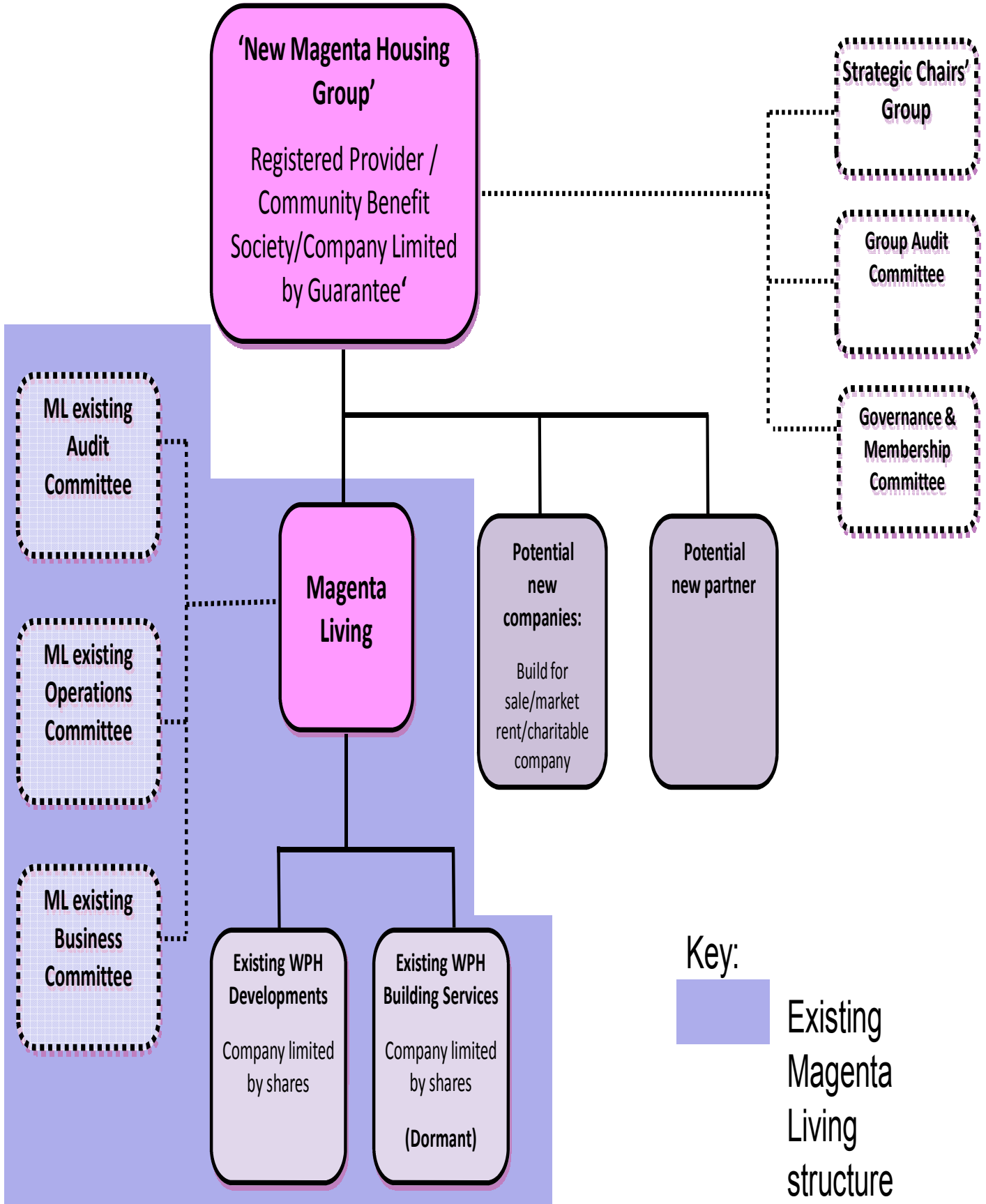
The Council confirms that it will enter into a Deed of Variation to the Deed of Covenant which was entered into by the Company at the same time as the Transfer Agreement, varying its rights of appointment to the Magenta Living board in accordance with the principles set out in this Agreement.

The Council agrees that it will not exercise its rights as a member of Magenta Living to vote against changes to Magenta Living's Articles of Association which are in accordance with the principles set out in this Agreement.

Signed on behalf of Magenta Living _____
by an authorised signatory
Name:

Signed on behalf of the Council _____
by an authorised signatory
Name:

DRAFT



This page is intentionally left blank