



Council

Town Hall
Wallasey

30 June, 2017

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held at **6.00 pm on Monday, 10 July 2017** in the Council Chamber, within the Town Hall, Wallasey, to take into consideration and determine upon the following subjects : -

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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 Civic Mayor's announcements and any apologies for absence.

3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 14)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 15 and 16 May, 2017 (Annual Council).

4. PETITIONS

To receive petitions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 21.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To deal with questions from members of the public, in accordance with Appendix 1 to Standing Orders – up to 30 minutes.

6. LEADER'S, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' AND CHAIRS REPORTS (Pages 15 - 72)

Attached is the Wirral Plan Annual Report 2016/17. **(Pages 15 – 46)**

Also attached is the Statutory Scrutiny Officer's, 'Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2016/17'. **(Pages 47 – 72)**

To receive questions and answers on these reports in accordance with Standing Orders 10(2)(a) and 11.

7. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

8. MATTERS REFERRED FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES OR OTHER COUNCIL COMMITTEES

To consider and determine any references from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and any other Council Committees.

9. VACANCIES

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.

Committees

Environment Overview and Scrutiny

Councillor Tony Smith to replace Councillor Joe Walsh

Outside Bodies

Merseyside Police and Crime Panel

Councillor Tony Smith to replace Councillor George Davies

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel

In addition to the two Labour Members appointed by Council on 16 May, and following the Annual Meeting of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on 26 May, the Council is requested to confirm the appointment of a Conservative representative on the Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Tom Anderson.

Merseyside Society for the Deaf
Vacancy to replace Councillor David Elderton

10. MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL OR CONSIDERATION BY THE COUNCIL (Pages 73 - 256)

MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL

To consider any recommendations of the Executive or Council Committees which require the approval or consideration of the Council.

A. Licensing Act 2003 Committee – 15 March, 2017
(Pages 73 – 105)

Special Cumulative Impact Policy (Minute 14 and Statement of Licensing Policy attached)

The Council is recommended to approve an amendment to the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for the specified area in Birkenhead as identified by Merseyside Police.

B. Employment and Appointments Committee – 27 June, 2017
(Pages 107 – 119)

Recruitment to Chief Officer Posts and Structure Changes (Minute 3, the report of the Chief Executive and the relevant appendix are attached)

The Council is recommended to:

- (1) Delegate authority to the Employment and Appointments Committee and its Appointment Panels to formally agree and confirm the appointment of all the posts specified in paragraph 2.2 of the report.
- (2) Amend the Council's Chief Officer pay scales, as set out in the Council's Pay Policy, to incorporate the proposed salary for the Director for Children's Services post.

C. Delegated Decision
Pages 121 – 248)

Local Wildlife Sites

Decision of Leader of the Council taken on 26 June, 2017 (decision and report attached)

The Council is recommended to:

- (1) Adopt the modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Sites Partnership and Local Wildlife Site assessment procedures (Appendix 1 of the report); and sections 2 (Habitat criteria) and 3 (Species criteria) of the Local Wildlife Sites Selection Criteria for

the Cheshire region (Appendix 2 of the report) as the basis for the future selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Wirral; and;

- (2) Adopt the revisions to the current schedule of Sites of Biological Importance (Appendix 3 of the report) as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.

OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL

Council is requested to approve interim appointments in respect of statutory officers (details to follow in the Council supplement).

MATTERS FOR NOTING

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

D. Cabinet – 26 June, 2017 **(Pages 249 – 253)**

Financial Monitoring Out-turn Reports for 2016/17 (minute 16 attached)

E. Audit and Risk Management Committee – 12 June, 2017 **(Page 255)**

Audit and Risk Management Committee Annual Report 2016/17 (minute 7 attached).

11. NOTICES OF MOTION (Pages 257 - 262)

Notices of motion submitted in accordance with Standing Order 7(1), are attached. They are listed in accordance with Standing Order 7(2), 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). **ENDING AUSTERITY**
To be debated.
- (ii). **TENANCY FEES**
To be debated.
- (iii). **LOSS OF SOCIAL HOUSING TO BAMBOO LETTINGS LLP**
To be debated.
- (iv). **SUPPORT FOR NEW FERRY**
To be debated.

(v). **SECURING OUR ECONOMY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD**

To be debated.

(vi). **GRENFELL TOWER DISASTER**

To be debated.

(vii). **FAIR VOTES**

To be referred to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

12. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

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

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Assistant Director: Law and Governance

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COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Monday, 15 May and reconvened on Tuesday, 16 May, 2017

Monday, 15 May 2017

<u>Present:</u>	The Civic Mayor (Councillor Pat Hackett) in the Chair Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor Ann McLachlan)		
Councillors	RL Abbey T Anderson B Berry E Boulton A Brighthouse P Brightmore D Burgess-Joyce C Carubia P Cleary W Clements A Davies G Davies P Davies WJ Davies D Elderton G Ellis S Foulkes P Gilchrist JE Green P Hayes	A Hodson K Hodson T Johnson AER Jones C Jones T Jones S Kelly B Kenny A Leech I Lewis M McLaughlin J McManus C Meaden D Mitchell B Mooney C Muspratt T Norbury M Patrick T Pilgrim C Povall	L Reecejones L Rennie L Rowlands W Smith C Spriggs J Stapleton P Stuart M Sullivan A Sykes T Usher W Ward G Watt S Whittingham J Williamson I Williams KJ Williams S Williams G Wood
<u>Apologies:</u>	Councillors	C Blakeley P Doughty J Hale	D Realey T Smith J Walsh

Tuesday, 16 May 2017

<u>Present:</u>	The Civic Mayor (Councillor Ann McLachlan) in the Chair Deputy Civic Mayor (Councillor Geoffrey Watt)		
Councillors	RL Abbey T Anderson B Berry E Boulton	J Hale P Hayes A Hodson K Hodson	C Povall D Realey L Reecejones L Rennie

A Brighouse	T Johnson	L Rowlands
P Brightmore	AER Jones	W Smith
D Burgess-Joyce	C Jones	C Spriggs
C Carubia	T Jones	J Stapleton
P Cleary	S Kelly	P Stuart
W Clements	B Kenny	M Sullivan
A Davies	A Leech	A Sykes
G Davies	I Lewis	T Usher
P Davies	M McLaughlin	W Ward
WJ Davies	J McManus	S Whittingham
D Elderton	C Meaden	J Williamson
G Ellis	D Mitchell	I Williams
S Foulkes	B Mooney	KJ Williams
P Gilchrist	C Muspratt	S Williams
JE Green	T Norbury	G Wood
P Hackett	M Patrick	

Apologies: Councillors C Blakeley T Smith
P Doughty J Walsh
T Pilgrim

1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

No such declarations were made.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Chris Blakeley, Paul Doughty, John Hale, Denise Realey, Tony Smith and Joe Walsh.

2 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Civic Mayor thanked all those within the Council and throughout the Borough who had supported him and the Mayoress in the wide variety of activities that they had undertaken throughout his year of office. In particular, the Civic Mayor thanked, his Cadet, Cadet Warrant Officer Leah Phillips, all the staff of Committee and Civic Services for their valued assistance, and all those involved in the work of the Civic Mayor's Charity Fund.

He also referred to the explosion which had occurred in New Ferry on 25 March, 2017 and paid tribute to all those involved from the emergency services, from the Council and from a number of organisations including the Life Church for all their work in responding to the incident and their work since in helping those affected.

3 **ELECTION OF CIVIC MAYOR 2017/18**

The Civic Mayor invited nominations for election of the Civic Mayor for the ensuing municipal year.

On a motion moved by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Ian Lewis and, in the absence of any other nominations, it was:

Resolved (unanimously) – That Councillor Ann McLachlan be elected Civic Mayor of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral for the 2017/18 municipal year.

Councillor McLachlan proceeded to make her declaration of acceptance of office and the retiring Civic Mayor, Councillor Hackett vacated the Chair. Councillor McLachlan occupied the Chair.

The new Civic Mayor welcomed her guests and spoke to her election.

4 **DEPUTY CIVIC MAYOR 2017/18**

The Civic Mayor invited nominations for the appointment of a Deputy Civic Mayor for the ensuing municipal year.

On a motion moved by Councillor Ian Lewis, seconded by Councillor Phil Davies, and in the absence of any other nominations, it was:

Resolved (unanimously) – That Councillor Geoffrey Watt be appointed Deputy Civic Mayor of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral for the 2017/18 municipal year.

Councillor Watt proceeded to make his declaration of acceptance of office.

5 **ADJOURNMENT**

The Council agreed, pursuant to Standing Order 5A (1), that the meeting stand adjourned to 6.00pm on Tuesday, 16 May 2017.

RECONVENED ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

Annual Council reconvened at 6.00pm on Tuesday 16 May 2017.

6 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Members of the Council were invited 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.

No such declarations were made.

7 **CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Civic Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the public and the newly Elected Member for Claughton ward.

The Civic Mayor noted that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Blakeley, Paul Doughty, Tracey Pilgrim, Tony Smith and Joe Walsh.

The Civic Mayor announced that she would like to be addressed as Madam Mayor and that she would be reviving the tradition of inviting Members into the parlour following ordinary Council meetings as from the July meeting.

8 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the three meetings of the Council held on 20 March, 2017 had been circulated to Members and, it was –

Resolved – That the minutes be approved and adopted as a correct record, subject to a correction to minute 154 ‘Houses in Multiple Occupation’, in that the sentence which begins, “Having been formally moved.....” be deleted and the next sentence be amended to read:

“The first and second amendment, were put to the Council as one amendment, and carried (58:0) (Two abstentions).”

9 **PETITIONS**

In accordance with Standing Order 21, the Civic Mayor received a petition submitted by Councillor Phil Gilchrist on behalf of 20 residents of Rosecroft, Bromborough requesting yellow lines on the northern side of the road alongside the boundary with Plymyard Court.

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

10 **BY-ELECTION RESULT - 4 MAY 2017**

The Chief Executive / Returning Officer reported that Gillian Wood of 74 Vaughan Road, Wallasey had been elected to fill the vacancy for Councillor in Claughton ward following the by-election held on 4 May, 2017.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

11 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader added his congratulations and welcomed Councillor Gillian Wood to the Council. He also welcomed the newly elected Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Ian Lewis and expressed his thanks and appreciation to the former Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Jeff Green with whom he had worked on a number of issues.

The Leader outlined the changes he had made to his Cabinet, the priority for which was to deliver the Wirral Plan and the twenty pledges which underpinned it. There would be a detailed progress plan for the Council to consider in July.

The Leader of the Council confirmed appointments to his Cabinet for 2017/18 as follows:

Portfolio	Councillor	Party	Ward
Leader, Growth	Phil Davies Leader of the Council	Labour	Birkenhead and Tranmere
Housing and Community Safety	George Davies Deputy Leader	Labour	Claughton
Children and Families	Bernie Mooney	Labour	Liscard
Delivering Differently	Chris Spriggs	Labour	New Brighton
Environment	Phill Brightmore	Labour	Pensby and Thingwall
Finance and Income Generation	Janette Williamson	Labour	Liscard
Highways and Transport	Stuart Whittingham	Labour	Upton
Localism and Engagement	Matthew Patrick	Labour	Upton
Social Care and Health	Christine Jones	Labour	Seacombe
Transformation	Angela Davies	Labour	Prenton

Addressing specifically the issues in Children's Services the Leader acknowledged the challenging year that lay ahead to drive the improvement process. The Leader stated that it was the right decision for both the Director of Children's Services and the Cabinet Member to have stepped down and confirmed that Councillor Bernie Mooney had taken charge of the Children and Families portfolio with immediate effect. He congratulated the police in bringing the two evil perpetrators of these sickening crimes to justice and applauded the bravery of the victims in coming forward. The Council would do everything in its powers to ensure this didn't happen again. A Serious Case Review had already commenced and would report in the summer and he

would ensure that the Council implemented its recommendations. As part of the work following the OFSTED review, a number of measures had been put in place, including:

- the appointment of a new senior management team
- a comprehensive programme of training for frontline staff
- a commitment of £10m additional funding into the service.

The Leader stated that Dr Maggie Atkinson, Chair of the Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board was clear in her view that the services were very different today than they were six months ago and that "lessons have already been learnt". He stated that he was encouraged by the progress already made but knew that there was still much more to do.

The Leader stated that an all Party approach was needed to address the issues in Children's Services and that a cross party task force would be established with the Group Leaders, Cabinet Member and the spokespersons from the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee all involved to meet regularly, this would be in addition to the Improvement Board. He appealed to all Members to put Party differences aside as the issue was too important to be used as a political football.

12 **REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS - RECOMMENDATION FROM THE STANDARDS AND CONSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

The Council considered a recommendation from the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee of 26 April, 2017 on a review of scrutiny arrangements.

It was moved by Councillor McLaughlin and seconded by Councillor Abbey that the recommendations of the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee of 26 April, 2017 (minute 32 refers) be approved.

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

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Add to Recommendation (4)

The Council welcomes the recommendation of the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee to have separate Overview and Scrutiny Committees looking at Adults and Children's Services independently. These

new arrangements should now provide a greater insight into the issues raised by Ofsted.

In approving Recommendation 4, the Council wishes to ensure that the provision of relevant information should not just be referred to the most appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee but should be provided in a more timely manner. This includes the reporting of financial information which, because of the timing of the Cabinet and Committee meetings, can be several months out of date when it is considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Council requests that all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees receives the latest available financial monitoring report at each Committee meeting, with an updated commentary on the achievement of savings and sources of income. Consideration should also be given to re-introducing the monthly financial statements provided to all Elected Members. By these means, the Council recognises that it should be better placed to manage Wirral's finances in the context of the Government's programme of grant reductions whilst seeking to ameliorate them.

Councillor McLaughlin stated that the Labour Group was happy to accept the Liberal Democrat Group amendment.

A vote was then taken on the amendment and it was carried (59:0) (One abstention).

The substantive motion, as amended was then put and it was carried (59:0) (One abstention)

Resolved (59:0) (One abstention) - That:

- (1) the remit of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee be divided to create two new Committees - Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee;**
- (2) membership of the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees be set at 15 Elected Members on a ratio of 9, 5, 1 (note: existing education co-opted members be appointed to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee);**
- (3) the impact on the political proportionalities arising from future changes to the membership of the revised Overview and Scrutiny Committee Structure be reviewed by the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee as part of its 2017/18 Work Programme;**

- (4) relevant Financial and Performance Reporting relating to each Committee be provided. Council welcomes the recommendation of the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee to have separate Overview and Scrutiny Committees looking at Adults and Children's Services independently. These new arrangements should now provide a greater insight into the issues raised by Ofsted.**

In approving recommendation (4), the Council wishes to ensure that the provision of relevant information should not just be referred to the most appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee but should be provided in a more timely manner. This includes the reporting of financial information which, because of the timing of Cabinet and Committee meetings, can be several months out of date when it is considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Council requests that all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees receive the latest available financial monitoring report at each Committee meeting, with an updated commentary on the achievement of savings and sources of income. Consideration should also be given to re-introducing the monthly financial statements provided to all Elected Members. By these means, the Council recognises that it should be better placed to manage Wirral's finances in the context of the Government's programme of grant reductions whilst seeking to ameliorate them.

- (5) the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payable to the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair be paid to the Chairs of Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny and Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committees;**
- (6) all Chairs / Vice-Chairs / Spokespersons will continue to meet on a regular basis to allocate scrutiny work that may cut across the responsibility of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee;**
- (7) the Council's Calendar of Meetings be revised to incorporate changes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Structure and recommended to Council for adoption; and**
- (8) the Council's Constitution be updated accordingly and be recommended to the Council for adoption.**

**13 APPOINTMENT AND CONSTITUTION OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES
2017/18**

The Council was requested to consider the report of the Assistant Director: Law and Governance for the Appointment and Constitution of Council

Committees and the appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to such committees.

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor Ron Abbey that the recommendations within the report be approved.

One amendment, which was circulated around the Chamber, was submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12(1) and (9), as follows:

Amendment

Proposed by Councillor Ian Lewis

Seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie

We know that vulnerable children have been exploited in the most awful circumstances – groomed and exploited for the sexual gratification of older men.

Time and time again Madam Mayor we have been told that Labour run this Council.

Time and time again the Conservative Group has asked for proper scrutiny of Children's Services and, at every turn, the Labour Leader has kept this 'in house'.

He's finally given in to calls to split up the scrutiny committee, and create one dedicated to children's services, but he must also accept that one Party scrutinising itself is not good for the people that have been let down so badly.

So given the current crisis in Children's Services I wish to add to recommendation (2)

"and considering best practice elsewhere those chairs and vice chairs are drawn from opposition members".

Following a debate and Councillor Phil Davies having replied, the amendment was put and lost (25:34) (One abstention).

The recommendation was put and carried (35:25) (One abstention)

Resolved (35:25) (One abstention) –

(1) That for the 2017/18 municipal year the total number of Committee places (excluding those on the Cabinet and Constituency Committees) shall be 133 and the places shall be allocated in the following proportions:

Committee	Places	Lab	Con	L/Dem	Green
Audit and Risk Management	9	5	3	1	
Employment and Appointments	8	5	2	1	
Licensing Act 2003	15	10	4	1	
Licensing, Health & Safety and General Purposes	9	5	3	1	
Pensions	10	6	3	0	1
Planning	13	7	4	1	1
Standards & Constitutional Oversight	9	5	3	1	
Overview & Scrutiny: Business	15	9	5	1	
Overview & Scrutiny: Environment	15	9	5	1	
Overview & Scrutiny: Adult Social Care	15	9	5	1	
Overview & Scrutiny: Children and Families	15	9	5	1	
Total	133	79	42	10	2

- (2) That the Chairs of the above Committees be allocated to the Labour Group along with the Vice-Chairs.
- (3) That the nominations for places on committees be submitted by the respective Political Group Leaders to the Assistant Director: Law and Governance and be as set out in Appendix A to the minutes of this meeting.
- (4) That the ongoing nominations of Diocesan and Parent Governor representatives on the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

14 **APPOINTMENTS TO STATUTORY AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS 2017/18**

The Council was requested to consider the report of the Assistant Director: Law and Governance for appointments to Statutory and Advisory Committees, Working Parties and Panels.

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

Resolved (43:17) (One abstention) - That the numbers be agreed for each appointment to Statutory and Advisory Committees, Working Parties and Panels for the 2017/2018 municipal year, including the proportional split where appropriate, and the nominations be submitted by the respective Political Group Leaders to the Assistant Director: Law and Governance and be as set out in Appendix B to the minutes of this meeting.

15 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES AND ORGANISATIONS 2017/18**

The Council was requested to consider the report of the Assistant Director: Law and Governance for appointments to Outside Bodies and Organisations.

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

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) - That the numbers be agreed for each appointment of Members (and/or other individuals) to all Outside Bodies for the 2017/2018 municipal year, including the proportional split, where appropriate, and the nominations be submitted by the respective Political Group Leaders (and Chief Executive in respect of Council Officer nominations) to the Assistant Director: Law and Governance and be as set out in Appendix C to the minutes of this meeting.

16 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS - CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Civic Mayor agreed to the consideration of two items of urgent business on the basis of recent events which Members would be aware of and which were in the public interest.

(1) On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Mooney it was –

Resolved (60:0) (One abstention) – That Deborah Gornik be appointed to the statutory position of Director of Children’s Services in an acting capacity with immediate effect after the departure of the Director of Children’s Services.

(2) The Civic Mayor announced that the Council would hear representations in relation to recent events concerning Children’s Services and in discussion with the three Political Group Leaders, it had been agreed that the following Members would address the Council in relation to this matter:

Group Leader for the Conservative Group – Councillor Ian Lewis
Group Leader for the Liberal Democrat Group – Councillor Phil Gilchrist
Deputy Group Leader for the Conservative Group – Councillor Lesley Rennie
Group Spokesperson for the Liberal Democrat Group – Councillor Alan Brighouse
Cabinet Member for Children and Families – Councillor Bernie Mooney
Leader of the Council – Councillor Phil Davies

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance in response to questions from Members clarified the position in relation to items of urgent business in that the manner in which they were dealt with was entirely at the discretion of the Civic Mayor. She had decided how the matter would be dealt with and this had been agreed with the three Political Group Leaders.

Councillor Lewis congratulated Councillor Gillian Wood on her election.

Councillor Lewis referred to the utterly reprehensible crimes which had taken place over several years and commented that this was now an opportunity for the Leader to tell the Council what had been going on and what had gone wrong. He hoped that the Leader could explain why the Cabinet member was no longer in post having expressed his confidence in him just nine months ago. The Conservative Group had no faith that lessons had been learnt and would be asking for Government intervention, whether this happened or not they would hold the administration to account and any scrutiny was best undertaken by members of the opposition.

Councillor Phil Gilchrist stated that he was keen to see the outcome of the Serious Case Review. As a member of the Improvement Board he was aware that the minutes were available on the Council website and that actions were recorded fairly and accurately. He was aware there had been difficulties within the department of staffing retention. He would play a full part in the cross party task force the Leader had set up.

Councillor Rennie commented that Wirral was once again appearing in the national and local press for all the wrong reasons. These were appalling revelations of young vulnerable people being exploited in the vilest of ways. Lessons had not been learnt with the administration limping from one crisis to another, the Council under a Labour administration had lost its way. There had to be change, a senior member of the Labour administration and a senior Director had both now fallen on their swords and the Leader of the Council should review his position.

Councillor Brighouse stated that the ‘much improved Council’ tag was starting to look somewhat tarnished. There were too many initiatives and not enough concentrating on doing the real job in hand. There was a lack

and loss of trust in what Members were being told or not being told, how many more times did the Leader have to say that lessons had been learnt. The Council needed to do what residents expected of it.

Councillor Mooney commented that the finger pointing was disgraceful. She made a commitment that, having been appointed to the Children and Families portfolio, she would lead the service through these incredibly challenging times in an open and inclusive manner with a cross party approach. She expressed her heartfelt sympathy to the girls and that everyone's thoughts should be with the victims and their families. She paid tribute to the police officers, health professionals and Council officers who had helped in bringing these men to justice. It was important to learn lessons from these terrible crimes and the Council had to do everything in its power to prevent child exploitation. She asked all Members for their full support in ensuring this never happened to another child in Wirral again.

Councillor Phil Davies stated that there was a need to let the Serious Case Review take its course which would report in the summer. He was confident that Councillor Mooney would bring a fresh approach and there had already been a number of improvements since the OFSTED report. The former Children's Commissioner for England, Dr Maggie Atkinson, had said that lessons had already been learnt and the service was now very different to what it was. He did not believe that the answer to all the Council's problems was for Government Commissioner's to move in. He assured Councillor Lewis that the Government was already involved as the Department for Education had appointed Tony Crane, an advisor for the Department to the Board. He stated that the issue was too important to be used as a political football and that the way forward was through a cross-party approach. The issue demanded a political maturity and there was clearly a lot more work to be done. There would be an opportunity to debate the Serious Case Review in a few months' time.

The Civic Mayor then thanked all the Members who had contributed and closed the meeting at 7.15pm.

Appendix A – Committee Membership 2017/18

Appendix B – Statutory and Advisory Committees, Working Parties and Panels 2017/18

Appendix C – Outside Bodies 2017/18

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Council

Monday 10th July 2017

REPORT TITLE:	The Wirral Plan Annual Report 2016/17
REPORT OF:	Chief Executive

Councillor Phil Davies, Leader of the Council, said:

“It is now two years since we first created the Wirral Plan – the first ever shared set of priorities and goals which the Council, the private, public and voluntary sectors committed to own and deliver together.

I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved since then.

While we are not without our challenges, it is clear we are making a huge difference to people’s lives all across the borough, and we are finding ever more imaginative ways to do more with less.

We made a commitment when we first agreed this Plan to report back to Wirral residents – to keep residents informed, and give open, honest appraisals of our progress so we can be held to account on the promises we made.

In this report you will see countless examples of where the 20 Pledges are making a difference to residents’ lives. The report highlights where we are making those impacts, but does not shy away from where we still have work to do.

I am proud of the progress we have made, and excited about our future plans. I encourage everyone to read this report.”

REPORT SUMMARY

The Wirral Plan sets out a shared vision across all partners to improve outcomes and quality of life for Wirral residents. Delivering the 20 Pledges are underpinned through the development and implementation of a set of key strategies and a delivery plan.

This report provides Council with an Annual Report for 2016/17; a key strategic document which outlines achievements during the past year and gives high level direction for next steps.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough. It is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Council are requested to:

1. Note the contents of the Annual Report for 2016/17.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The Annual Report 2016-17 has been developed to demonstrate progress against the 20 pledges since Wirral Plan was agreed in 2015. The Report provides an opportunity to report back to Wirral residents on what the Wirral Partnership has achieved together and what it will focus on in the coming year.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Wirral Partnership has made a commitment to regularly report on progress towards the 20 Pledges. The Annual Report is part of that process and therefore no other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Wirral Plan was agreed in July 2015 as the 'Wirral Council Plan' before being adopted by all partners as the strategic, shared plan for the borough.

The Council and its partners have been working on delivering the 20 Pledges and – at the end of the second year of the Wirral Plan – are now reporting back to residents on progress made to date.

A series of underpinning strategies to drive and support the delivery of the Wirral Plan have been agreed or in development.

The Wirral Plan Pledges have now been adopted as the Council's performance framework, and progress towards achieving them will be regularly reported to Cabinet throughout the year.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising as a direct implication of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising as a direct implication of this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are none arising as a direct implication of this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

There are none arising as a direct implication of this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

The Wirral Partnership has agreed with the voluntary, community and faith sector to define and strengthen relationships between these sectors for the

benefit of all Wirral communities. There is a commitment to extensive consultation with local communities.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) for the Wirral Plan and associated strategies have been developed.

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APPENDICES

- Annual Report 2016/17

REFERENCE MATERIAL – N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None	N/A

WIRRAL PLAN 2020: ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

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FOREWORD

“While we are not without our challenges, it is clear we are making a huge difference to people’s lives all across the borough, and we are finding ever more imaginative ways to do more with less”

It is now two years since we first created the Wirral Plan – the first ever shared set of priorities and goals which the Council, the private, public and voluntary sectors committed to own and deliver together.

I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved since then.

While we are not without our challenges, it is clear we are making a huge difference to people’s lives all across the borough, and we are finding ever more imaginative ways to do more with less.

We made a commitment when we first agreed this Plan to report back to Wirral residents – to keep residents informed, and give open, honest appraisals of our progress so we can be held to account on the promises we made.

I am delighted to report more than 2,000 jobs created, 1000 new businesses, our highest-ever level of employment for people with disabilities, more than 1500 homes improved or brought back into use, and 9 out of 10 schools being rated ‘good’ or better by Ofsted among many other achievements.

It is absolutely clear: the 20 Pledges are making an impact.

In this report you will see countless examples of how our Pledges are making a real difference to people’s lives.

You will see how by working with partners, residents and communities we are seeing lasting improvements to the borough and you will see ever-increasing evidence of a Council which is becoming more modern, flexible and able to meet people's changing needs.

The report highlights and celebrates the many achievements of which we are rightly proud, but it does not shy away from those areas where challenges persist and where we still need to improve and focus more attention.

During the coming year we will deliver major, sustained improvements in services for children and families. Our response to the Ofsted inspection last year has been positive, and we have made significant progress, but I know we still have much to do. We will not rest until the services provided to protect our children are of the very highest quality. Nothing else is good enough.

We will also use this year to go even further in redesigning our services – ensuring the services available to our residents meet their needs, are fit for purpose and are financially sustainable. Just this past year, we have done more in this area than ever before.

Social care services in Wirral are being fully integrated with health services provided by the NHS – creating the most seamless, joined up service for residents anywhere in the Liverpool City Region. Similarly, our

community safety services are now provided in partnership with Merseyside Police.

I am demanding we build on these successes and continue to see innovative and imaginative new models put in place to make sure that, even in these challenging financial times, Wirral residents see their services improve and become more able to meet their needs.

As I have said time and again since 2015, the Wirral Plan is our contract with the people of Wirral; my personal pledge to every Wirral resident is to continue to spend every day working to make Wirral a better place.

I am proud of our performance this year. I encourage you to read this document and see for yourself how the Wirral Plan is changing and improving our borough for every resident.



P.L. Davies

Cllr Phil Davies

Leader of Wirral Council and Chair of the Wirral Partnership

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The Wirral Plan was an ambitious agenda. It set out 20 Pledges to transform Wirral, and the lives of its residents, during a time of unprecedented change and uncertainty within the public sector.

The next few sections of this document are our report card: they show you just what we have achieved towards our 20 Pledges since first agreeing them in July last year. It shows some real life examples of where we are already making a difference, it is honest about where our issues and challenges remain and it tells you what we are going to do next.



90%

OF SCHOOLS RATED '**GOOD OR OUTSTANDING**' BY OFSTED



70%

OF CHILDREN REACHING A **GOOD LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT** BY AGE 5



44%

HIGHEST-EVER LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH **DISABILITIES**



2081
NEW JOBS

1025
NEW BUSINESSES
IN WIRRAL



£386 MILLION  **FROM TOURISM ECONOMY**



980

HOMES
IMPROVED



597

EMPTY PROPERTIES
BROUGHT BACK INTO USE



1907

REDUCTION IN **ANTI-SOCIAL**
BEHAVIOUR INCIDENTS



“

Wirral is a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, every child gets a good start in life and older residents are respected and valued.

Ensuring the most vulnerable among us are safe, and feel safe, is perhaps our most important responsibility. We will work across Council and agency boundaries to promptly identify and tackle problems before they develop.

”



This Girl Can

Wirral's version of Sport England's 'This Girl Can' campaign has launched with an exclusive party welcoming 30 teenagers who will be its official ambassadors.

This Girl Can in Wirral campaign is aimed specifically at girls aged 13-16 after research showed 85% were not doing the recommended amount of exercise a week. The campaign will focus on helping girls in the area feel more confident and boosting their self-esteem with fun activities.

The invitation-only party took place at The Yog Bar, Hoylake and the evening celebrated the girls now helping to lead the campaign and in charge of getting their friends more active.

The night saw a variety of special guest speakers including Hollyoaks actress, Nadine Mulkerrin (Cleo McQueen), Miss Teen Great

Britain Ashleigh Wild and Miss Galaxy England Zara Nortley. The guests were able to help inspire and empower the girls with their own personal experiences and professions.

Wirral Council has partnered up with The Yog Bar for the campaign with sisters and owners of the local business, Stephanie and Charlotte Hodson, pledging to support the campaign and future activities.

Along with the This Girl Can Wirral team the 30 ambassadors will help to plan events for the coming months that will help encourage other girls their age to get involved and find the sports and activities right for them.

Follow @thisgirlcaninwirral on Instagram for updates.

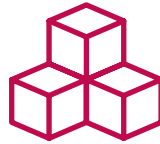


PEOPLE PLEDGES



90%

OF SCHOOLS RATED '**GOOD OR OUTSTANDING**' BY OFSTED



70%

OF CHILDREN REACHING A **GOOD LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT** BY AGE 5



44%

HIGHEST-EVER LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH **DISABILITIES**

People want services tailored to meet their individual needs. They expect services which help them in their individual circumstances, and which have an impact in improving their lives.

A compelling example is the work which has been done to integrate health and social care services in Wirral, where residents will now enjoy the among the most seamless, joined up health and social care services in the UK after major integration projects were successfully delivered this year.

Challenges do of course remain. Wirral is one of many boroughs in the UK which is facing up to the implications of hugely increased demand for children's social care services. An inadequate Ofsted rating last year has focussed attention on making absolutely sure our vital children's services quickly improve and become the best possible quality.

Every organisation in the Wirral Partnership is working together to improve the lives of children, families and older people in the borough. We are seeing an impact in many areas already.

Older people live well

Agreed in early 2016, the Ageing Well in Wirral Strategy has led to major improvements in how services for older people are designed and delivered. Organisations such as AgeUK are working alongside public agencies to support older people, tackle social isolation and ensure they can play an active role in strong, thriving communities.

A good example of innovative, simple interventions which have resulted in a big impact on people's lives is the programme of 'door knock' events throughout 2016. These events have seen all agencies working together to reach out directly to more than 2,000 local residents, referring over 300 people for further advice or support, resulted in a new bereavement support group being created and prevented 6 people from being alone on Christmas Day and set up a bereavement peer support group.

Children are ready for school

Almost 70% of young children are now reaching a 'good' level of development by age 5: this is the highest ever level in Wirral and among the highest in the region. This is fantastic news, but there is still more to do.

More and more children are taking advantage of the early years' services and support which is available to them, including development checks, health visitor reviews and a range of targeted services tailored to individual needs being provided at locations throughout the borough. Parents are being provided with support, both to help them care for their children but also for their own development, with employment training being offered to new parents all across Wirral.

Young people are ready for work and adulthood

90% of Wirral schools are now rated by Ofsted as being good or better and 63% of children achieved 5 or more 'good' GCSE's (including English and Maths). Performance in these areas compares favourably to the national picture of 89% and 53.5% respectively.

The Young Chamber programme is among the most successful and innovative in the UK, working with children at every Wirral primary school to help develop their skills and encourage them to be enterprising and entrepreneurial when planning their future careers. More than 600 young people

attended Wirral Careers and Skills Show earlier this year, meeting with education providers, large employers and local entrepreneurs.

Vulnerable children reach their full potential

Like many areas throughout the UK, Wirral has some challenges to overcome in trying to ensure good services in the face of hugely increased demand for children's social care. After an inadequate rating from Ofsted in 2016, a detailed Improvement Plan is in place, alongside support from industry experts, new political and officer leadership and major investment in the services.

Major focus remains on enabling children and young people to live in stable, supportive homes which help them reach their full potential. We have more children in the care of the local authority than ever before, which means encouraging foster care and adoptive places is more important than ever. Wirral Council is now a 'Fostering Friendly' employer – the first Local Authority in Merseyside to become so. We're working with our partners and reaching out to all employers in Wirral to encourage them to follow suit to help find foster parents to help our children in need of this very special support.

Making sure services for vulnerable children and families deliver fast, sustainable improvement is Wirral's biggest challenge and its number one priority for the coming year.

Reduce child and family poverty

Making sure children and families do not live in poverty is incredibly important. This Pledge has triggered a range of new approaches to raise aspirations and provide intensive support to vulnerable residents across the borough.

‘Community Connectors’ have been employed in key areas throughout the borough, whose role is to help residents access the services, support and advice available to help them. A directory of local services has been produced and distributed in targeted communities and among front line staff to raise awareness of support which is available.

Some other examples of support include the Birkenhead Constituency Committee providing holiday food through food banks in the area, and ‘His Church’ delivering a 40,000 tonnes lorry to Birkenhead full of cereal for groups and schools to provide breakfast clubs. The Beechwood Centre, which has been refurbished, is providing a range of activities and support to local people to improve their life chances and increase aspirations.

People with disabilities live independently

More people with disabilities in Wirral are now employed than ever before, which is testament to the work delivered by all agencies involved as well as Wirral

Evolutions, the council-owned company – providing services for people with learning disabilities.

There has been a significant increase in the employment rate for people with a disability or long term condition, and targets were exceeded in relation to the quality of life for people with long term conditions and the proportion of people who feel supported to manage their condition.

A new Advocacy Hub has been launched to deliver a range of new and improved services, including advocacy related to Independent Mental Capacity and Health, the Care Act and the promotion of self and peer advocacy. These services will ensure that people with disabilities are effectively represented and supported in relation to decisions made about them and their care provision.

Zero tolerance to domestic violence

Tackling domestic abuse is vital, to support vulnerable residents to live happy and safe lives – protecting and supporting the victims, and ensuring the perpetrators do not repeat violent behaviour. We must continue to focus on this area as, despite many positive initiatives and hard work from many organisations, we are not yet seeing the impact in reducing instances which we are all aiming for. Tomorrow’s Women Wirral are just one example of a community

or charitable organisation in the borough who have delivered fantastic, innovative and important work to support residents.

Just in the past year, they have provided intensive support to more than 250 women across the borough. A further 32 women have become fully qualified peer mentors, 25 have become qualified domestic abuse mentors and 100 women have – for the first time – disclosed they had been victims of domestic abuse, and been provided the support they so desperately needed.

New services have been commissioned to provide support and counselling, staff have been retrained and given the skills they need and the new service has been commended by the Butler Trust for its innovative and successful approach. Together, by working across the full Wirral partnership and with experts in the community, a real difference is being made to vulnerable residents' lives.



Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive. We must seize the opportunities before us, and work hard to create new ones to transform Wirral's economy for this generation and the next.

We will focus on Wirral's priority growth sectors to promote and grow jobs in the visitor economy, advanced manufacturing, maritime and renewable energy sectors. We will work with our partners to deliver these ambitions for Wirral and ensure our plans are both economically and environmentally sustainable.





The Wirral Growth Company

First announced at international property conference MIPIM earlier this year, the Wirral Growth Company will now officially go to market seeking an investment partner for a potential £1bn development programme.

Council leader Phil Davies says there has already been interest from major global developers and he is confident that residents will see 'spades in the ground' on new schemes within the next twelve months.

Cllr Davies said: "Following the recent successes of Liverpool and Manchester, I am proud to be putting Wirral forward as the next great Northern regeneration opportunity.

"Only a few months ago we went to the world's largest property and development conference to introduce Wirral to the globe's biggest investors and developers. We shared our vision for £1bn worth of development opportunities but we also knew we needed to put a modern, commercially viable organisation in place to help us deliver our goal.

Local architects, developers and urban planners have already contributed ideas as to what Wirral could look like in the future. Images and more information about the Wirral Growth Company is available now at wirralwellmade.com



BUSINESS



2081

JOB'S CREATED



£386 MILLION

FROM TOURISM ECONOMY



1025

NEW BUSINESSES
IN WIRRAL

Following the successes in Liverpool and Manchester, Wirral is firmly positioned as the next great Northern regeneration opportunity

The recently-created Wirral Growth Company will take our ambitions for the borough and transform them into bricks and mortar developments, economic growth and jobs – working with a private sector partner to bring the expertise and capital which Wirral needs to transform its economy.

Sustained success from our local businesses in the past two years, with support from the UK's fastest growing Chamber of Commerce, are combined with this ambitious and radical plan for economic growth and regeneration, providing a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create thousands of good jobs for Wirral residents.

Greater job opportunities in Wirral

Since the start of the Wirral Plan, almost 2100 jobs have been created by Wirral businesses – a clear example of a business-base which is ambitious, talented and determined to succeed. The council launched a £6.5m 'Ways to Work' programme, which has helped almost

350 into work or training; and the pioneering Health Related Worklessness programme has worked with many of our most vulnerable and isolated unemployed residents to help them back into training, education and work.

Wirral's GVA continues to grow, and the earnings for full-time employees in Wirral are higher than the North West average. Through the work of the Wirral Growth Company, we have the opportunity to drive the creation of thousands more jobs across a range of sectors in the biggest regeneration drive Wirral has ever embarked upon.

Increase inward investment

Investment in Wirral is thriving. More than £65 million has been invested into projects and businesses in Wirral since the start of the Wirral Plan, including major developments such as the new Dong Energy Offshore Wind Operations and Maintenance Base in the Birkenhead docklands.

An exciting partnership between Wirral Council and Glasgow based Stream Marine Training will see further investment in the offshore sector at Birkenhead, with a new development creating up to 25 new jobs within the thriving Maritime Knowledge Hub. The investment was made possible through the innovative Wirral Waters Investment Fund, which uses increased levels of business rates to kick-start further regeneration in the area.

Thousands more jobs are set to be created throughout Wirral as the council's ambitious regeneration plans take an important step forward. The Wirral Growth Company will help drive forward exciting plans and opportunities for a potential £1 billion in regeneration at key sites all across the borough. There has already been interest from major global developers in partnering with the council and there is a high level of confidence that we will see 'spades in the ground' on new schemes by early 2018.

Thriving small business

More than 1,000 new businesses have opened their doors in the borough since the start of the Wirral Plan, with almost 8500 employers now operating from the peninsula. These businesses are supported by the UK's fastest growing Chamber of Commerce, who are providing expert, tailored support

A new Business Support Service launches in summer 2017, delivered by Wirral Chamber and providing help for start-ups, expanding small businesses, business re-locating to Wirral and support with workforce development.

Entrepreneurs in Wirral also now have access to an innovative, unique working space – the Sheds at Pacific Road. The Sheds at Pacific Road allows freelancers, temps, independent contractors and solopreneurs, to join a thriving community, tap into new networks; interact with new people; make new friends – and stumble across the random opportunities you wouldn't encounter if you were working from home. The only space of its kind in Wirral, The Sheds benefits from excellent transport links, with two Mersey Ferry Terminals and Hamilton Square train station within walking distance.

Workforce skills match business need

We launched Skills for Growth Advisers across the City Region to work with our Business Growth Hub Advisers, so far providing 30 Wirral businesses with skills funding and advice, and up-skilling almost 350 employees.

We have reviewed post-16 education provision across the City Region to ensure it can meet the challenges and demands of the future workforce; because of this we will have greater local control of future government skills funding to meet our workforce needs.

Major capital investments into facilities such as the Wirral Met STEM Centre, Engineering College are allowing many residents get the skills they need to build a positive career. Soon, we will create a Skills Commission to work with businesses, learners and education providers and oversee a Skills Strategy fit for commissioning our locally devolved Adult Skills budgets.

We will also work with our partners to realise new major skills infrastructure projects, including the Maritime Knowledge Hub and the Manufacturing Technology Catapult Centre.

Vibrant tourism economy

The first-ever 'River of Light' event saw more than 50,000 visitors flock to Wirral's coast to enjoy a spectacular firework show. This will be followed up throughout 2017 with a programme of high-profile events, attracting hundreds of thousands of people to Wirral.

Wirral remains the fastest growing destination in the Liverpool City Region, with more and more people every year discovering all Wirral has to offer. The tourism economy in Wirral is now worth an estimated £385 million – up from £355 million in 2014 – and employs more than 5,000 people in the borough.

The Pledge committed to increasing this value to £450 million and, to get there, a detailed plan, developed by industry experts and proposing a series of actions and new promotions has been agreed at Cabinet in June 2017. This strategy will guide the work of the Wirral Partnership through to 2020 and ensure the fantastic success in this sector is built on and maximised to create more jobs and ensure Wirral continues to grow as a visitor destination.

Technology and infrastructure

Our residents' survey in 2015 told us clearly that transport networks – roads and pavements, specifically – are extremely important for residents across the borough.

The council is investing in its highway infrastructure, with more than £4 million being spent in 2015-16 alone on improving roads, fixing potholes and doing everything possible to create a high-quality transport network.

A major investment is well underway in upgrading the Dock Bridges linking Birkenhead and Wallasey – a critical link which will allow for quicker, more efficient travel throughout the borough but also, crucially, providing the support for Birkenhead docks to continue to expand. Continuing to improve our roads and, in particular, road safety in the borough is extremely important and investments are in place to replace and repair streetlights as well as improve residential streets in every ward in Wirral.

Assets and buildings are fit for purpose

Our ambition remains to create 'one public estate', where public services from all agencies are available, as much as possible, from the same buildings, co-locating to make sure residents receive the best, most joined up service.

Good progress is being made. There are now fewer buildings, running costs have been reduced, and many more public services are now co-locating and providing integrated services.

In the coming year, much more will be done with services throughout the public sector working closer together, sharing office space and ensuring a more efficient use of land, buildings and public assets.



“

Wirral is a place where employers want to invest and businesses thrive. We must seize the opportunities before us, and work hard to create new ones to transform Wirral's economy for this generation and the next.

We will focus on Wirral's priority growth sectors to promote and grow jobs in the visitor economy, advanced manufacturing, maritime and renewable energy sectors. We will work with our partners to deliver these ambitions for Wirral and ensure our plans are both economically and environmentally sustainable.

”



The 'LOVE Wirral' Stars

Residents are getting on board our 'Love Wirral' campaign and giving their neighbourhood some TLC. Volunteers at Wallasey Breck are just one group who are making a difference in their part of the borough – get inspired at #LoveWirral!

The Breck

The old sandstone quarry on The Breck has views over to the Welsh hills and is rumoured to have taken its name from Viking settlers.

Once a favourite place for picnics and blackberrying, The Breck fell on hard times but has now been adopted by volunteers who turn out weekly to care for the wooded sandstone outcrop.

With fantastic views of the coast, The Breck includes Granny's Rock, a large sandstone outcrop, used by generations for rock climbing and bouldering.

The restoration has been led by Wirral Council ranger Paul Sinclair, who paid tribute to volunteers. 'In just over a year, this hidden gem is again being used by the community, from dog walkers to rock climbers, and families with young children.' The Breck has also been submitted for Green Flag Award.

Plans include restoring and turning the formal shrubbery at the main entrance into a memorial garden for Alan Rouse, the Wallasey-born mountaineer who climbed here as a teenager and became the first British mountaineer to summit K2, the world's second highest peak, before being killed on the mountain days later in 1986.

More information about the group's work is available on The Breck's Facebook page.



ENVIRONMENT



980

HOMES
IMPROVED



597

EMPTY PROPERTIES
BROUGHT BACK INTO USE



1907

REDUCTION IN **ANTI-SOCIAL**
BEHAVIOUR INCIDENTS

Wirral residents told us clearly what their priorities were; they told us what was important to their lives and what brings the biggest impact on their quality of life. Focussing on the environment, and on making Wirral safe, was top of the list for residents and must be top of the list for the Wirral Partnership too.

Huge progress has been made in improving housing options for residents, in continuing to invest in ensuring quality leisure facilities and on helping residents live healthier lives.

Making Wirral a safer place to live and visit has also been at the top of the agenda, with a new, innovative integrated community safety service about to launch – making Wirral the first area in the region to fully combine Police and Community Safety services.

Leisure and culture opportunities for all

The Hive opened in Birkenhead and within less than a month had generated over 3,000 members, exceeding the first year membership target. This new facility for young people offers up to 20 activities per night and includes a 4G football pitch, four court sports hall, iconic climbing wall, fully fitted gym, skate park, music room, media room, arts and crafts areas, dance studio

and even a boxing gym and recording studio. The Hive will deliver lots of positive outcomes for young people as a place to develop their sporting and artistic talents for the future.

We continue to develop our parks and open spaces and have exceeded our target for quality awards in 2016/17 with Wirral now having more green flag awards for its parks than any other local authority in the North West. Wallasey is also now proudly flying the first Blue Flag in Wirral at the Harrison Drive beach, testament to the hard work of everyone involved.

A vibrant, packed programme of high-profile events is coming together – with Wirral playing a leading role across the region in creating a cultural and leisure programme which is second to none. Events such as the River of Light, River Festival, Vintage Fair, Armed Forces Day celebrations and many more throughout the year will be enjoyable events for families throughout Wirral.

Wirral residents live healthier lives

This year we have commissioned many new and improved services to help people live healthier lives, including innovative uses of community funding, working with businesses in new ways and integrating more with partners..

Our partners ABL, for example, have delivered targeted smoking cessation services to young people, long term smokers, and pregnant women. Continuing success from our 'Reducing Strength Campaign' has seen retailers signing up to the initiative to stop selling super strength alcohol. We've also commissioned Slimming World to help residents learn how to manage their weight loss ambitions.

New strategies to improve how we support people to stop smoking and to reduce alcohol related illness have also recently been developed, in partnership with every public agency in the borough.

A new "Move On Up" service started in 2017, to increase the availability of non-medical recovery services for low level mental health conditions. This will improve people's readiness for employment and move them towards more mainstream services specifically employment support programmes.

Community services are joined up and accessible

Making sure residents can access services easily and quickly is vital. It is incredibly frustrating for residents to not have easy access to information, to not be able to quickly and simply contact the council or any public agency to get advice or request a service.

During 2017, the first stage was completed in a major overhaul and improvement in accessing services. The Access Wirral programme will now completely redesign and simplify how residents can access services – from paying a bill, through to asking for a pothole to be filled, applying for a job or becoming a foster carer, all will be available online in a quick and easy method.

Good quality housing

Just in the past year, more than £7 million in funding was secured to build 280 new affordable homes in the borough, and 144 have been built in the past twelve months.

A bid for £2.66 million funding for Extra Care schemes has been secured through the Homes and Communities Agency; this will help to support some of our most vulnerable residents. Wirral now has five purpose-built extra care schemes funded by the Council, providing 193 general units and 10 specialist dementia related units of accommodation, all of which are now occupied.

The Disabled Adaptations Service has exceeded its annual target of delivering adaptations into residents' homes; 3,000 home adaptations have been delivered during 2016-17 to disabled children and adults to help them to live independently at home.

The Homelessness and Housing Options Team has intervened to prevent 1,291 households from becoming homeless during 2016-17 by working with other relevant local agencies, leading to the early identification of households and individuals who are likely to be vulnerable to homelessness.

Attractive local environment

Litter and environmental crime is a blight on the landscape. Wirral residents said they wanted a zero tolerance approach, which is exactly what has been delivered. More than 20,000 fixed penalty notices have been issued to people dropping litter or not cleaning up after their dogs since the start of the Wirral Plan. As well as the enforcement activity, we installing bag dispensers in some of our parks and coastal areas so people can obtain a bag to clean up after their dog if they have forgotten to bring one out with them.

Those areas which residents told us were damaging their communities – the grot spots – have been tackled; with the successful clean-up of 26 individual areas. Local Environmental Quality is exceeding the target (93% of streets cleansed to a good standard) at 95.2% in 2016/17 meaning we are maintaining a high level of cleanliness

on key routes and shopping areas across the borough. Those areas which residents told us were damaging their communities... up of 26 individual areas.' - These clean ups were funded through reinvesting some of the proceeds from littering fixed penalty notices.

Wirral Council was shortlisted for a national Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) "Most Improved" Council award at the end of 2016 and were shortlisted again in February 2017 for a Keep Britain Tidy Quality Improvement award.

Unfortunately, recycling has decreased from 37.3% in 2014/15 to 36.4% in 2015/16 and continues to decrease in 2016/17. This is in line with the national trend of increasing residual waste tonnages and more work will need to be done in the coming year to encourage and enable residents to recycle more.

Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe

Wirral now has the lowest crime rate per population in Merseyside and is the 3rd lowest within the Home Office defined 'family' of 15 demographically similar areas. Incidents of anti-social behaviour being reported to the Police have fallen by 16% compared to 2014/15.

These achievements are a testament to taking the lead across the City Region on the successful implementation of Phase 1 of the 'Safer Wirral Hub', an operating model integrating community safety related services and agencies into a single resource, to tackle

crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce statutory front line services demands. Wirral has turned a corner in effectively reducing crime to support the most vulnerable victims and reduce repeat victimisation. This has been achieved by working in partnership, applying interventions, targeting victims, locations and offenders; supporting the prevention and deterrence of repeat offending and repeat victimisation; and concentrating on restorative justice practices.

The Wirral Youth Zone 'The Hive' opened in April 2017, and has a range of high tech, high profile facilities to ensure its popularity, including a skate park, climbing wall, gym equipment, boxing ring, sofas, pool tables, desktop and computers. This facility, coupled with its 100 strong volunteers are engaging with Wirral's Youth to give them a place to relax, learn, play and enjoy themselves.

KEY PRIORITIES

Everyone associated with the Council and Wirral Partnership should be proud of the progress this document has described, and possess a shared determination to continue our improvements and delivery to create the Wirral residents deserve.

This section of the report describes the main priorities for the Wirral Partnership over the next twelve months – the key things which will be delivered to maintain the momentum towards achieving the 20 Pledges by 2020.

Securing excellent services

Children's services will quickly improve. A £10 million investment into the service has been delivered, and more social workers will soon be in post, more and better training has been and will be delivered, and processes and systems are being systematically redesigned to deliver a robust, sustainable improvement which will lead to children receiving better services. There is no higher priority for the Council – this is at the top of the list and will be delivered this year.

It is also important we don't forget the simple, every-day services such as street cleanliness, road maintenance and street lighting which sometimes go unnoticed, but are incredibly important to the quality of life every resident enjoys. We will redouble our efforts to improve the public realm, road safety and work with residents in every community to ensure their concerns are listened to.

Making sure Wirral Council is a customer focussed organisation, which is easy to contact, work with and do business with, will be a major focus of attention in the coming twelve months. Investments in our customer services will help residents work with the council much more quickly and easily.

Improving Wirral for every resident

Every one of the 20 Pledges is important. We have a set of strategies – designed by experts in their field, and containing shared goals which all partners are working to achieve. It is imperative we do not lose focus on these, and continue to deliver on our promises to Wirral residents.

We continue to make fast, exciting progress on improving Wirral's economy. More residents are in work, more businesses are opening their doors and more investment is flowing into the borough than ever before. The Wirral Growth Company, alongside our other regeneration and skills plans, will encourage even more growth and ensure we capitalise on the once-in-a-generation opportunities before us.

We must make sure we continue to talk to residents – we must constantly ask for views, and empower local people to shape the services and decisions which affect them. The Residents' Survey of 2015 will soon be repeated, and we will also launch a new, completely redesigned approach to community engagement and working with communities.

Creating a well-run, efficient and modern council

The council and all of its partners must deliver a balanced and sustainable budget. Last year, the council delivered an 'underspend' of almost £3 million – a fantastic achievement in such difficult times and money which is now available to be reinvested into securing the financial position of public services.

It is clear however that with the ongoing, massive financial challenges which the council and its partners face, that new solutions are needed to continue to provide the services which residents rely on. We must be ready to have adult conversations and difficult debates about the future of some traditional council services, and find ways of delivering what residents want in new ways.

Huge progress is already being made. Wirral has gone further in NHS-social care integration than almost anywhere in the UK. In this borough, residents will more and more benefit from joined up, seamless services, with one number to call and one person to speak to when arranging care for themselves or their family. We must find more of these solutions, and review all of our services to ensure they are modern, fit for purpose and meet the needs of our residents.

CONCLUSION

“We are all proud of Wirral. It is a great place to live, to work and to grow up.”

Wirral brings together beautiful, rural countryside with cutting edge technology and it has a cultural and economic history which is second to none.

The Wirral Plan, and the 20 Pledges we have committed to, are about its future. They are about delivering on the promises which have been made to Wirral residents.

We have achieved a lot already, but we know there is still much to do;

- *We must continue to ‘get the basics right’, and make sure Wirral residents can enjoy the best possible quality of service – from the quality of our local environment, through to social care services, street lighting, highway maintenance and everything in between.*
- *We have got to be ambitious for Wirral, and never settle for second best. The Wirral Growth Company is, I believe, the vehicle which will translate our ambitions for Wirral into the vibrant local economy we all want.*

- *We will create a council which is modern, fit for purpose and which meets residents’ needs. Our services are, by and large, still traditional in how they are set up and delivered. We will review everything we provide, and ensure it is the best, most appropriate and sustainable service for the Wirral of 2017 and beyond.*

- *We will continue to ensure Wirral Council is a well-run organisation – financially secure, investing in the right areas, and using 100 per cent of its resources to invest in improving this borough for every resident.*

I commit to ensuring these points are delivered in the coming year.

I am proud of what we have achieved so far, and remain excited about the future of Wirral.



Cllr Phil Davies

Leader of Wirral Council and Chair of the Wirral Partnership

WIRRAL PLAN 2020: ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

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Monday 10th July 2017

REPORT TITLE:	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2016/17
REPORT OF:	The Statutory Scrutiny Officer

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function during the 2016/17 municipal year. The report captures the progress made and key pieces of work delivered. It also highlights proposals for further improving the function going forward.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to:

1. Consider the contents of this report and whether there are any questions or actions arising.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To provide Members with a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function during the municipal year 2016/17.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny is a legal requirement for local authorities under the Local Government Act 2000 and a key indicator of good governance. Effective scrutiny also provides significant opportunities to improve the Council's decision-making, service provision and cost-effectiveness.

Wirral Council commits to the principles of good corporate governance through the development, adoption and implementation of its Code of Corporate Governance. Scrutiny has a key role in promoting good governance.

A significant amount of scrutiny work was undertaken by the function in 2016/17. This is set out in the Annual Report included as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are none arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

There are none arising from this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been completed as this report is for information and there is no equality impact arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – 2016/17 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL – N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Scrutiny Annual Report to Council	14/07/14
Scrutiny Annual Report to Council	06/07/15
Scrutiny Annual Report to Council	11/07/16

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Wirral Council Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report

2016/17



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INTRODUCTION

The 2016/17 municipal year was a busy one for scrutiny in Wirral. A new committee model was introduced to align with the Wirral Plan which led to the creation of three Overview and Scrutiny committees with the themes of Business, Environment and People. This was designed to enable scrutiny to best support and add value to the Wirral Plan in delivering better outcomes for Wirral residents. The committees replaced the four Policy and Performance Committees that had been in place since 2013.

To support the new arrangements and further develop the scrutiny function to ensure its contribution to good governance and delivering value for money, the following were also introduced:

- Closer engagement with the Executive to ensure scrutiny holds the Executive to account and achieves the greatest possible impact in supporting the delivery of the Wirral Plan;
- Increased use of scrutiny as a vehicle to enable the voice of service users and residents to be heard;
- Setting clear objectives for scrutiny work to have the maximum impact;
- Making more use of pre-decision scrutiny to influence and improve decision-making;
- Dedicated scrutiny of the Council's transformation programme;
- Reducing the focus on formal committee meetings and increasing the focus on scrutiny work that produces member-led reports with clear recommendations;
- Time-limiting task and finish work to deliver results more quickly;
- Closing the loop on task and finish work to measure the effectiveness of scrutiny.

The three committees have been very productive, with six scrutiny reviews being completed during the year and a further five reviews initiated to be completed during 2017/18. There were six additional one-off sessions for the consideration of matters such as emerging transformation proposals and the 2017/18 budget proposals. Committees also received a total of 120 presentations, reports and updates, dealt with nine Notices of Motion and convened four additional meetings to review decisions that had been called-in or special meeting requests. Further details of the breadth and scope of the work carried out by the scrutiny function can be found in the appendices to this report.

This report highlights the key successes of 2016/17 setting out the task & finish work completed in-year including the outcomes and impact of this work. The report also explains the rationale for a further refinement of the committee model going into 2017/18 and will set out the priorities for scrutiny in Wirral for the coming municipal year.

CHAIRS REFLECTIONS

Councillor Moira McLaughlin – Chair of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The committee has continued to deliver a very full work programme throughout the year and I would like to thank all members for their continued hard work and commitment. I have continued to work with colleagues from both opposition parties to develop the work programme and improve the quality of scrutiny. In December committee members were invited to attend a dedicated training session delivered by the Centre for Public Scrutiny on more effective scrutiny of safeguarding procedures.

All Chairs, vice Chairs and party spokespersons have worked collectively to look at how scrutiny can be strengthened. This led to some changes in performance reporting mid-year to ensure members have the best information to undertake their scrutiny roles. This joint working also led to the proposal to the Council leadership, following the Ofsted report into Children's Services, to establish a dedicated Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This will ensure that scrutiny can achieve better results on monitoring the Improvement Plan and the testing the efficacy of policies and procedures.

Though I have decided to stand down as Chair, I hope to continue to play an active part in scrutiny and support colleagues Tom Usher and Julie McManus in their new roles. I hope they enjoy doing this as much as I have.

Councillor Mike Sullivan – Chair of the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Committee has worked hard over the last year and it is encouraging to see more involvement in Task & Finish work across all parties. I would like to thank all Members for working collaboratively during 2016/17.

Pre-decision scrutiny is key to good scrutiny and this has been demonstrated through scrutiny of the 2017/18 budget proposals and the new service delivery models as they are developed through the Council's Transformation Programme. On a personal note, I found it very positive to see the Cabinet Member fully engaging with committee members at the workshop to review the Access Wirral proposals.

As part of the Growth Plan, the Committee has been receiving updates from Peel Holdings on the development of Wirral Waters. Although open to all Members, these developments are a key part of the Committee's work programme and Members find the briefing sessions of great interest.

The development of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has been an important item on the Committee's agenda and Members have found the regular updates extremely beneficial. The LCRCA Scrutiny Panel has also worked tirelessly to scrutinise the work of the Combined Authority. As the Scrutiny Link for Wirral Council, I have ensured that the work of the Panel has been conveyed back to the Committee.

Councillor Phillip Brightmore – Chair of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Committee has worked hard this year and I would like to thank all members for their continued commitment and collaborative approach to scrutiny.

A themed approach to meetings was piloted by the Environment Committee with the January meeting having a Housing theme and the March meeting focussing on Community Safety. The themed approach was well received by committee members allowing a holistic approach to reviewing progress against the Wirral Plan pledges. It provides a focus around the Wirral Plan pledges within the Environment remit, whilst allowing flexibility for urgent or follow-up items to be taken to committee as required.

Committee's pre-decision scrutiny session of the budget proposals within the Environment Committee's remit was well attended and a number of members' suggestions and mitigations were adopted by Cabinet. This included a suggestion to increase the charge for additional garden waste bins, which had not been increased since the introduction of the garden waste collection service.

I would like to offer my congratulations to Councillor Paul Stuart on being appointed as Chair of the Environment OSC Committee. I wish Paul well for the future and hope to form a good working relationship with this Committee in my new role as Cabinet Member for Environment.

Overview of Progress 2016/17

During 2016/17 the scrutiny function continued to develop its role in support of good corporate governance. The key achievements of 2016/17 include:

Cross Party Collaboration

Committee Chairs continued with their practice of holding agenda setting meetings with party spokespersons prior to formal committee meetings. This provided the opportunity for all groups to influence the shape of agendas and the scrutiny work programme throughout the year. Joint Chair's and spokespersons meetings have also been convened to focus on areas for improvement and development.

Wirral Plan & Committee Scope

A shift in focus on the committee's remit towards supporting the Wirral Plan has been implemented. This ensures that each committee reviews the pledges under their identified Wirral Plan theme. A good example of this is the themed approach to committee meetings adopted by the Environment Overview & Scrutiny committee, providing a more focused and holistic approach to understanding pledge delivery and the associated challenges.

The Scrutiny Work Programme

To improve scrutiny work planning Members were supported to prioritise areas of work which would add the most value and optimise the available resources to provide an efficient and deliverable work programme for each committee. The following principles were adopted by Members at work programme planning sessions to assist with topic selection:

Principles for Prioritisation	
Wirral Plan	Does the topic have a direct link with one of the 2020 pledges?
	Will the review lead to improved outcomes for Wirral residents?
Public Interest	Does the topic have particular importance for Wirral Residents?
Transformation	Will the review support the transformation of the Council?
Financial Significance	Is the subject matter an area of significant spend or potential saving?
	Will the review support the Council in achieving its savings targets?
Timeliness / Effectiveness	Is this the most appropriate time for this topic to be scrutinised?
	Will the review be a good use of Council resources?

Performance Reporting

Alongside the new scrutiny model, the approach to performance reporting was re-designed to ensure effective oversight of the Wirral Plan. Quarterly pledge themed performance reports were provided to Scrutiny Committees to enable performance to be continuously monitored and reviewed.

Scrutiny of the Transformation Programme

The Centre for Public Scrutiny promotes the effective involvement of scrutiny councillors in considering and debating major council transformation plans to make the end product more robust. In Wirral, a mechanism for scrutinising the Council's Transformation Programme was adopted by scrutiny committees at the start of the year. This embedded the pre-decision scrutiny of service development proposals providing an opportunity to influence decisions on major transformation projects affecting all residents of the borough. A series of workshops has been delivered in year to consider a number of service development proposals. Feedback from these sessions has been considered in the development of business cases presented to Cabinet.

Budget Scrutiny

The 2017/18 budget proposals received detailed and comprehensive pre-decision scrutiny through a series of workshops set up for each committee. These sessions influenced a number of budget decisions, for example encouraging the Cabinet to revise proposals to introduce car parking charges in various locations around the borough, and suggesting an increase to the charge for additional garden waste bins.

Member Development

Scrutiny takes an active role in providing elected Members with access to training and development. This year, in response to the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services a training session was commissioned to improve scrutiny and challenge of children's safeguarding services. The session, 'Effective Children Safeguarding' delivered by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, was attended by 13 scrutiny Members. Members' learning from the session included the need to build relationships with key groups including the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, and to develop mechanisms to test the effectiveness of front line practices. A comprehensive session booklet and review key learning outcomes were issued to members after the session.

Scrutiny members have access to a Scrutiny Toolkit comprised of seven useful guides covering all aspects of scrutiny. In addition, regular updates and best practice guides from the Centre for Public Scrutiny are circulated to Members.

THE IMPACT OF SCRUTINY IN 2016/17.

PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Scrutiny Committee Meetings	Scope
5 regular committee meetings	To review and scrutinise the strategies and plans associated with the People theme of the Wirral Plan. To review and scrutinise the commissioning, management and performance of services under the People Committee remit. This has included a combination of standing items and items identified by the Chair and Party Spokespersons for committee agendas. See appendix 3 for the full list of reports received during the year.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Avoiding Admissions Scrutiny Review</p> <p>This detailed review aimed to provide assurances that adequate plans are in place to enhance community-based services in order to reduce unplanned admissions to hospital.</p>	<p>Sessions were held with representatives from many different health and care provider organisations including care homes, carer and patient representative groups and third sector organisations. The task and finish group was strengthened by the inclusion of a representative from Healthwatch Wirral.</p>	<p>Members endorsed the direction of travel towards greater integration of health & care and enhanced provision of community services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that pressure on frontline services will only increase without radical changes to the way services are delivered. • The establishment of a clear leadership structure and a coordinated response from a range of services is required to ensure delivery of successful health and social care. • Acknowledgement of the vital contribution and continued importance of community care, including domiciliary care. This will require additional resources to ensure acceptable pay rates and further training. • The vital role of public health and the preventative agenda was highlighted.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Cumulative Impact Scrutiny Review This review was instigated due to concerns raised about negative public health and public order impacts in localities with high concentrations of off-licences and fast food outlets.</p>	<p>The aim was to explore the issue of cumulative impact in relation to the prevalence of off licences and fast food takeaways and their impact on public health. Members were keen to establish what powers and tools were at the Council’s disposal and to what extent these were being fully realised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This review contributed to policy development and improvement by creating momentum for a special cumulative impact policy to be consulted upon. Following this review the Licencing Committee authorised a consultation into the possibility of amending the Licensing Authority’s Statement of Licensing Policy to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for an area in Birkenhead identified by Merseyside Police in respect of premises which sold alcohol for consumption off the premises.
<p>Community Pharmacies This was a fast turnaround scrutiny review to respond to Government proposals for changes to community pharmacy contractual and funding arrangements.</p>	<p>An evidence Day was held with representatives from NHS England, Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Community Pharmacy Cheshire & Wirral Local Pharmacy Committee and Public Health (Wirral Council). The aim was to understand the implications for Wirral of the Government proposals for changes to the contractual framework and funding of community pharmacies, and whether any mitigating actions were required by the various stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review panel found that, despite concerns among providers, no reduction to the number of community pharmacies in Wirral had occurred at that time. • Recognition of the need to assess the on-going impact of future developments in the local pharmacy market and the potential impact on other service providers, such as GPs. • The findings of this review are being considered in the development of the Council’s Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment. A draft of this will be shared with the overview and scrutiny committee prior to its publication.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Transforming Wirral - DASS Integration & Integrated Commissioning Members of the Committee scrutinised the Council's proposals to create a commissioning hub and integrate community care teams with the NHS.</p>	<p>A workshop was convened for members to consider the business cases relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a commissioning hub to jointly commission services with Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) • Creating integrated community care teams with Wirral Community NHS Trust to deliver services to older people. <p>Members' comments were reported to Cabinet for consideration alongside the business cases.</p>	<p>The workshop highlighted a number of issues to Cabinet including the impact on staff job security and terms and conditions, the ability to manage increasing demand on services, the need to be client focused and the need for robust performance management arrangements.</p> <p>The issues highlighted by Members were incorporated into the delivery of the Adults Integration project which successfully delivered on 1/6/17, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of staff numbers during the transfer and the contractual arrangements which allowed for the buyback of Council back office services to support the new model. • A robust performance management mechanism integrated into the contract to ensure there would be effective measures of the service once transferred.
<p>Health & Care performance Panel 4 Panel Meetings and 2 Quality Account Sessions</p>	<p>The Health and Care Performance Panel scrutinises the general performance of the key health and social care service providers in Wirral. The panel reviews performance and provides oversight, support and challenge to the health sector on behalf of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfilling statutory health scrutiny duty. • Effective scrutiny of the performance of local health Trusts via the Quality Account scrutiny sessions. • Monitoring standards in care homes and domiciliary care. • Engagement with patient advocacy groups e.g. Healthwatch Wirral.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Children Sub-Committee 4 Sub-Committee Meetings</p>	<p>The Children Sub-Committee scrutinises the achievement of key outcomes, as set out in Wirral’s Strategy for Children, Young People and Families. The specific Wirral Plan pledges within the remit of the Sub-Committee are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are ready for school; • Young people are ready for work and adulthood; • Vulnerable children reach their full potential; • Reduce child and family poverty. <p>The Sub-Committee has influenced effective scrutiny arrangements regarding the Children’s Services Ofsted report and the Improvement Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the scrutiny response to the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection into Children’s Services, including monitoring progress of the Improvement Plan against key performance indicators. • Effective engagement with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. • New approaches to scrutiny of children’s services e.g. Reality Check Visits.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Scrutiny Committee Meetings	Scope
5 regular committee meetings	To review and scrutinise the strategies and plans associated with the Business theme of the Wirral Plan. To review and scrutinise the commissioning, management and performance of services under the Business Committee remit. This has included a combination of standing items and items identified by the Chair and Party Spokespersons for committee agendas. See appendix 3 for the full list of reports received during the year.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>IT Disaster Recovery This was a quick review carried out in response to concerns regarding the need for an up-to-date and comprehensive IT disaster recovery plan for Wirral Council.</p>	The objectives for doing this work were to receive assurances that the Council establishes effective IT disaster recovery arrangements and takes steps to mitigate risks relating to IT disaster recovery highlighted in the Council's risk register. It was also an aim of the Panel to raise the profile of IT disaster recovery across the Council and its partners. This was conducted over a single evidence session with senior officers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will have an IT Disaster Recovery Plan fit for purpose. • Raised staff awareness of IT disaster recovery and the impact on services across the Council. • Establishment of effective disaster recovery arrangements with Council partners.
<p>Tourism This piece of work was commissioned following an officer report to the previous Regeneration & Environment Policy & Performance Committee on how tourism is marketed.</p>	The key objectives of the review were to review how Wirral's tourism offer, including heritage, is marketed and to identify any gaps that can be exploited. Additionally, the Review Panel wanted to understand the role of the Local Enterprise Partnership and to ensure that all opportunities for marketing of tourism are taken. The review was conducted over a number of evidence sessions with key senior officers and representation from the LEP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding and engagement with volunteer groups working in the sector. • Wirral to enhance its tourism profile through a complementary programme of events. • The potential of Birkenhead Market as a key feature for developing its tourism offer. • Influenced the development of the Wirral Visitor Economy Strategy.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Resident Parking This was a quick review commissioned following an officer report to Committee which highlighted a number of issues relating to resident parking in Wirral.</p>	<p>The scrutiny review was undertaken over two evidence sessions. The key objectives were to understand the issues around the current resident parking scheme policy on new and existing resident parking schemes and to help inform the development of a new Resident Parking Scheme Policy for Wirral.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents were engaged and their views were used to understand and influence the development of policy proposals. A more equitable and sustainable approach to resident parking was recommended.
<p>Transforming Wirral - Access Wirral Members of the Committee scrutinised the proposal to develop the Council's Customer Contact and Transactional Services to deliver a better, faster and more efficient customer service.</p>	<p>A workshop was held to review an outline business case for Access Wirral, which forms part of Wirral Council's Strategic Transformation Programme. The workshop, which was open to all Members of the Committee, took a question and answer approach. Members' comments were referred to Cabinet To be considered as part of the decision to proceed.</p>	<p>The workshop highlighted a number of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring on-line accessibility for Wirral residents. Issues relating to the Customer Relationship Management interface and the user experience. The impact on vulnerable residents and the appropriate support available. The outcomes of the project are monitored and value for money is demonstrated.
<p>Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny The LCRCA Scrutiny Panel convened three times over the 2016/17 Municipal Year.</p>	<p>The panel carries out scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the Liverpool City Region. During 2016/17 the Scrutiny Panel completed in-depth scrutiny reviews on apprenticeships and short-hop bus fares across the City Region for consideration by the Combined Authority.</p> <p>Following the election of the Mayor for the Liverpool City Region, the powers and responsibilities of this office have been formalised. This establishes a greater role for scrutiny members to hold the Mayor to account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring Wirral's voice is heard as part of the scrutiny of LCRCA areas of activity. Providing challenge to LCRCA policy and strategy development; Monitoring the delivery of the Authority's strategic plan.

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Scrutiny Committee Meetings	Scope
5 regular committee meetings	To review and scrutinise the strategies and plans associated with the Environment theme of the Wirral Plan. To review and scrutinise the commissioning, management and performance of services under the Environment Committee remit. This has included a combination of standing items and items identified by the Chair and Party Spokespersons for committee agendas. See appendix 3 for the full list of reports received during the year.
Special Meeting to review Community Safety	Members of the Committee requested a Special Meeting to discuss the remit of the Council's Community Patrol Service.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Page 24</p> <p>Coastal Strategy scrutiny review was added to the work programme to consider how coastal schemes are being delivered and the level of funding required, including local levy contributions, given the financial challenges facing the Council.</p>	The review was undertaken through question and answer sessions. The key focus of the review was to review how Wirral Council is delivering the Coastal Strategy, particularly in relation to the four schemes identified as requiring intervention in the short-term, and to ensure that all funding opportunities are explored where there are shortfalls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring all viable funding opportunities are explored to reduce impact on capital bids Linking in regeneration opportunities with coastal schemes to maximise funding Acknowledgement of Members role in raising residents' awareness of flood and coastal erosion risk to help communities better prepare for the challenges ahead.
<p>Number of Councillors Scrutiny Review This quick review was conducted in response to a Notice of Motion to Council suggesting that the number of Councillors in Wirral should reduce from 66 to 44.</p>	Panel Members aimed to reach an informed view on whether the Council should actively progress a referral to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to conduct an Electoral Review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reassurance of the low cost of councillors in Wirral in comparison with local and statistical neighbours. Reassurance that Wirral has a good level of electoral equality in terms of the number of electors per councillor.

Scrutiny Work Outside Committee Meetings	Scope	Outcome
<p>Transforming Wirral - Community Safety Proposals: Safer Wirral Unit</p> <p>Members of the Committee scrutinised the proposal to fully integrate Community Safety services with Merseyside Police to create a new Delivery Vehicle, the Safer Wirral Unit.</p>	<p>A workshop was held to review an outline business case for Community Safety which forms part of Wirral Council's Strategic Transformation Programme. The workshop, which was open to all Members of the Committee, took a question and answer approach. Members' comments were reported back to Committee before being referred to Cabinet for consideration.</p>	<p>The workshop highlighted a number of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of reviewing performance data and accountability for this • The accountability for key community safety activities • Training of officers being commensurate with roles • Ensuring proactive work remains on the agenda • Ensuring effective governance and scrutiny arrangements are in place.
<p>Wirral Flood and Water Risk Management Partnership</p> <p>Standing Panel to meet 3 times per year</p>	<p>Following a report into the significant flooding incidents on Wirral in August and September 2015, Committee agreed to set up a standing panel to monitor the implementation of the recommendations contained within the report and the Action Plan of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The Panel would also ensure Wirral Council and its partners are best placed to respond effectively to future significant flood events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of the formal mechanism for committee to carry out its statutory responsibility to scrutinise Wirral's flood and water management arrangements.

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NEW SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIORITIES FOR 2017/18

Review of Scrutiny Arrangements for Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health.

During the municipal year, the extensive scope of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee was widely acknowledged by Members. This was with consistent with Member concerns about the scope of the former Families & Wellbeing Policy & Performance Committee. Consequently a review of the scrutiny structure took place at the end of the municipal year.

The outcome of the review resulted in the People Overview and Scrutiny committee being replaced by two new scrutiny committees, the Adult Care & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Children & Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The creation of a specific Committee with responsibility for scrutinising children's services will support the Council's response to the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection. An enhanced profile for health scrutiny will be achieved by conducting health scrutiny in public through the Adult Care & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The current Business and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committees will remain unchanged. Arrangements for financial monitoring and performance reporting aligned to the People Wirral Plan theme will be split between the two new committees. This will ensure the scrutiny function continues to add value to the Wirral Plan.

Priorities for 2017/18

In the coming year the scrutiny function will continue to prioritise supporting the effective delivery of the Wirral Plan and the Council's Transformation Programme.

The scrutiny function will continue to focus on delivering the following outcomes:

- The Council's Executive is held to account
- Partner agencies are held to account
- Good governance is maintained
- Decision-making is improved
- Policy is developed and enhanced
- Service improvements are identified and implemented
- Resident or service user feedback is used to influence change
- Members are informed about the quality or effectiveness of services

In support of the above, the following key areas of focus have been identified for 2017/18:

Engagement of Cabinet Members

Scrutiny will continue to work closely with Cabinet Members to ensure scrutiny holds the Executive to account and is able to achieve the greatest impact in supporting the delivery of the Wirral Plan. This has been evident so far in the scrutiny of Transformation Programme projects, where Cabinet Members have presented proposals and were challenged by scrutiny Members. The aim for the

coming year is to further engage with Cabinet Members through transformation scrutiny and invitations to scrutiny committees.

Seeking opportunities to engage better with residents

A key aim for the coming year is to improve engagement with service users and local residents, so that their views can be used to influence policy and service improvement. This will be achieved through increased engagement with voluntary organisations, friends groups and conducting focus groups and surveys with residents.

On-going assurance

Scrutiny must be agile and flexible in order to be able to provide effective oversight of services delivered by the Council and its partners. Seeking new ways to conduct scrutiny will support elected Members to scrutinise the broadest range of services in the most efficient way. The use of different tools to carry out scrutiny will optimise the available capacity of each committee. Examples of new assurance methods being considered in the coming year include mystery shopping exercises and reality check visits with staff in Children's Services.

Closing the loop and measuring the effectiveness of scrutiny

To achieve tangible impact and make sure the work of scrutiny counts, scrutiny must get better at monitoring progress against its findings and recommendations. To achieve this, scrutiny committees will ensure that progress reports from previous scrutiny reviews are scheduled on committee work programmes. This will require members to ensure there is adequate space on committee agendas for follow-up reports. This will encourage greater ownership of scrutiny recommendations and will improve accountability regarding their implementation.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Table of completed / initiated scrutiny activity in 2016/17

Item	Format	Committee	Timescale
Avoiding Admissions	Scrutiny Review	People Committee	Completed September 2016
Cumulative Impact	Scrutiny Review	People Committee	Completed September 2016
Community Pharmacies	Scrutiny Review	People Committee	Completed February 2017
Re-provision of respite services	Scrutiny Review	People Committee	Initiated February 2017
Continuing Healthcare Funding – (H&CPP)	Scrutiny Review	People Committee	Initiated March 2017
Health & Care Performance Panel	Standing Panel	People Committee	6 Meetings during 2016/17
Health & Care Performance Panel Quality Accounts	Scrutiny Workshop	People Committee	May 2016
Children Sub-Committee	Sub-Committee	People Committee	4 Meetings during 2016/17
Department of Adult Social Services Transformation Project	Transforming Wirral Scrutiny Workshop	People Committee	August 2016
Disaster Recovery	Scrutiny Review	Business Committee	Completed July 2016
Tourism	Scrutiny Review	Business Committee	Completed January 2017
Resident Parking Scrutiny Review	Scrutiny Review	Business Committee	Initiated December 2016
Supporting the Creative Sector	Scrutiny Review	Business Committee	Initiated February 2017
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Scrutiny	Standing Panel	Business Committee	3 Meetings during 2016/17
Access Wirral Transformation Project	Transforming Wirral Scrutiny Workshop	Business Committee	February 2016
The Number of Councillors	Scrutiny Review	Environment Committee	Completed January 2017
Coastal Strategy	Scrutiny Review	Environment Committee	Completed July 2016
Modern Slavery	Scrutiny Review	Environment Committee	Initiated March 2017
Community Safety Transformation Project	Transforming Wirral Scrutiny Workshop	Environment Committee	September 2016
Budget Scrutiny	Budget Scrutiny Sessions across all O&S Committees	All Committees	January 2017

Appendix 2: Call-In Meetings and Notices of Motion

Call-In Meetings

Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date
Keeping Residents Informed (Business OSC)	27/07/2016
Hoylake Golf Resort (Business OSC)	07/12/2016
Car Parking Changes – Budget Saving Options (Business OSC)	13/03/2017
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date
Domestic Refuse Collection Outline Business Case (Environment OSC)	26/07/2016

Notices of Motion

Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date
Setting Clear Targets for Wirral Waters	12/07/2016
Reducing Pedestrian Casualties in Wirral	12/07/2016
Performance Management - Reporting Arrangements	29/11/2016
Inward Investment	29/11/2016
Treating All Residents Fairly and Equitably	29/11/2016
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date
Performance Management - Reporting Arrangements	30/11/2016
Recognising the Contribution of Our Friends Groups	30/11/2016
People Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date
Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Charter	28/11/2016
Performance Management - Reporting Arrangements	28/11/2016

Appendix 3: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Agenda Items 2016/17

Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Title	Format	Date
Transforming Wirral	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Disaster Recovery Scrutiny Review Report	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Street Lighting - Scottish Power Performance	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Resident Parking Policy	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Verbal Update	12/07/2016
2015/16 Regeneration & Environment and Transformation & Resources Directorate Plan Closedown Reports	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Policy Inform: Business	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Appointment of the Highways Representation Panel	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Scrutiny Work Programme	Officer Report	12/07/2016
Road Safety - Reducing Pedestrian Casualties	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Customer Contact Update Report	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Update on Liverpool City Region Developments	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel	Verbal Update	13/09/2016
Wirral Plan Overview Report: 2016-17 Quarter 1 - Business	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 2016//17	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Policy Inform: Business	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Highways and Traffic Representation Panel Minutes	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Scrutiny Work Programme Update	Officer Report	13/09/2016
Asset Strategy Presentation	Presentation	29/11/2016
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel	Verbal Update	29/11/2016
2016/17 Quarter 2 Wirral Plan Performance – Business	Officer Report	29/11/2016
Financial Monitoring Quarter 2 2016/17	Officer Report	29/11/2016
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme	Officer Report	29/11/2016
Proposal to Implement Risk Based Verification	Officer Report	29/11/2016
Budget Proposals Workshop Report	Officer Report	24/01/2017
The Role of Councillors in Wirral's Asset Strategy	Officer Report	24/01/2017
Tourism Task and Finish Scrutiny	Officer Report	24/01/2017
Update on Liverpool City Region Developments	Officer Report	24/01/2017
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel	Verbal Update	24/01/2017
Policy Inform: Business	Officer Report	24/01/2017
Highways and Traffic Representation Panel Minutes	Officer Report	24/01/2017
Scrutiny Work Programme Update	Officer Report	24/01/2017
Council's Commercial Approach Presentation	Officer Report	29/03/2017
Access Wirral Service Development Proposals	Officer Report	29/03/2017
Update on Liverpool City Region	Officer Report	29/03/2017
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel	Verbal Update	29/03/2017
2016/17 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance – Business	Officer Report	29/03/2017
Financial Monitoring 2016/17 Quarter 3	Officer Report	29/03/2017
Policy Inform: Business	Officer Report	29/03/2017
Scrutiny Work Programme Update	Officer Report	29/03/2017

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Title	Format	Date
Flood and Water Management Act: Significant Flood Investigation: August 22nd to September 2nd 2015	Officer Report	18/07/2016
Coastal Strategy Scrutiny Report	Officer Report	18/07/2016
Transforming Wirral Report	Officer Report	18/07/2016
2015/16 Regeneration & Environment and Transformation & Resources Directorate Plan Closedown Reports	Officer Report	18/07/2016
Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Governance and Reporting Arrangements	Officer Report	18/07/2016
Policy Inform: Environment	Officer Report	18/07/2016
Scrutiny Work Programme Report	Officer Report	18/07/2016
Work Programme Workshop Feedback	Officer Report	21/09/2016
Transforming Wirral - Community Safety	Officer Report	21/09/2016
Future Domestic Refuse Collection Service	Presentation	21/09/2016
Wirral Plan Overview Report: 2016-17 Quarter 1 - Environment	Officer Report	21/09/2016
Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 2016/17	Officer Report	21/09/2016
Policy Inform: Environment	Officer Report	21/09/2016
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	21/09/2016
Number of Councillors - Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel	Officer Report	30/11/2016
Wirral Leisure Strategy Presentation	Presentation	30/11/2016
Wirral Culture Strategy Presentation	Presentation	30/11/2016
2016/17 Quarter 2 Wirral Plan Performance - Environment	Officer Report	30/11/2016
2016/17 Quarter 2 - Financial Monitoring	Officer Report	30/11/2016
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	30/11/2016
Magenta Housing Association - Impact of Welfare Reform	Presentation	31/01/2017
Wirral Housing Strategy	Presentation	31/01/2017
Homelessness in Wirral and the Implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Bill	Officer Report	31/01/2017
Policy Inform	Officer Report	31/01/2017
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	31/01/2017
2017/18 Budget Scrutiny Report	Officer Report	31/01/2017
Information Report: Local Policing On Wirral	Presentation	28/03/2017
'Ensuring Wirral's Neighbourhoods Are Safe' Strategy - Progress Update	Presentation	28/03/2017
Community Safety Integration Project – Progress Update	Presentation	28/03/2017
2016/17 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance - Environment	Officer Report	28/03/2017
Financial Monitoring 2016/17 Quarter 3	Officer Report	28/03/2017
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	28/03/2017
Policy Inform	Officer Report	28/03/2017

People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Title	Format	Date
Transforming Wirral Report	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Elected Members and the Quality Assurance of Care	Officer Report	14/07/2016
The Implications of the Modern Slavery Act 2015	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Safeguarding Children Scrutiny Review - Update	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Performance Monitoring - End Of Year 2015/16	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Work Programme for the Municipal Year	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Report from the Health & Care Performance Panel (H&CPP)	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Establishment of the H&CPP for the Municipal Year	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Establishment of the Children Sub-Committee for the Year	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Policy Inform Briefing Paper	Officer Report	14/07/2016
Public Health Annual Report	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Meeting the Housing Needs of Vulnerable People	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Transforming Wirral - DASS Business Cases	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Cumulative Impact on Public Health Scrutiny Review Report	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Avoiding Admissions Scrutiny Review Report	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Healthy Wirral - Local Delivery Plan	Presentation	08/09/2016
Wirral Plan Overview Report: 2016-17 Quarter 1 - People	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2016/17	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Policy Inform	Officer Report	08/09/2016
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	08/09/2016
All Day Health Centre Services and GP Seven Day Working	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Review of Services Provided By Change, Grow, Live	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Cheshire & Merseyside Sustainability and Transformation Plan	Presentation	28/11/2016
2016/17 Quarter 2 Wirral Plan Performance - People	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Financial Monitoring - 2016/17 Quarter 2	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Children Sub Committee - Terms of Reference	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Report from Health and Care Performance Panel	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	28/11/2016
Safeguarding Children Annual Report 2015/16	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Tobacco Control and Alcohol Strategies	Presentation	01/02/2017
Ageing Well In Wirral – Strategy Delivery Update	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Community Pharmacy Scrutiny Review Report	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Budget 2017/18 Scrutiny Report	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Policy Inform	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Feedback from the Meeting of the H&CPP held on 07/12/16	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	01/02/2017
Minutes of the meeting of the H&CPP – 01/02/17	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Adults Safeguarding Annual Report	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Wirral CCG - Outcomes from Service Policy Review Consultation	Officer Report	23/03/2017
2016/17 Quarter 3 Wirral Plan Performance - People	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Financial Monitoring 2016/17 Quarter 3	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Avoiding Admissions Scrutiny Review - Follow Up	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Health and Social Care Integration – Progress Update	Verbal Update	23/03/2017
Improving Life Chances Strategy Update	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Policy Inform	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Membership of Children's Sub Committee	Officer Report	23/03/2017
Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme Update	Officer Report	23/03/2017

MINUTE EXTRACT

LICENSING ACT 2003 COMMITTEE

15 MARCH 2017

14 SPECIAL CUMULATIVE IMPACT POLICY

The Licensing Manager reported upon the outcome of the public consultation undertaken in response to a request received to amend the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for an area of Birkenhead which was specified on the map attached to the report.

The Licensing Manager referred to the responses received in respect of the consultation which had been provided to Members and outlined the matters to be considered by the Licensing Authority when considering whether to adopt a Special Policy relating to cumulative impact which were stated within the Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003.

Sergeant K Wilkinson from Merseyside Police who had been the duty inspector who had submitted the request from Merseyside Police during the consultation period attended the meeting and gave a presentation in respect of why Merseyside Police considered it necessary and appropriate for the Council's Licensing Policy to be amended to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy.

Sergeant Wilkinson reported upon the alcohol related anti-social behaviour in Wirral over the past month and advised that the majority of calls were within the area of the proposed Special Cumulative Impact Policy and its surroundings.

Sergeant Wilkinson informed Members that the Birkenhead and Tranmere areas accounted for 25% of the reported Domestic Violence assaults within Wirral where alcohol was believed to be a contributing factor. She further advised that after speaking with local residents, 75% believed they suffered from anti-social behaviour in their area and 71% believed that licensed premises contributed to this. She also referred to a number of comments made by the community in respect of anti-social behaviour they had experienced.

In response to questions from Members, Sergeant Wilkinson confirmed that a number of different computer sources were used in response to crimes reported by members of the public and it was indicated on the system whether alcohol had been involved. She also advised that alongside these reports, emails had also been received from Councillors, town hosts and other organisations expressing concerns regarding the contribution of alcohol to anti-social behaviour and the number of off licences in Birkenhead. Sergeant Wilkinson informed Members that there had been ongoing communication from Merseyside Police with shop keepers, town hosts and Councillors and also attendance at residents meetings and that press releases had been carried out.

Ward Councillor Jean Stapleton addressed the Committee and expressed her support in respect of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy being amended to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for the area of Birkenhead as outlined by Merseyside Police.

Members expressed their support in respect of the requested Special Cumulative Impact Policy being adopted and believed it would assist in preventing problems of anti-social behaviour linked to alcohol in the area specified in the map which had been identified by Merseyside Police.

The Chair thanked Sergeant Wilkinson for her presentation.

It was moved by Councillor A Hodson and seconded by Councillor D Mitchell that –

“It be recommended for approval by Council that the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy be amended to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for the specified area in Birkenhead as identified by Merseyside Police.”

Resolved – That it be recommended for approval by Council that the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy be amended to include a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for the specified area in Birkenhead as identified by Merseyside Police.



Statement of Licensing Policy

July 2017

Wirral Licensing Authority
Wallasey Town Hall
Brighton Street
Wallasey
CH44 8ED

0151 691 8043

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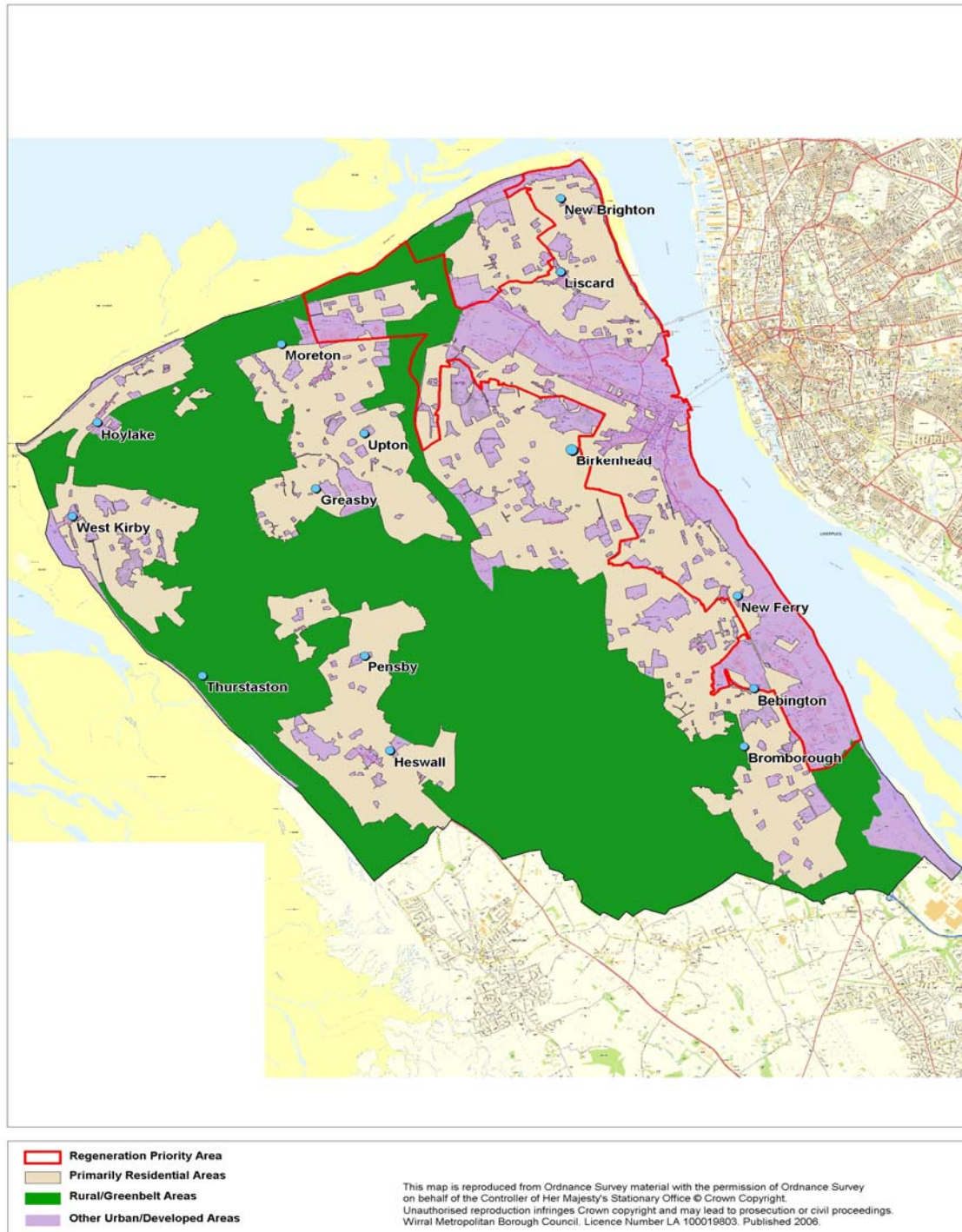
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Wirral Borough Council is situated in the County of Merseyside, which contains no district Councils, but 5 metropolitan councils: Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. The Council area has a population of 319,800 (ONS 2010 midyear population estimates) making it the second largest after Liverpool in the County in terms of population. In terms of area it is the largest in Merseyside, covering 60.1 square miles. The Borough is mainly urban in outlook, with 32.85 square miles (54.66% of the borough) covered in Residential, Industrial or Commercial buildings.



The key provided identifies the urban / rural areas as well as regeneration priority areas.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This policy sets out how the Licensing Authority will carry out its function in respect of individual applications made under the terms of the Licensing Act 2003 (The Act).
- 2.2 The Licensing Authority aims to provide a transparent balanced, consistent, proportionate and fair licensing service for all service users including applicants, licence holders, Responsible Authorities and members of the public.
- 2.3 Holders of authorisations, be that a Premises Licence, Club Premises Certificate, Temporary Event Notice or Personal Licence will be expected to work proactively and positively with the Licensing Authority, Responsible Authorities and members of the public to promote the licensing objectives.
- 2.4 The policy aims to ensure a consistent approach to licensing within Wirral, promoting fairness and proportionality. The policy is to assist Officers and Members of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee in reaching decisions on particular applications, setting out those matters that will normally be taken into account.
- 2.5 The policy seeks to provide clarity for applicants and those who wish to make representations in respect of any applications to enable them to understand the objectives being promoted and matters that will be considered in determination of the applications made under The Licensing Act 2003.
- 2.6 The policy will cover all applications for Premises Licences, Club Premises Certificates, notification of temporary events, together with applications for renewals, transfers and variations. The policy also provides details of the review process that provides a key protection for the community where problems associated with the licensing objectives are occurring after the grant or variation of a Premises Licence or Club Premises Certificate.
- 2.7 Wirral Borough Council is the Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 (the Act) and works closely with the Responsible Authorities, the licensed trade, local residents, local businesses and Ward Councillors to deliver the licensing objectives.
- 2.8 The Licensing Authority takes its responsibility and the Act seriously and actively works with other bodies including Merseyside Police and Trading Standards to combat alcohol related crime and disorder and tackle the sale of alcohol to underage persons. Further details of this work can be identified in Wirral's Strategy to tackle alcohol related crime.
- 2.9 The Licensing Authority works closely with residents to listen to their concerns and where appropriate act as a mediator between licence holders and residents to address issues, in particular relating to the prevention of public nuisance. The Licensing Authority also works with licence holders both directly and through Pub Watch, to seek compliance with licence conditions and encourage discussion between all relevant parties to promote the licensing objectives. The Authority has a Charter for Licensed Premises and it is expected that all Licence Holders sign up to this Charter. This work is undertaken in recognition that enforcement action will be taken when necessary and appropriate in accordance with the Authority's Enforcement Policy.
- 2.10 Not only has this Statement of Licensing Policy been prepared to promote the four licensing objectives under the Act, the Licensing Authority has had regard to the local strategies which have been developed for the borough, its residents, businesses,

workers and visitors. The Licensing Authority intends to secure the proper integration with local crime prevention, planning, and other relevant strategies in its roles to promote the licensing objectives.

- 2.11 Applicants for premises licences should be aware of the expectations of the Licensing Authority and the Responsible Authorities as to the steps that are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives, and to demonstrate knowledge of their local area when describing the steps they propose to take to promote the licensing objectives.
- 2.12 The Licensing Authority will monitor the effect of this Policy throughout the period it covers through licensing liaison meetings with representatives of licence holders such as PubWatch meetings and also by way of regular meetings with the Responsible Authorities.
- 2.13 The Authority is committed to ensuring the highest levels of customer service for applicants, Responsible Authorities and members of the public. Our officers will always seek to assist licence applicants in completing applications and considering relevant conditions – particularly with a view to addressing possible representations from residents and Responsible Authorities. This is an important part of building and enhancing the partnership between the Licensing Authority and the licensed trade and providing useful advice and assistance. Notwithstanding this advice, it will be a matter for the applicant to decide what conditions to volunteer and for Responsible Authorities and other persons to seek additional conditions where appropriate to promote the licensing objectives.

3.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE LICENSING POLICY

- 3.1 The Licensing Act 2003 requires that the Licensing Authority publish a Statement of Licensing Policy that sets out the principles the Licensing Authority will generally apply to promote the licensing objectives when making decisions on applications made under the Act. In addition the Policy seeks to provide clarity for applicants and residents to enable them to understand the objectives being promoted and the matters that will be considered in the determination of licences. This Statement of Licensing Policy has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Act and having regard to the Guidance issued under Section 182.
- 3.2 The Policy relates to all those activities identified as falling within the provisions of the Act, namely:
 - Retail sale of alcohol
 - Supply of alcohol to club members
 - Provision of regulated entertainment
 - The supply of hot food and/or drink from any premises between 11.00 pm and 5.00 am
- 3.3 In accordance with Section 5(3) of the 2003 Act, the policy has been prepared in consultation with:
 - The Chief Officer of Police
 - The Fire and Rescue Authority
 - The Director of Public Health
 - Persons/Bodies representative of local holders of premises licences
 - Persons/Bodies representative of local holders of club certificates

- Persons/Bodies representative of local holders of personal licences
- Persons/Bodies representative of businesses and residents in its area

4.0 LICENSING OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 To achieve these objectives the Licensing Authority will use its full range of powers and engage all relevant Responsible Authorities and members of the public. Accordingly, the Licensing Authority will enter appropriate partnership arrangements, working closely with the Police, the Fire and Rescue Authority, local businesses, community representatives and local people in meeting these objectives.
- 4.2 In carrying out its various licensing functions the Licensing Authority will promote the licensing objectives which are:
- The prevention of crime and disorder
 - Public safety
 - The prevention of public nuisance
 - The protection of children from harm

These objectives will be considered of equal importance and paramount at all times.

- 4.3 Licensing is about the control of licensed premises, qualifying clubs and temporary events within the terms of the 2003 Act.
- 4.4 In determining a licence application the overriding principle adopted by the Licensing Authority will be to determine each application on its individual merits.

Prevention of Crime and Disorder

- 4.5 The Licensing Authority expects individual licence holders, new applicants and temporary event organisers to regularly review their arrangements in addressing crime and disorder issues pertinent to their particular licensable activities and/or premises. Information and advice can be obtained from regulatory agencies, business network groups and other sources. The Licensing Authority also encourages local residents and other businesses to discuss issues of concern directly with individual businesses or, to contact the Police and Licensing Service if they believe that a particular licensed premises is failing to achieve this objective.
- 4.6 The Licensing Authority will require the applicant to detail in their operating schedule the steps proposed to ensure the deterrence and prevention of crime and disorder, on and in the vicinity of the premises, having regard to their location, character, condition, the nature and extent of the proposed use and the persons likely to resort to the premises.
- 4.7 There are many steps an applicant may take to prevent crime and disorder. The Licensing Authority will look to the Police for the main source of advice on these matters. In accordance with the Statutory Guidance, Police views on matters relating to crime and disorder will be given considerable weight.
- 4.8 The Authority will through its' Community Safety Partnership, devise and help deliver strategies to tackle the misuse of alcohol, identified in the Government Office's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy as being a precursor to crime and anti-social behaviour. The Licensing Authority expects existing licence holders, new applicants and the organisers of temporary events, to be able to demonstrate the measures they

- use, or propose to adopt, to prevent and actively discourage underage retail and hospitality sales/supply of alcohol. The Licensing Authority supports initiatives / good practice to prevent the sale of alcohol to those who attempt to buy alcohol on behalf of those who are underage as well as those who are drunk.
- 4.9 Where its discretion is engaged, the Licensing Authority will seek to promote the licensing objective of preventing crime and disorder in a manner which supports the Community Safety Partnership and any local crime reduction strategy.
 - 4.10 The risk assessment approach remains fundamental. Licence holders and applicants are strongly recommended to work closely with the Police and Licensing Service in particular, in bringing into effect appropriate control measures to either overcome established or potential problems. A combination of short and longer-term strategies may need to be deployed by the licence holder to sustain and promote the prevention of crime and disorder.
 - 4.11 The Licensing Authority will require the licence holder to indicate what steps will be put in place to control the excessive consumption of alcohol and drunkenness on relevant premises in order to reduce the risk of anti social behaviour occurring elsewhere after customers have left the premises.
 - 4.12 The Licensing Authority is aware of the link between the supply of discounted alcohol and incidents of alcohol related disorder and will consider whether any measures or restrictions can be placed on alcohol sales to prevent binge drinking and promote 'sensible drinking'.
 - 4.13 Off Licences, shops, supermarkets and stores selling alcohol for consumption off the premises potentially have a high risk of crime and disorder as they can be targeted as an easy premises from where to acquire alcohol. Such premises can contribute to anti social behaviour and disorder through the consumption of alcohol on the street and in open spaces by groups of drinkers, through the sale of alcohol to children, and through the sale of alcohol to street drinkers and persons who are already drunk.
 - 4.14 The Licensing Authority expects Off Licences to show particular due diligence in areas where these problems are prevalent, and to strictly monitor the way they sell alcohol where the premises are located close to schools and hostels and similar premises that provide shelter or services to alcohol dependent persons.
 - 4.15 It is important that staff working at Off Licences are suitably trained in the Act and can discharge their duties in full compliance with the licence conditions and requirements of the Act. This includes the ability to competently check a customer's age with acceptable forms of identification where necessary.
 - 4.16 The Licensing Authority will expect new applicants, existing licence holders and organisers of temporary events to adopt recognised good practices in whatever area of operation they are engaged. For example, the 'Safer Clubbing Guide' provides essential advice for clubs and pubs providing public entertainment.
 - 4.17 The Licensing Authority encourages relevant businesses to participate in the local PubWatch scheme or similar forums where they are set up, and where this helps secure and/or promotes the licensing objectives.
 - 4.18 The Licensing Authority will review the adequacy of transport provision, in relation to the ability to disperse customers of licensed premises, in a safe and timely manner.

Swift dispersal of patrons of licensed premises will help reduce the opportunity for crime and disorder.

- 4.19 The Licensing Authority will encourage small businesses to network locally with other businesses and to seek advice from regulatory agencies.
- 4.20 The Council has specific duties under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 that underpins any control strategy that is employed. The Council will continue to work in partnership with the Police in addressing the crime and disorder issue(s).

Promotion of Public Safety

- 4.21 Public safety is not defined within the Act, but is concerned with the physical safety of people, not specifically with public health matters, which are covered by other legislation such as the Health and Safety at Work etc, Act 1974 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 4.22 Applicants and event organisers will be expected to assess not only the physical environment of the premises (or site) but also operational practices, in order to protect the safety of members of the public visiting the site, those who are permanently employed in the business, those who are engaged in running an event or anyone else that could be affected by site activities.
- 4.23 Holders of Premises Licences, and Club Premises Certificates Certificates, or those organising temporary events, should interpret safety widely, the Licensing Authority will take a broad approach to its meaning.
- 4.24 For licensed or certificated premises and for temporary events, public safety must be kept under review and where changes to operational practices occur, a review of risk assessment must be undertaken.
- 4.25 Fire safety and means of escape remain an essential consideration to the Licensing Authority when determining applications. The Licensing Service will work in partnership with the Fire and Rescue Authority and other Council departments (e.g. Building Control and Environmental Health) to ensure that appropriate standards are applied and maintained. Applicants are encouraged and reminded to consult with all relevant parties prior to submission.
- 4.26 In the context of providing safe access to licensed premises for disabled members of the community, the Licensing Authority urges all licensees to familiarise themselves with The Equality Act 2010.
- 4.27 Special events in the open air or temporary structures raise particular issues. Applicants are referred to other sections of this document where guidance on holding these types of event is given.
- 4.28 Maximum occupancy limits in the premises licence will be specified only where appropriate for the promotion of public safety or the prevention of disorder.

Prevention of Public Nuisance

- 4.29 In considering the promotion of this licensing objective, applicants and licence holders need to focus on the effect of licensable activities on persons living and working in the area around the premises which may be disproportionate and unreasonable.

- 4.30 Public nuisance is not narrowly defined within the context of the Act. The Licensing Authority will take a broad approach to its meaning. In effect, any nuisance arising from a licensable activity – ranging from major noise from an outdoor pop concert affecting a wide area, to a low-level nuisance affecting only a few people (e.g. vibrations from a poorly mounted extraction duct serving a night café), could be included.
- 4.31 The Licensing Authority remains sensitive to the expectations and needs of different parts of the community in respect of leisure and cultural pursuits, and will view applications accordingly. The Licensing Authority will consider the impact of those activities on people who have to live, work and sleep within the local vicinity of a licensed premises.
- 4.32 The Licensing Authority will always consider whether other legislation already provides sufficient protection of the rights of local people. For example, the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Noise Act 1996 and the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 can be utilised to address noise nuisance issues. The Licensing Authority considers that the potential for public nuisance can be prevented or much reduced by good design and planning during new or ancillary construction works, and by the provision of good facilities. This will require appropriate advice at the planning and development stages of new projects. The Licensing Authority's Licensing Service and the Environmental Health Department and other regulatory agencies such as the Police, should be viewed as being instrumental in this respect. Applicants should consider carefully the suitability of the premises for the type of activity to be undertaken, particularly in terms of ventilation, noise breakout and noise/vibration transmission to adjoining premises. Applicants should ensure they have measures in place to prevent public nuisance within the vicinity of the premises that might affect other businesses as well as residents.
- 4.33 The Licensing Authority expects licence holders to use their risk assessments and Operating Schedules to review and, if need be, to make necessary improvements to the premises, or to operational practices, in order to prevent public nuisance. The matter of persons congregating in outside areas including beer gardens can cause disturbance and be a public nuisance to residents living in close proximity to licensed premises. This congregation may be connected to the manner in which the smoke free legislation is managed at the premises. The Licensing Authority will expect such matters to have been demonstratively assessed and addressed in the Operating Schedule. In cases where there appears to be a likelihood of residents living around licensed premises or businesses within the vicinity being disturbed by customers leaving venues, or there being an impact on crime and disorder from customers leaving venues, applicants may consider putting in place a dispersal policy. Such a policy would set out the steps that would be put in place to minimise disorder or disturbance that may be caused as customers leave.
- 4.34 Applicants are recommended to consult Environmental Health Services for advice on measures that may need to be incorporated into an operating schedule.
- 4.35 The Licensing Authority will particularly consider the following matters where they are material to the individual application:
- The proximity of residential accommodation
 - The type of use proposed, including the likely numbers of customers, proposed hours of operation and the frequency of activity

- The steps taken or proposed to be taken by the applicant to prevent noise and vibration escaping from the premises, including music, noise from ventilation equipment, and human voices. Such measures may include the installation of soundproofing, air conditioning, acoustic lobbies and sound limitation devices
- The steps taken or proposed to be taken by the applicant to prevent disturbance by customers arriving at or leaving the premises
- The use of smoking areas and how these are controlled / managed
- The use of a garden / other open-air areas, and how these are controlled / managed
- The steps taken or proposed to be taken by the applicant to ensure staff leave the premises quietly
- The arrangements made or proposed for parking by patrons, and the effect of parking by patrons on local residents
- The provision for public transport in the locality (including taxis and private hire vehicles) for patrons
- Whether a dispersal policy has been prepared to minimise the potential for disturbance as customers leave the premises
- Any other relevant activity likely to give rise to nuisance

4.36 Following the implementation of the smoking ban, the Licensing Authority has become aware of nuisance issues relating to the use of external areas at licensed premises. If relevant representations are made, the Licensing Authority will consider whether it is necessary to impose conditions to regulate behaviour in external areas and access to them in order to promote the licensing objectives. In so doing the Licensing Authority considers that generally patrons who are using external smoking areas or shelters are there as a direct result of the licensed premises and are within the control of the licence holder. Applicants with external areas are recommended to seek the views of the Council's Environmental Health Department when preparing their operating schedule so as to include appropriate measures to prevent public nuisance.

4.37 Where the provision of existing legislation proves inadequate or inappropriate for control purposes, if its discretion is engaged through the submission of representations the Licensing Authority will consider imposing licence conditions. Any condition deemed appropriate and imposed by the Licensing Authority to promote the prevention of public nuisance will focus on measures within the direct control of the licence holder, and designated premises supervisor. If conditions or other legislation cannot adequately address the issues of nuisance, an application may be refused.

Protection of Children from Harm

4.38 The Licensing Authority recognises the Local Safe Guarding Children Board as being competent to advise on matters relating to the protection of children from harm.

- 4.39 Applicants will be expected to demonstrate in their operating schedule that suitable and sufficient measures have been identified and will be implemented and maintained to protect children from harm, relevant to the individual style and characteristics of their premises and events.
- 4.40 The Licensing Authority is committed to tackling the issue of under-age drinking and has developed a comprehensive package of measures in partnership with other stakeholders and will seek support from licence holders to implement these measures.
- 4.41 It is mandatory for premises which sell or supply alcohol to have an age verification policy in place. The Licensing Authority supports the Challenge 25 scheme, and such a scheme volunteered as part of an operating schedule will be given the appropriate weight when the Licensing Authority determines the licence application.
- 4.42 Licensing conditions will usually only restrict access to children in order to protect those children from harm. Applicants will be expected to pay particular attention to safety issues within their operating schedule where regulated entertainment is specially presented for children.
- 4.43 The Licensing Authority recognises the great variety of premises for which licences may be sought, including cinemas, public houses and 'night-clubs'. The Licensing Authority will consider the individual merits of each of these applications. Examples of premises where restrictions on access to children may be imposed include:
- Where there have been convictions of current staff for serving alcohol to minors
 - Where there is a known association with drug taking or dealing
 - Where there is a strong element of gambling on the premises
 - Where entertainment of an adult or sexual nature is commonly provided
 - Where the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises is the exclusive or primary purpose of the services provided at the premises
- 4.44 The options available for limiting access to children can include:
- A limit on the hours when children may be present
 - Age limitations (below 18)
 - Limitation or exclusions when certain activities are taking place
 - The requirement to be accompanied by an adult
 - Full exclusion of people under 18 from the premises when any licensable activities are taking place
- 4.45 The Licensing Authority will not impose any condition which specifically requires access for children to be provided at any premises. Where no restriction or limitation is imposed the issues of access will remain a matter for the discretion of the individual licensee or club or event organiser.
- 4.46 Where children are expected to attend public entertainment, appropriate adult supervision will be required to control the access and egress of children and to protect them from harm.
- 4.47 The type of entertainment and the nature of the premises will determine the appropriate level of adult supervision. If considered appropriate, the Licensing Authority may require that adult supervisors be subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.

- 4.48 Where cinemas are concerned, the Licensing Authority would expect licensees to impose conditions that children will be restricted from viewing age-restricted films according to the recommendations of the British Board of Film Classification or the Licensing Authority. Licensees will be expected to include in their operating schedule arrangements for restricting children from viewing age restricted films.
- 4.49 The Licensing Authority has not adopted its own system of classification and therefore abides by the recommendations of the British Board of Film Classification. A mandatory condition attached to all Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates authorising the exhibition of films requires that all films should have been classified by a body designated under Section 4 of the Video Recordings Act 1984 (the British Board of Film Classification is the only body designated as such) or by the Licensing Authority itself. Where the Licensing Authority itself is to classify a film, the Authority expects:
- A synopsis of the exhibition or young person's film programmes to be sent to the Licensing Service 21 days in advance, where possible, of any exhibition, giving sufficient information on any potentially controversial issues such as theme, swearing, violence, imitable techniques, horror, drugs, nudity, flashing lights etc, and in particular anything considered over 18 – R18 for example.
 - Information as to the steps that will be taken to display notices inside and outside the premises so that persons entering can readily read them and be aware of the category attached to the film.
 - Information on how staff are informed on policies and matters that may be significant at the time of the exhibition.
 - To ensure that whenever children are in the vicinity of a film or exhibition that is being shown in a multi purpose premises, sufficient ushers/stewards (minimum 18 years old) shall be in attendance at the entrance to the viewing room at all times to ensure children cannot enter or view the film or exhibition.
- 4.50 Following receipt of the above written information, elected Members will view the film to determine the appropriate recommendation. The film will therefore be referred to a Licensing Sub-committee for determination.

5.0 OPERATING SCHEDULE

- 5.1 Under the Licensing Act 2003 applicants are required to complete an 'operating schedule'. Applicants are expected to have regard to the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy. They must also be aware of the expectations of the Licensing Authority and the Responsible Authorities as to the steps that are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and to demonstrate knowledge of their local area when describing the steps they propose to take to promote the licensing objectives.
- 5.2 Operating schedules are the key to ensuring that the four licensing objectives are promoted. An operating schedule should include enough information to enable any Responsible Authority or other person to assess whether the steps to be taken to promote the licensing objectives are satisfactory.
- 5.3 Applicants should make their own enquiries and demonstrate how they have considered the following in their operating schedule:

- The layout of the local area and physical environment including crime and disorder hotspots, proximity to residential premises and proximity to areas where children and young persons may congregate
- Any risk posed to the local area by the applicants' proposed licensable activities; and
- Any local initiatives for example, local crime reduction initiatives or voluntary schemes which may help mitigate potential risks of undermining the licensing objectives.

5.4 The Licensing Authority expects individual applicants to complete the operating schedule in a manner that is specific to the application being made in respect of those premises and the licensable activity to be carried on rather than in general or standard terms. Information should be given to demonstrate how the applicant proposes to address and promote the licensing objectives.

5.5 Any application or operating schedule not completed in accordance with the Act and the regulations may be returned to the applicant unprocessed with a request to complete the forms correctly before the application is accepted by the Licensing Authority.

5.6 Operating schedules for premises licences are the key to ensuring compliance with the four licensing objectives. The measures proposed in the operating schedule will normally be converted into conditions to be attached to the premises licence and/or club premises certificate and should therefore fulfil the following criteria:

- i) Be precise and enforceable
- ii) Be unambiguous
- iii) Not duplicate other statutory provisions
- iv) Be clear in what they intend to achieve, and
- v) Be appropriate, proportionate and justifiable

5.7 Prospective holders of new Premises Licences, and those seeking variations to existing Premises Licences are advised to consult with the Licensing Authority and the various Responsible Authorities at the earliest possible stage.

5.8 During the course of its inspections, the Licensing Authority may refer matters to any other agency where there appears to be a contravention of the legislation enforced by that agency.

6.0 OFF LICENCES

6.1 For sales of alcohol for consumption off the premises – applicants in respect of off licences and other premises selling alcohol for consumption off the premises may need to consider whether:

- there are appropriate numbers of staff on duty to deal with possible 'intimidation' to sell alcohol.
- there are restrictions required on the sale of low price, high strength alcohol and drink promotions.
- an incident log book is available to record incidents.

- there are measures in place to prevent underage sales.
- there are measures in place to prevent alcohol from being sold outside permitted hours where the operating hours of the premises exceed those for the sale of alcohol.
- there are procedures in place to prevent sales of alcohol to intoxicated persons (with particular attention to street drinkers) or individuals leaving premises in the vicinity such as a late night bar; where there is evidence to suggest this is a problem the Licensing Authority may require a temporary cessation of alcohol sales during high risk times.

7.0 CONDITIONS

- 7.1 The Licensing Authority cannot impose conditions unless it has received a relevant representation from a Responsible Authority, such as the Police or an Environmental Health Officer or an other person, such as a local resident, local business or a local Ward Councillor. The Licensing Authority will determine whether or not a representation qualifies as a “relevant representation” and therefore whether or not the representations may be taken into account by the Licensing Authority when it makes its decision. In determining whether or not a representation is a “relevant” representation, the Licensing Authority will have regard to Government guidance. The Licensing Authority then needs to be satisfied that it is appropriate to impose conditions or refuse an application in order to promote one or more of the licensing objectives.
- 7.2 The Licensing Authority recognises that all applications should be considered on an individual basis and any condition attached to such a licence will be tailored to each individual premises. Standard conditions, other than mandatory conditions, will therefore be avoided and no condition will be imposed that is disproportionate or cannot be shown to be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.
- 7.3 Applicants for Premises Licences or Club Premises Certificates or for variations to such licences or certificates are expected to conduct a thorough risk assessment with regard to the licensing objectives when preparing their applications. The risk assessment should cover the premises, events, activities and the customers expected to attend and will inform any necessary steps to be set out in the operating schedule to promote the licensing objectives. As referred to earlier in this Policy it would be sensible for applicants and clubs to consult with Responsible Authorities when operating schedules are being prepared. This would allow for proper liaison before representations prove necessary. The level of detail to be provided should be proportional to the scale and nature of the application to allow Responsible Authorities and other persons to consider whether the licensing objectives are being/can be fully met.
- 7.4 If an applicant volunteers a prohibition or restriction in their operating schedule because their own risk assessment has determined it is appropriate, such prohibitions or restrictions will become conditions attached to the licence, or certificate and will be enforceable.

- 7.5 Conditions deemed appropriate to achieve the licensing objectives will be applied following relevant representations. Conditions attached to licences will be proportionate and will focus on matters that are within the control of individual licensees and others granted relevant permissions. The focus of these conditions will be on the direct impact that activities taking place at the licensed premises could have on persons attending the venue as well as members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned and will seek to ensure the protection of children from harm.
- 7.6 It is recognised by this policy that licensing law is not a mechanism for the general control of anti-social behaviour by individuals once they are beyond the direct control of the individual, club or business holding the licence, certificate or permission concerned. This policy is able to address such behaviour “in the vicinity” of premises used for licensable activities. Whether or not incidents can be regarded as “in the vicinity” of licensed premises or places is ultimately a matter of fact to be determined by the courts in cases of dispute. The Licensing Authority will primarily focus on the direct impact of the activities taking place at the licensed premises on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned.
- 7.7 The Licensing Authority will work in partnership with the Police and other relevant agencies to promote the licensing objectives and will develop licensing conditions for individual premises in order to meet these objectives and conditions will be tailored to the specific premises concerned. Licensing Law is not the primary mechanism for the general control of nuisance and anti-social behaviour once they are beyond the direct control of the individual, club or business holding the licence, however the Licensing Authority recognises that it is a key aspect of such control and Licensing Law will always be part of a holistic approach to the management of the evening and night time economy in town and city centres.
- 7.8 Other mechanisms available for addressing issues when individuals behave badly away from licensed premises include:
- Planning control
 - Town centre initiatives
 - The provision of CCTV surveillance in town centres
 - Designation of defined areas within this Authority where alcohol may not be consumed publicly
 - Police enforcement of the normal law concerning disorder and anti-social behaviour including the issuing of fixed penalty notices
 - The prosecution of any personal licence holder or member of staff at such premises who is selling alcohol to people who are drunk or who are underage
 - The confiscation of alcohol from adults and children in designated areas
 - Police powers to close down instantly for up to 24 hours any licensed premises or temporary events on grounds of disorder, the likelihood of disorder or excessive noise emanating from the premises
 - The power of the Police, other Responsible Authority or a local resident or business to seek a review of the licence or certificate in question

8.0 STAFF TRAINING

- 8.1 The Licensing Authority recommends that all persons employed on licensed premises who are engaged in the sale and supply of alcohol be encouraged to attend training programmes to raise awareness of their responsibility and particularly of the offences contained within the Act. Similarly persons employed at on-licensed premises should

be encouraged to attend training programmes which will raise their awareness of the issues relating to drugs and violence in licensed premises, and that suitable training be extended to all staff involved in managing or supervising the premises.

- 8.2 It is also recommended that persons employed on premises providing entertainment for children and youths attend training programmes in basic child protection and safety, and if appropriate have the necessary Disclosure Barring Service checks.

9.0 ENFORCEMENT

- 9.1 It is essential that Licensed Premises are maintained and operated to ensure the continued promotion of the licensing objectives and compliance with the specific requirements of the Act. The Licensing Authority will monitor premises and take appropriate enforcement action in line with the Licensing Authority's Enforcement Policy. A copy of the Enforcement Policy is available on request.
- 9.2 The Licensing Authority recognises the interests of both citizens and businesses and will work closely with partners to assist licence holders to comply with the law and the licensing objectives. However, proportionate but firm action will be taken against those who commit serious offences or consistently break the law.
- 9.3 The Licensing Authority will continue to work with Merseyside Police on joint inspections of premises to reduce the level of crime and disorder and ensure the safety of the public. Protocols will continue to be developed to avoid duplication and ensure the best use of resources to promote the licensing objectives.
- 9.4 Protocols continue to be developed in accordance with the Licensing Authority's Enforcement Policy and the principles of better regulation. The principles of risk assessment and targeting will prevail and inspections planned accordingly.

10.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACT

- 10.1 Cumulative impact means the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a significant number of licensed premises concentrated in one area. Cumulative impact of licensed premises on the promotion of the licensing objectives is a proper matter for a Licensing Authority to consider and the Licensing Authority may adopt a special policy.
- 10.2 The effect of adopting a special policy of this kind is to create a rebuttable presumption that applications for new Premises Licences or Club Premises Certificates or variations that are likely to add to the existing cumulative impact will normally be refused, following relevant representations, unless the applicant can demonstrate in their operating schedule that there will be no negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.
- 10.3 However, a special policy does not relieve Responsible Authorities or any other person of the need to make a relevant representation before a Licensing Authority may lawfully consider giving effect to its special policy. If there are no representations, the Licensing Authority must grant the application in terms that are consistent with the operating schedule submitted.
- 10.4 The absence of a special policy does not prevent any Responsible Authority or any other person making representations on a new application for the grant of a licence on the grounds that the premises will give rise to a negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.

- 10.5 It is for any person making such representations to provide evidence to the Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee that the addition of the premises concerned would cause the cumulative impact claimed. When considering such representations, the committee will:
- Identify any serious and chronic concern
 - Identify the area from which problems are arising and the boundaries of that area
 - Make an assessment of the causes
 - Consider adopting a policy about future licence applications from that area
- 10.6 The cumulative impact of licensed premises on the promotion of the licensing objectives is a matter the Licensing Authority can take into account. This should not, however, be confused with 'need' which relates more to the commercial demand for a particular type of premises e.g. a public house, restaurant or hotel. The issue of 'need' is therefore a matter for planning consideration or for the market to decide and does not form part of this licensing policy statement.
- 10.7 The Licensing Authority recognises that public houses, 'night clubs', restaurants, theatres, concert halls, community buildings and cinemas all provide their services of selling alcohol, serving food and providing entertainment with contrasting styles and characteristics. Proper regard will therefore be given to these differences and the differing impact they will have on the local community and each application will be considered on its individual merits.

11.0 SPECIAL CUMULATIVE IMPACT POLICY

- 11.1 On 5 January 2017 Merseyside Police requested the Licensing Authority consider adopting a Special Cumulative Impact Policy, for an area within Birkenhead. The request was made due to the level of crime and disorder, public nuisance, littering, street drinking, under-age drinking and anti-social behaviour believed to be resulting in part from the number of off-licence premises located in the area. The request was supported by Ward Councillors.
- 11.2 A comprehensive consultation process was therefore undertaken about the possibility of introducing a Special Cumulative Impact Policy for Charing Cross, Grange Road West, Grange Mount, Oxtan Road and the boundary of the Town Centre.
- 11.3 The consultation period ran from 13 January 2017 to 3 March 2017 and sought views on a Special Cumulative Impact Policy in relation to premises licensed for the sale by retail of alcohol for consumption off the premises only
- 11.4 The Authority was satisfied from the responses received that the number of premises in Charing Cross, Grange Road West, Grange Mount, Oxtan Road and the boundary of the Town Centre licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 for the sale by retail of alcohol for consumption off the premises only were cumulatively giving rise to significant problems of public nuisance and crime and disorder.
- 11.5 As a result, the Authority resolved to introduce a Special Cumulative Impact Policy limited to Charing Cross, Grange Road West, Grange Mount, Oxtan Road and the boundary of the Town Centre with effect from 10 July 2017.
- 11.6 The streets that are subject to the Cumulative Impact Policy are shown delineated on

a plan attached to this Policy Statement at Appendix C.

- 11.7 In arriving at this decision the Authority decided that the Special Cumulative Impact Policy in this area should only apply to Premises licensed for the sale by retail of alcohol for consumption off the premises only.
- 11.8 All premises within the streets specified above falling within this category or wishing to apply to carry out licensable activities which, if granted, would place them in category will be subject to a presumption against granting any application for a premises licence or a variation that is likely to add to the existing cumulative impact.
- 11.9 However, this presumption will only be triggered in the event of a relevant representation being received. If there are no such representations the Authority MUST grant the application in terms that are consistent with the operating schedule submitted.
- 11.10 If such representations are made, a Sub-committee of the Authority will hear those representations and conclude whether or not the presumption against granting should apply. This will normally be the case unless the applicant can demonstrate in their operating schedule that the application will not add to the cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives and that the Authority would therefore be justified in departing from the Special Cumulative Impact Policy in the light of the individual circumstances of the case.
- 11.11 Other than this area, there are no other places within the Authority's area which are the subject of a special cumulative impact policy. In the event that the Licensing Authority becomes satisfied, after considering available evidence following consultation in accordance with Section 5(3) of the Licensing Act 2003, that it is appropriate to include an approach to cumulative impact in respect of any other streets or areas in the licensing policy statement, this will be referenced in the Policy Statement by way of amendment.
- 11.12 The absence of a special policy in a particular street or area does not prevent any responsible authority or person making representations on an application for the grant or variation of a licence on the grounds that the premises will give rise to a negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.

12.0 LICENSING HOURS

- 12.1 Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 states that the Licensing Authority has powers to make decisions regarding licensed opening hours and that Licensing Authorities are best placed to make such decisions based on local knowledge. In determining licensing hours the Licensing Authority will have regard to the location of the premises in question and the surrounding area, considering each application on its individual merits.
- 12.2 Particular regard will be given to premises in close proximity to residential accommodation.
- 12.3 If relevant representations are made, the Licensing Authority will determine the hours of use proposed having regard to the operating schedule and any risk assessment that adequately demonstrates that:

- the applicant has properly considered what is appropriate for the local area when considering what hours and activities to apply for
- the potential effect on the licensing objectives is not significant
- the agreed operating schedule demonstrates that the applicant is taking appropriate steps to minimise any adverse impact on local residents and businesses

12.4 Restrictions may be made to the proposed hours of use where, after receiving relevant representations, the Licensing Authority considers it appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives to do so.

13.0 INTEGRATING STRATEGIES

13.1 The Licensing Authority will seek to ensure proper integration with the Community Safety Partnership, Planning, and other relevant strategies when dealing with licence applications and through partnership working. The Licensing Authority will work with other partners including the Police, Trading Standards and Public Health to develop initiatives that support the licensing objectives.

13.2 The Licensing Authority recognises that there are many stakeholders in the leisure industry covering a wide range of disciplines.

13.3 The Licensing Authority shall have regard to the local Policing Plan and local crime prevention strategies where appropriate.

13.4 The Licensing Authority shall have regard to the need to disperse people quickly and safely from the town centre to avoid concentrations that may produce disorder and disturbance. The policy shall reflect any protocols agreed between the local Police and other licensing enforcement officers and the need to report to other council committees.

14.0 PLANNING

14.1 It will be expected that applications for Premises Licences, Club Premises Certificates and Temporary Event Notices will normally relate to premises with an existing lawful use for the activity proposed and the times when such activities are permitted.

14.2 Applications for Premises Licences for permanent commercial premises should normally be from businesses with planning consent for the property concerned. However, applications for licences may be made before any relevant planning permission has been sought or granted by the planning authority. The planning and licensing regime involve consideration of different (albeit related) matters, for example, Licensing considers public nuisance whereas planning considers amenity.

14.3 The Licensing Authority recognises that licensing applications should not be seen as a re-run of the planning application process and that there should be a clear separation of the planning and licensing regimes to avoid duplication and inefficiency. Similarly, the granting by the Licensing Authority of any variation of a licence which involves a material alteration to a building would not relieve the applicant of the need to apply for planning permission or building consent.

14.4 There are also circumstances when as a conclusion of planning permission, a terminal hour has been set for the use of the premises for commercial purposes. Where these

hours are different to the licensing hours, the applicant must observe the earlier closing time. Applicants are strongly recommended to consider whether their application conflicts with a relevant planning permission for a particular premises. If the applicant is unsure whether this is the case or where they are aware of such a conflict, they should contact the planning department. Contact details are provided in Appendix 2

- 14.5 The Council's Planning Policies are currently set out in its Unitary Development Plan (UDP), supplemented by additional guidance on A3 use of restaurants and cafés, A4 use of public houses and A5 use for take-aways. The strength of these policies is that there is an obligation both on the Council, as the local Planning Authority, and the decision maker on any appeal, to give considerable weight to them. This helps to ensure consistency in the decision making process.
- 14.6 In general, planning permissions authorise the development or change of use of land and buildings in the public interest, whereas licences relate to the specific circumstances and proposed licensable activity within a particular premises and the suitability of the operator and may cover only a part of the premises.
- 14.7 In many cases where an application is made for a new licence or variation, the town planning use will already be authorised by a previous planning permission or because the premises has a longstanding lawful use. Therefore, a new application for planning permission is often not required. However, the existing planning permission if recently granted is very likely to have conditions restricting the use of the premises in some way: e.g. the hours of operation. In that case, anybody seeking a licence to operate beyond those hours would need to seek and obtain the revised planning permission or a variation or removal of the relevant planning condition.
- 14.8 In general, the planning position should be resolved before a licence application is made. The Licensing Authority may refuse to grant a licence if the:
- Activity to be authorised would amount to an unlawful use of the premises
 - Hours being sought exceed those authorised by any planning permission.
- 14.9 The Licensing Authority may nonetheless determine a licence application without evidence of a lawful planning use where the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates special reasons justifying such an approach.

15.0 TEMPORARY EVENT NOTICES

- 15.1 A permitted temporary activity is an event lasting for no more than 168 hours where the number of people attending the event is no more than 499.
- 15.2 Temporary events do not involve the Licensing Authority giving permission for the event to take place but the Police and Environmental Health must be served with the Temporary Event Notice (TEN). This is a notification procedure in which only the Police and Environmental Health may intervene to prevent such an event taking place or to modify the arrangements for such an event. The Police and Environmental Health may only do so where they believe it may undermine the promotion of the licensing objectives.
- 15.3 The event organiser must give the Licensing Authority, the Police and Environmental Health a minimum of 10 clear working days notice, or 5 clear working days notice in the case of a late TEN. This does not include the application date, the day of the

event, weekends and bank holidays. The Licensing Authority recommends that TEN's are received by this Authority and Merseyside Police at least 28 days before the event, to allow any necessary discussions to take place with the Police or Environmental Health.

- 15.4 It is not a requirement for a TEN to be served on other Responsible Authorities, however the Licensing Authority will notify the Responsible Authorities of all TEN's received. In addition Ward Councillors will be made aware of the TEN'S received relating to the premises in their ward so they are up to date with activities taking place in their area and are therefore able to respond to enquiries from local residents.

As started in paragraph 12.2 it is only the Police and Environmental Health who can object to a TEN and providing details to other Responsible Authorities and Ward Councillors is purely to assist them in undertaking their duties.

16.0 LICENCE REVIEWS

- 16.1 At any stage following the grant of a Premises Licence or Club Premises Certificate a Responsible Authority or any other person may ask the Licensing Authority to review the Licence or Club Premises Certificate because of a matter at a particular premises in connection with any of the four licensing objectives.
- 16.2 Where a person or body is considering making an application for a review they are advised to contact the Licensing Office, contact details are provided in Appendix 2. This is so that an officer may provide some initial feedback on the matter and then if appropriate attempt to facilitate a meeting or a series of meetings between relevant persons to discuss the review process and identify any possible solutions.
- 16.3 Applicants for a review should make all efforts to set out their concerns clearly and ensure that these concerns are relevant to a failure to promote one or more of the licensing objectives.
- 16.4 In considering an application from an 'other person' the Licensing Authority must first consider whether the applicant is relevant, vexatious, frivolous or repetitions.
- 16.5 The promotion of the licensing objectives relies heavily on a partnership between license holders, residents, Responsible Authorities and other persons in pursuit of common aims. It is important therefore that Authorities, persons and Responsible Authorities give licence holders early warnings of their concerns and of the need for improvement.
- 16.6 The Licensing Authority in considering the review may take such of the following steps:
- modification of the conditions of the premises licence
 - the exclusion of the sale of alcohol by retail (or other licensable activities) from the scope of the licence
 - removal of the designated premises supervisor from the licence
 - suspension of the licence for a period not exceeding 3 months
 - revoke the licence
- 16.7 The Licensing Authority may decide that no action is necessary if it finds that the review does not require it to take any steps necessary to promote the licensing objectives.

17.0 ADMINISTRATION EXERCISE AND DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

- 17.1 The powers of the Licensing Authority under the Act may be carried out by the Licensing Act 2003 Committee, by a Sub-Committee or, instead, by one or more officers acting under delegated authority.
- 17.2 The Licensing Authority recognises its responsibilities under The Equality Act 2010.
- 17.3 It is considered that many of the functions will be largely administrative with no perceived areas of contention. In the interests of efficiency and effectiveness these will, for the most part, be carried out by officers.
- 17.4 Where there are relevant representations applications will be dealt with by a Sub-Committee of the Licensing Act 2003 Committee, as will any application for the Review of a licence.
- 17.5 The Licensing Authority will expect individual applicants to address the licensing objectives in their operating schedule having regard to the type of premises, the licensable activities to be provided, the operational procedures, the nature of the location and the needs of the local community.
- 17.6 When determining applications, the Licensing Authority will have regard to any guidance issued under Section 182 of The Licensing Act 2003. If representations are made concerning the potential for limited disturbance in a particular neighbourhood, the Licensing Authority's consideration will be balanced against the wider benefits to the community.
- 17.7 In the interests of speed, efficiency and cost effectiveness, the Licensing Authority have determined which decisions and functions should be carried out by the full Licensing Act 2003 Committee, or delegated to a Sub-Committee or Council officer. Appendix 1 to this Statement of Licensing Policy sets out how the Council will approach and carry out its different functions.

18.0 PROMOTION OF EQUALITY

- 18.1 The Licensing Authority will undertake its functions and responsibilities in accordance with the requirements of The Equality Act 2010.

DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

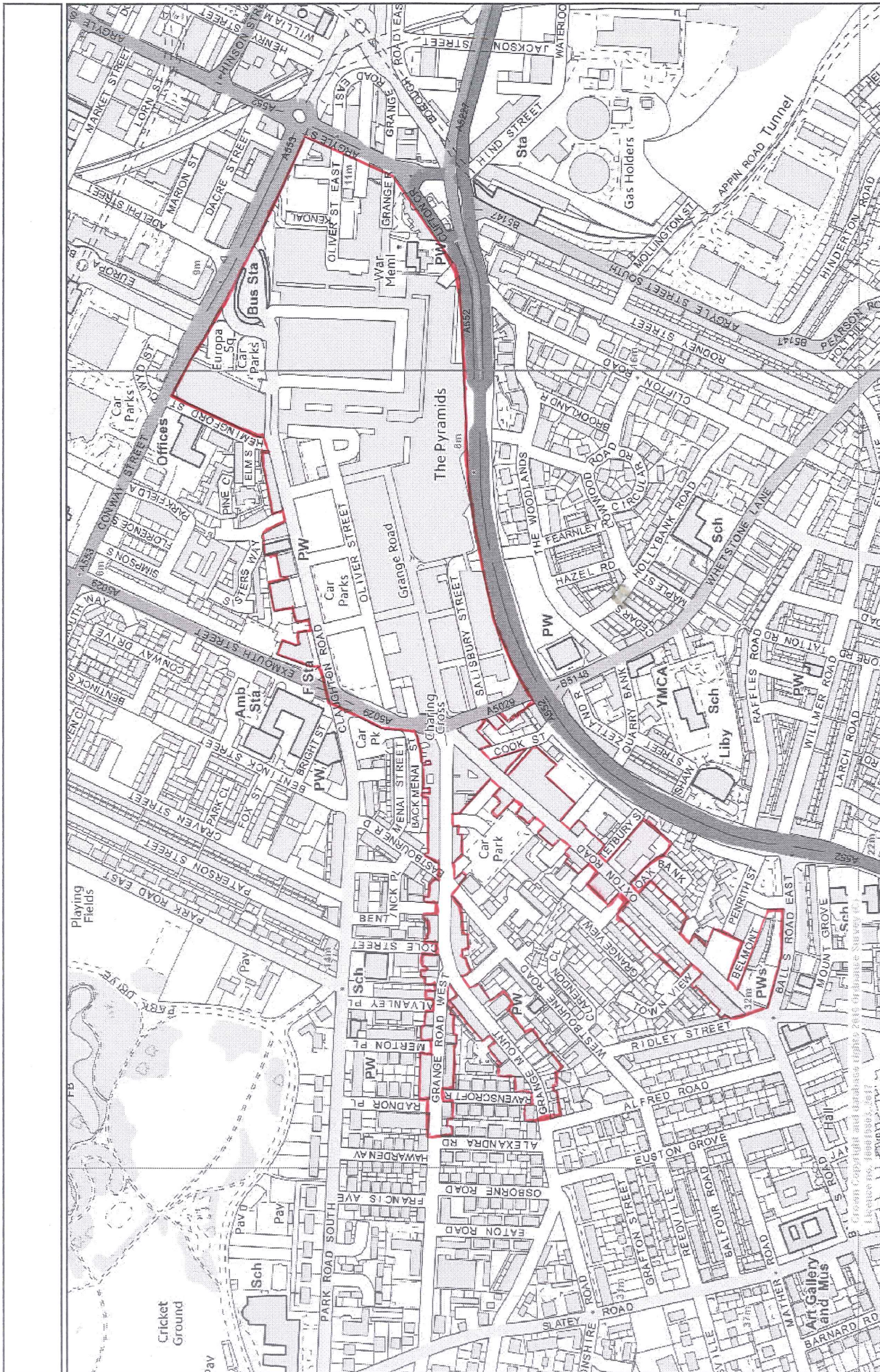
Matters to be dealt with	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers
Application for personal licence		If a police objection	If no objection made
Application for personal licence with unspent convictions		All cases	
Application for premises licence/club premises certificate		If a relevant representative made	If no relevant representation made
Application for provisional statement		If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made
Application to vary premises licence/club premises certificate		If a relevant representation made	If no relevant representation made
Application to vary designated premises supervisor		If a police objection	All other cases
Request to be removed as designated premises supervisor			All cases
Application for transfer of premises licence		If a police objection	All other cases
Application for interim authorities		If a police objection	All other cases
Application to review premises licence/club premises certificate		All cases	

Matters to be dealt with	Full Committee	Sub-Committee	Officers
Decision on whether a complaint is irrelevant frivolous vexatious, etc.			All cases
Decision to object when local authority is a consultee and not the relevant authority considering the application		All cases	
Determination of an Environmental Health / Police objection to a temporary event notice		All cases	

LIST OF CONTACTS

Name and Address	Telephone Number	Email Address	Fax Number
Licensing Authority Wallasey Town Hall Brighton Street Wallasey CH44 8ED	0151 691 8043	licensing@wirral.gov.uk	0151 691 8215
Police Licensing Section Walton Lane Police Station Walton Lane Liverpool L4 5XF	0151 777 4618	licensing.unit@merseyside.pnn.police.uk	0151 777 4619
Environmental Health Town Hall Brighton Street Wallasey CH44 8ED	0151 604 3549	environmentalhealth@wirral.gov.uk	N/A
Planning Authority Development Control Wallasey Town Hall South Annexe Brighton Street Wallasey CH44 8ED	0151 606 2004	planningapplications@wirral.gov.uk	0151 691 8532
Wirral Area Child Protection Committee Hamilton Building Conway Street Birkenhead CH41 4FD	0151 666 4291	N/A	0151 666 4580
Trading Standards Wallasey Town Hall South Annexe Brighton Street Wallasey CH44 8ED	0151 691 8020	tradingstandards@wirral.gov.uk	0151 691 8098

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Wirral District Fire Safety The Fire Station Mill Lane Wallasey CH44 5UE	0151 296 4932	WirralAdmin@merseyfire.gov.uk	0151 296 6222
Public Health Old Market House Hamilton Street Birkenhead CH41 5AL	0151 666 5182	N/A	N/A
Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 can be obtained from:			
Home Office Direct Communications Unit 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF	020 7035 4848	public.enquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk	020 7035 4745



Date 29/6/2017

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MINUTE EXTRACT

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

27 JUNE 2017

3 RECRUITMENT TO CHIEF OFFICER POSTS AND STRUCTURE CHANGES

The Chair advised that the Committee would be invited to consider the open part of this agenda item first prior to a proposal to move into exempt session for item 10 on the agenda, the exempt appendices to the report.

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive on recruitment to Chief Officer posts and structure changes following two recent resignations and a request for early retirement at Chief Officer level. He had also been notified of a planned retirement.

The requirement to recruit to a number of key posts also provided an opportunity to review how the Council was best organised at senior management level to deliver its plans at this time. The Council had made appointments to a number of senior positions since November 2016 and was continuing to improve its capacity to deliver the Wirral Plan, deliver transformation plans and explore the best models to deliver services to residents of Wirral.

The report recommended recruiting to the vacant post of Director for Children, the forthcoming vacant post of Assistant Director: Law and Governance and a newly configured Director of Finance post (following retirement). The report also gave details of recommended salaries for these roles based on external benchmarking and advice.

In addition, the report set out some changes to reporting lines for some functions in response to the evolving nature of the operating model; to enable the Council to reorganise capacity and to meet future requirements.

Councillor Rennie, expressed support for some of the proposals within the report, including the proposals that the Director for Care and Health report directly to the Chief Executive and that the recruitment to a re-designated post of Director of Finance would not just be focussed within the local government arena but the search would also encompass potential candidates from the commercial sector. She did, however, express concern and stated she would be unable to support the proposed increase in the salary for the Director for Children's post.

Councillor Phil Davies, referring to the comparator salaries for other Authorities' Director of Children's Services posts, spoke of the need to pay an appropriate salary to enable the recruitment of the highest quality candidate. He acknowledged that the Council should always be prudent in its expenditure of Council Tax payers' monies but this was the most important job for the Council to recruit to.

Councillor Gilchrist posed the question as to what had the creation of the Strategic Director posts achieved. He also referred to the fact that it was only recently that the

Council had recruited a Director of Transformation, and queried why there was a need to change the role and title of this post now.

The Chief Executive stated that he would be happy to have a one to one with Councillor Gilchrist to talk him through the proposed changes to the structure. He had also spoken with the recruitment consultants, Penna, on the need to have a wider field of candidates from both the public and commercial sectors for the Director of Finance post.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development confirmed that she was satisfied with the service provided by Penna who had successfully tendered twice for the position of recruitment consultants. She stated that the Council did have a challenging relationship with Penna and that they provided advice all the way through the recruitment process.

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

Resolved (4:3) –

- (1) That the revised Chief Officer structure of the Council, detailed in Appendix Two (including the deletion, creation and change of roles) with the new structure effective from 1 September 2017, be approved.**
- (2) Politically proportionate Appointments Panels, be established, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix Seven of the report, for the following posts to be advertised internally and externally at the following salary:**
 - **Director for Finance (S151 Officer), Director 1, £103k-115k**
 - **Director for Children SD2 (new grade), £140-155k**
 - **Assistant Director: Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) AD 1/Director 2, £79-93k**
- (3) To agree that the posts specified in (2) above be advertised as soon as possible following the meeting of this Committee on 27 June 2017.**
- (4) To agree that the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development be authorised to make and undertake all requisite arrangements necessary for the appointments to be made.**
- (5) That it be RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL that the Employment and Appointments Committee and its Appointment Panels have delegated authority to formally agree and confirm the appointment of all the posts specified in (2) above.**
- (6) That it be RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL that the Chief Officer pay scales as set out in the Council's Pay Policy be amended to incorporate proposed salary for Director for Children's Services post (appendix three to the report).**

Employment and Appointments Committee

27 June 2017

REPORT TITLE	RECRUITMENT TO CHIEF OFFICER POSTS AND STRUCTURE CHANGES
REPORT OF	CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 REPORT SUMMARY

- 1.1 In November 2016 the Council implemented a new operating model and organisational structure to enable the Council to deliver the 20 Pledges for 2020, described within the Wirral Plan. (Appendix One)
- 1.2 We have recently had two resignations and a request for early retirement at Chief Officer level. We were also notified of a planned retirement.
- 1.3 As a consequence of this there will now be a requirement to recruit to a number of key posts. This has provided an opportunity to review how we are best organised at senior management level to deliver our plans at this time. We have made appointments to a number of senior positions since November 2016. We are continuing to improve our capacity to deliver the Wirral Plan, deliver our transformation plans and explore the best models to deliver services to residents of Wirral.
- 1.4 This report recommends recruiting to the vacant post of Director for Children, the forthcoming vacant post of Assistant Director: Law and Governance and a newly configured Director of Finance post (following retirement). The report sets out recommended salaries for these roles based on external benchmarking and advice.
- 1.5 The report also sets out some changes to reporting lines for some functions in response to the evolving nature of the operating model; to enable the Council to reorganise capacity and to meet future requirements

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Employment and Appointments Committee is requested:

- 2.1 To approve the revised Chief Officer structure of the Council, detailed in Appendix Two (including the deletion, creation and change of roles) with the new structure effective from 1 September 2017.

- 2.2 To set up politically proportionate Appointments Panels, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix Seven, for the following posts to be advertised internally and externally at the following salary:
- Director for Finance (S151 Officer), Director 1, £103k-115k
 - Director for Children SD2 (new grade), £140-155k
 - Assistant Director: Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) AD 1/Director 2, £79-93k
- 2.3 To agree that the posts specified in 2.2 be advertised as soon as possible following the meeting of the Employments and Appointments Committee on 27 June 2017.
- 2.4 To agree that the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development be authorised to make and undertake all requisite arrangements necessary for the appointments to be made.
- 2.5 That it be recommended to Council that the Employment and Appointments Committee have delegated authority to formally agree and confirm the appointment of all the posts specified in 2.2.
- 2.6 To recommend to the Council that the Chief Officer pay scales as set out in the Council's Pay Policy be amended to incorporate proposed salary for Director for Children's Services post. (Appendix Three)
- 2.7 To consider those matters detailed in Appendix Eight. This appendix contains personal information about an individual and therefore is an exempt by virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The public interest test has been applied and it favours the exemption being applied.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The revised Chief Officer structure is proposed by the Chief Executive for the following reasons:

- The retirement of the Assistant Director: Finance (Section 151 Officer).
- The resignation of the Director for Children.
- The resignation of Assistant Director: Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer);
- A request for early voluntary retirement at Chief Officer level; and
- In response to the evolving nature of the operating model; to enable the Council to reorganise capacity and to meet future requirements.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 There is a requirement to replace the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and Director of Children's Services all of which are statutory posts. The Council has taken appropriate benchmarking advice on the level of remuneration for those roles in current market.

4.0 Summary of Proposed Changes (Recruitment)

Director for Children

4.1 This is a vacancy following the resignation of the previous Director for Children in May 2017. There is currently a short-term acting up arrangement in place.

4.2 This is a challenging time for Children's Services. This post is critical in managing high risk areas and continuing the progress that has been made to improve the service following the Ofsted inspection in 2016 and contains statutory duties. There is a new management team in place at senior level. There is no higher priority for the council and its partners than protecting Wirral's vulnerable children.

4.3 It is paramount that we attract the highest quality candidates with the necessary skills and experience to lead and drive the service forward and someone who has a credible track record of children's services/social care improvement.

4.4 The Council has undertaken some benchmarking of similar roles and has taken advice from our recruitment consultant (Penna) to determine the appropriate level of remuneration for this post. There are a number of other roles currently being advertised across the country.

4.5 It is recommended that the post is advertised at circa £140k-155k to ensure that we are competitive in this market and able to attract the highest calibre of applicants.

4.6 A salary range is proposed to allow the Committee flexibility to appoint the right candidate. This would require an amendment to current Chief Officer pay grades as set out in the Pay Policy.

- 4.7 Appendix Four sets out a summary of duties for the Director for Children role and salary benchmarking information.
- 4.8 There would be no impact on other Chief Officer pay arrangements arising from this proposed change.

Director for Finance

- 4.9 Assistant Director: Finance (and S151 Officer) confirmed his intention to retire earlier this year. There is no cost to the Council.
- 4.10 We have reviewed the role and requirements for the Council going forward.
- 4.11 It is proposed to re-designate this role as a Director of Finance (and S151 Officer) which will have a wider breadth and focus than the current role. The Council's budget challenge is significant (with £132m budget gap over the next 3 years) and there is a continued requirement for robust financial planning and governance. This role will also have a strong commercial focus, a responsibility for investment and income generation opportunities and will also oversee the responsibilities for pensions.
- 4.12 This post will report to the Director of Corporate Resources and Reform (see below) which will ensure that financial management, planning and benefits realisation are fully integrated within the transformation process.
- 4.13 The Council needs to attract a candidate with significant experience at strategic level in financial services, experience of transformational change, strong commercial awareness and acumen, solution focused with a strong and clear budget approach and understanding income and investment.
- 4.14 The Council has undertaken some benchmarking of similar roles. Advice from our recruitment consultant (Penna) has advised that a competitive market rate for this role would be circa £110,000. Therefore it is proposed the salary range for this post is Director 1 (£103,606-£115,117) to reflect the additional responsibilities and attract the highest calibre of candidate.
- 4.15 The Assistant Director of Finance has agreed to remain in post for a further period of time. As part of this, interim support is required at senior financial level to support the transformation work and allow a phased retirement between now and the end of this year. This will be funded by existing vacancies within the service area.
- 4.16 Appendix Five sets out a summary of duties Director of Finance role and salary benchmarking information.

Assistant Director: Law and Governance (and Monitoring Officer)

- 4.17 This post will soon be vacated following the resignation of the current post holder. This is a statutory post.
- 4.18 The Council is required to ensure that a Monitoring Officer is in place. The current post holder will have worked his notice period and left before an

appointment can be made and therefore an interim Monitoring Officer will be appointed and confirmed at Council on 10 July 2017.

- 4.19 The Monitoring Officer requires a solution focused approach to managing risk, leading a professional legal and democratic service, overseeing and managing the Council's constitutional arrangements including Member conduct, and ensuring strong governance through change.
- 4.20 The Council has undertaken some benchmarking of similar roles. The role is currently Head of Service 1 level within the salary range £79,259 - £88,065.
- 4.21 Advice from our recruitment consultant (Penna) following an assessment of the current labour market is that a competitive market rate for this role would be circa £90,000. Therefore it is proposed the salary range for this post is extended to Head of Service/Director 2 (£79,259 – £92,854) to provide flexibility for the Appointment Panel for the right candidate.
- 4.22 Appendix Six sets out a summary of duties for this role and salary benchmarking information.

Current Labour Market Context

- 4.23 The roles set out above form a core element of the Council's senior management team. We require team players, relationship builders, those who can develop strategy and deliver results, manage risk and help manage their teams through major changes. We need candidates who understand political acumen and can work commercially.
- 4.24 Penna has advised that the current market in local government is challenging and competitive. Given the focus needed, some of the statutory roles are in high demand and require modern operators who look at challenges and opportunities in an innovative and solution focused way.
- 4.25 All of the above places an emphasis on the packages for a quality field of candidates that needs to be positioned well to attract in a market place which is already challenging.

Other changes to structure proposed

- 4.26 There are a number of other changes proposed which have arisen from the review of roles undertaken following vacancies at very senior level as detailed below.

Health and Care

- 4.27 With the commissioning of adult services being led jointly with Health, the Director for Care and Health role will need to adapt to reflect the integrated working and commissioning arrangements in place.
- 4.29 Considerable progress has been made in the last 6 months and work is currently being undertaken to explore further integration with the NHS for health

and care commissioning functions by April 2018. This will be a significant change for this post.

4.30 It is proposed that the Director for Care and Health and the team below move out of the strategic hub and report directly to the Chief Executive whilst this work is undertaken.

4.31 The Assistant Director for Integrated Commissioning will continue to report to this post and move with it.

Commissioning

4.32 Following the appointment of the Assistant Director: Commissioning Support in February 2017 it is proposed that Commissioning Support will move from Business Services to the Strategic Hub. This will strengthen the relationship between the function and the strategic commissioners in the Council.

Transformation Director

4.33 It is proposed that the Transformation Director will be retitled as Director of Corporate Resources and Reform which more accurately reflects the role and changes identified below.

Human Resources/Organisational Development and Finance

4.34 It is proposed Human Resources and Organisation Development (HR/OD) and Finance functions will move under the Director of Corporate Resources and Reform. These functions are integral to the successful delivery of organisational change, future modernisation of Council services as benefits are realised and will ensure that corporate functions are aligned to that agenda.

Merseyside Pension Fund

4.35 Upon commencement of a new Director of Finance it is proposed that they will assume responsibility for financial and governance oversight of Merseyside Pension Fund. This is anticipated to be January 2018.

Business Services

4.36 The Business Services function will retain Law and Governance, Digital and Asset Management. The Director of Business Services will also manage the Chief Executive's office as part of the role of Assistant Chief Executive.

4.37 The Council's digital function has an internal manager acting up following the resignation of the Head of Digital earlier this year. This will continue in place for the time being. A comprehensive review of the Council's approach to digital is required and will be undertaken.

4.38 The Director of Business Services has expressed interest in reducing working hours from five to four days a week once the Council has recruited to key posts. It is proposed that this request will be accommodated in due course.

- 4.39 It is proposed that changes to reporting lines set out above will be implemented by 1 September 2017.

Delivery

- 4.40 Merseyside Pension Fund will move under Director of Finance upon appointment. Other service functions will remain in Delivery. Under the transformation programme, work is being undertaken to explore the most appropriate models of service delivery across a range of services including further integration with health of some adult social services.

5.0 Support to the recruitment process

- 5.1 Subject to agreement to recruit to posts specified in 2.2, Penna Plc will act as the recruitment consultants to support the external recruitment processes under the Council's current contracting arrangements and under an existing framework agreement.
- 5.2 With a number of key roles, this will include some additional work around employer branding, enhanced recruitment microsite and the review and development of appropriate candidate assessment processes in line with best practice to support Employment and Appointments Panel in seeking to attract a strong pool of candidates and recruiting the best person for the role.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The report sets out the recommended level of remuneration for each role in order for the Council to be competitive, based on advice and market conditions.
- 6.2 The overall revenue cost to the Council arising from proposed changes is £79,672. This arises from advice on current job market conditions for senior roles. This is growth and will need to be built into the Council's budget.
- 6.4 There is potential for a future reduction of £29,308 when the expected reduction in hours by the Director of Business Services is implemented.
- 6.5 Appendix Eight sets out the costs associated with a request at Chief Officer for early retirement. These are one-off costs that can be met within existing resources in year.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council will ensure that all relevant employment legislation is complied with throughout the recruitment and selection processes.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 8.1 The savings and costs are set out above report.
- 8.2 The cost of change; internal recruitment process will be managed by Human Resources. External recruitment processes will be managed by Human

Resources with the support of the recruitment consultants, Penna Ltd as per the Council's contractual arrangements.

9.0 RELEVANT RISKS

9.1 The Council has three vacancies in critical posts. There are considerable risks associated with the failure to recruit successors of high calibre at the right level and as swiftly as possible. This will form a core component of a new management team for the Council by late 2017/early 2018 which will provide the stability required to deliver our plans and budget challenges

10.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

10.1 There has been no requirement for formal consultation. There has been engagement with Chief Officers affected by the changes to reporting lines and re-organisation of functions. Trade Unions have been made aware of proposals.

11.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The council will comply with all applicable Equality Act 2010 obligations.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Eric Robinson**
Chief Executive
telephone: (0151) 691 8589
email: ericrobinson@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix	Title
One	Current Chief Officer Structure
Two	Proposed Chief Officer Structure
Three	Chief Officer Salary Structure
Four	Director for Children Draft JD and Salary Benchmarking Information
Five	Director for Finance Draft JD and Salary Benchmarking Information
Six	Assistant Director: Law and Governance Draft JD and Salary Benchmarking Information
Seven	Proposed Terms of Reference for the Appointments panel
Eight (Exempt)	Chief Officer Early Retirement information and costs
Nine (Exempt)	Additional information relating to Appendix 8

REFERENCE MATERIAL

N/A

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Employment & Appointments Committee	25 July 2016
Employment & Appointments Committee	11 October 2016

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**Current
Chief Officer Grade/Salaries: 1 April 2017**

	Chief Executive (CE)	Strategic Director (SD)	Director 1 (D1)	Director 2 (D2)	Head of Service 1 (HS1)	Head of Service 2 (HS2)
Salary Range						
01	158,116	111,829	103,606	83,568	79,259	68,690
02	163,216	114,935	106,484	85,889	81,460	70,598
03	168,316	118,041	109,362	88,210	83,661	72,506
04	173,417	121,148	112,240	90,532	85,863	74,414
05	178,518	124,255	115,117	92,854	88,065	76,323

**Proposed
Chief Officer Grade/Salaries**

	Chief Executive (CE)	Strategic Director (SD2)	Strategic Director (SD1)	Director 1 (D1)	Director 2 (D2)	Head of Service 1 (HS1)	Head of Service 2 (HS2)
Salary Range							
01	158,116	140,000	111,829	103,606	83,568	79,259	68,690
02	163,216	143,750	114,935	106,484	85,889	81,460	70,598
03	168,316	147,500	118,041	109,362	88,210	83,661	72,506
04	173,417	151,250	121,148	112,240	90,532	85,863	74,414
05	178,518	155,000	124,255	115,117	92,854	88,065	76,323

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EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION FORM

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

COUNCIL LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR GROWTH -
COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES

KEY DECISION: YES

PORTFOLIO AREA: GROWTH

PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED:

Growth, Housing and Community Safety, Environment

WARDS AFFECTED:

Recommendation 1 will affect all Wards

Recommendation 2 (proposed changes to Sites of Biological Importance) will affect the Wards of Wards of Clatterbridge; Heswall; Greasby, Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; and West Kirby and Thurstaston, as set out within the main body of the report.

SUBJECT: *Local Wildlife Sites – New Selection Criteria, Terms of Reference and Site Selection Procedures and Changes to the Schedule of Sites of Biological Importance*

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That it be recommended to Council that:

- (1) The modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Sites Partnership and Local Wildlife Site assessment procedures (Appendix 1 of this report); and sections 2 (Habitat criteria) and 3 (Species criteria) of the Local Wildlife Sites Selection Criteria for the Cheshire region (Appendix 2 of this report) be adopted as the basis for the future selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Wirral; and
- (2) That the revisions to the current schedule of Sites of Biological Importance (Appendix 3 of this report) be adopted as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.

2. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

To enable implementation of the modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership and revised procedures for site selection and to agree a final amended schedule of Sites of Biological Importance prior to starting a review of all sites against the new criteria.

3. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The report has been prepared with the approval of the Assistant Director Law and Governance and the Assistant Director Finance.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Signed: 	Signed: 
Executive Member: CLERK. PHIL JAMES	Chief Officer:
Date: 26/6/17.	Date: 26/6/17
Also present:	
Date of Senior Policy Team Meeting(s):	

A list of background papers on this issue is held with:

Contact Officer:

John Entwistle, Principal Forward Planning Officer, 0151 691 8221

Date: 26 June 2017

Date of Publication:

Date of Expiry of Call-In Period:

<p>COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES</p> <p>LEADER OF THE COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FINANCE AND DEVOLUTION</p>	<p>DELEGATED REPORT</p> <p>LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES – NEW SELECTION CRITERIA, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SITE SELECTION PROCEDURES AND CHANGES TO THE SCHEDULE OF SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE</p>
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REPORT SUMMARY

Local Wildlife Sites are sites with ‘substantive nature conservation value’. They are defined areas, identified and selected locally for their nature conservation value, based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species that have a national, regional and importantly, a local context. Cabinet considered a report on the implications of the Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance on the identification, selection and management of local wildlife sites on 12 December 2007 and endorsed the establishment of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership (Minute 398). The agreed role of the Partnership incorporates the co-ordination of site selection procedures including survey and identification of candidate sites for designation, deletion, or boundary alteration. On 14 February 2011, Council (Minute 82 refers) agreed an update to the schedule of Sites of Biological Importance incorporating all the changes made since the UDP was adopted, using the existing selection criteria.

A revised set of selection criteria for local wildlife sites for the Cheshire region (including Wirral) was issued by Cheshire Wildlife Trust in February 2014, including sections on the role of the Local Sites Partnership in the selection process, key principles of site selection and procedures to be followed (drawing on the DEFRA guidance). This report recommends that the new Cheshire Region Local Sites selection criteria, modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Sites Partnership and procedures for site selection be adopted as the basis for future site selection in Wirral.

The modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership make provision for the identification of candidate or ‘alert’ sites which are sites which may host habitats or species of local/national importance but which have not yet been assessed against the local wildlife sites selection criteria or subject to detailed ecological survey work and therefore have not been formally designated as a Local Wildlife Site. These would not have the status of designated sites but would act as an alert for the planning process and may indicate that an ecological survey is required before determination of any application affecting the site. This report recommends that the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership are allowed to maintain an advisory list of ‘alert sites’ for inclusion as part of the planning hazards system.

Since the Council agreed an update to the schedule of Sites of Biological Importance in 2011 the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership has identified further changes under the existing selection criteria. This report recommends that the changes to the schedule of Sites of Biological Importance are adopted as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.

The report could potentially have implications for all Wards but the site-specific recommendations set out within the report currently relate to the Wards of Clatterbridge; Heswall; Greasby, Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; and West Kirby and Thurstaston.

The recommendations will support the delivery of Wirral Plan priorities for the environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That it be recommended to Council that:

- 1. The modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Sites Partnership and Local Wildlife Site assessment procedures (Appendix 1 of this report); and sections 2 (Habitat criteria) and 3 (Species criteria) of the Local Wildlife Sites Selection Criteria for the Cheshire region (Appendix 2 of this report) be adopted as the basis for the future selection of Local Wildlife Sites in Wirral; and**
- 2. That the revisions to the current schedule of Sites of Biological Importance (Appendix 3 of this report) be adopted as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To enable implementation of the modified terms of reference for the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership and revised procedures for site selection and to agree a final amended schedule of Sites of Biological Importance prior to starting a review of all sites against the new criteria.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Non-statutory Local Sites include both Local Geological Sites and Local Wildlife Sites. There are in the region of 42,000 such sites in the country. Local wildlife sites ('LWS') are defined areas, identified and selected locally for their substantive nature conservation value, based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species that have a national, regional and importantly, a local context. These sites provide refuges for much of the UK's flora and fauna, play an important role in meeting biodiversity targets, represent local character and distinctiveness and contribute to the quality of life and well-being of the community. Local wildlife sites are intended to sit below the national statutory designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and complement rather than duplicate protection of habitats and species by other mechanisms such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Unlike SSSIs, local wildlife sites provide a comprehensive, rather than a representative suite of sites and all locations that meet the assigned criteria should normally be designated.
- 3.2 Designation of a local wildlife site is advisory and does not in itself confer statutory protection. It is a way of alerting planners, landowners and developers to the fact that there is a nature conservation interest on the site, which should be taken into account when considering planning applications and when making decisions about the management of the site in question. Designation of a Local Wildlife Site is not necessarily an automatic barrier to development and has to be considered in the context of the relevant development plan policies and other material planning considerations.
- 3.3 In most areas of the country, local authorities, working with other local partners, have set up systems to cover the designation and administration of local wildlife sites. These systems traditionally varied considerably in terms of size (both the administrative area they cover and the number of sites selected); the terminology used; and coverage of contrasting landscapes in coastal, rural and urban situations. In an attempt to promote a more transparent and consistent approach to the operation of local wildlife sites systems, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published "Local Sites – Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management" in 2006. A key recommendation in the guidance was the establishment of local wildlife sites partnerships to manage local sites systems. The guidance also recommended use of the generic term "Local Site", which could be subdivided to describe an individual site as either a "Local Wildlife Site" ("LWS")

or “Local Geological Site” or even a “Local Wildlife/Geological Site” if the interests coincide.

4.0 LOCAL SITES IN WIRRAL

4.1 Wirral currently has a system of local wildlife sites called Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs). These were originally drawn up by Cheshire Wildlife Trust in the late 1980s, replacing an earlier wildlife sites system developed by Merseyside County Council. The sites were last reviewed in full in 1999 by Wirral Wildlife (the Wirral group of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust) prior to the formal designation of 70 SBIs through Proposal NC6 - *Sites of Biological Importance* in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (‘UDP’) adopted in February 2000. The reasoned justification for Proposal NC6 states that “*sites not currently identified, but which can be demonstrated to meet the criteria specified, will, therefore, also be subject to protection as SBIs under Policy NC5*”.

4.2 Cabinet considered a report highlighting the key recommendations and implication of the aforementioned 2006 DEFRA Local Sites guidance on the 12th December 2007, endorsed the establishment of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership and agreed the terms of reference for this group (Minute 398 refers). The agreed role of the Partnership incorporates the co-ordination of site selection procedures, including survey and identification of candidate sites for designation, deletion, or boundary alteration. The more formalised identification and agreement of proposed changes through the Partnership was intended to enable these new or amended sites to carry some weight in planning terms prior to their inclusion in the statutory Local Plan for Wirral which will replace the UDP. On 14th February 2011, Council (Minute 82 refers) agreed an update of the schedule of SBIs, incorporating all the site changes (using the existing selection criteria) identified in the period since the UDP was adopted. The updated schedule of 70 SBIs, including site plans can be viewed on the Council’s web site at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/sites>

4.3 It has been recognised however, that for the long term, the existing site selection criteria needed to be reviewed to bring them in line with the DEFRA guidance, followed by a re-assessment of the existing sites against the new criteria.

5.0 NEW LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE CHESHIRE REGION

5.1 For ecological recording and biodiversity purposes, Wirral is included within the historic county of Cheshire (“the Cheshire Region”), in the same way that Liverpool and the other north Merseyside districts are included within the historic county boundary of Lancashire. In the Cheshire Region prior to 2012, each local authority had its own guidance and site selection criteria for Local Sites. In Halton and Warrington such sites were known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and in Wirral, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester the sites were known as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs). A smaller number of sites in Cheshire West and Chester were previously known as Sites of Nature Conservation Value (SNCVs).

- 5.2 In order to standardise the approach to selecting local wildlife sites across the whole of the Cheshire Region as far as possible, Cheshire Wildlife Trust led an initiative to prepare new site selection criteria and guidance in line with the DEFRA guidance to cover Halton, Warrington, Wirral, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester. The revised criteria and guidance were published in February 2014 as “Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria for the Cheshire Region” (“Cheshire LWS Criteria”) (Appendix 2) which can be downloaded from the Cheshire Wildlife Trust web site at <http://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Cheshire%20LWS%20criteria%20V40.pdf>
- 5.3. The Cheshire LWS Criteria document sets out a number of key principles. Schedules of local wildlife sites are intended to be a comprehensive rather than a representative list, including all sites meeting the selection criteria. Sites with a substantive nature conservation interest should be selected. What constitutes substantive nature conservation interest is set out in the site selection criteria (sections 2 and 3 of the document) and reflects the local context as well as national priorities. Sites where the social/aesthetic/educational interest of the site derives from the wildlife features present may also be selected. Only one criterion needs to be met in order for a site to qualify as a local wildlife site.
- 5.4 The Cheshire LWS Criteria have been developed in wide consultation with various naturalist organisations and specialists. There are 30 habitat based criteria and a further 13 species-specific criteria with measurable thresholds and a structured and systematic approach to site selection. The criteria have been devised to reflect local and national priorities and take into consideration attributes such as size, diversity, naturalness, rare/exceptional value, fragility, typicalness, historic/cultural associations, landscape connectivity and value for learning/appreciation of nature.
- 5.5 Criteria are weighted relative to each other and geographically so that the suite of local wildlife sites (together with other networks such as SSSIs) can maintain the nature conservation interest of the Cheshire region by supporting viable populations and functioning ecological communities. The habitat criteria in section 2 of the document closely follow the definitions of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. Under the site selection criteria, provision is also made for sites that provide important wildlife corridors or perform a buffering function for other important sites.
- 5.6 Sites may be selected for the species they support where these are of local or national conservation status, or if the site supports important species assemblages or a significantly large population.
- 5.7 It is proposed that sections 2 and 3 of the Cheshire LWS Criteria document be adopted as the basis for future local site selection in Wirral.

6.0 ROLE OF THE WIRRAL LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES PARTNERSHIP

- 6.1 The new Cheshire LWS Criteria document also includes guidance on the role of Local Wildlife Sites Partnerships in the selection process, key principles in site selection and procedures to be followed. The existing terms of reference of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership (‘Wirral LWSP’) have been reviewed against this new guidance and a number of amendments have been proposed to bring them

into line with the Cheshire Region approach, while retaining Wirral specific elements. In particular the opportunity has been taken to include the key principles for selection of sites together with the procedures to be followed. The revised terms of reference for the Wirral LWSP and procedures for site selection are set out in Appendix 1.

- 6.2 It is proposed that the Wirral LWSP reassess all existing SBIs against the new Cheshire LWS criteria and compile a new schedule of Local Wildlife Sites that will form part of the evidence base for Wirral's local plan and inform the consideration of planning applications (and land management, where the sites are in Council ownership). Not all existing sites would require re-survey as part of this exercise, depending on when they were last surveyed: the Wirral LWSP currently aim to resurvey sites on a 10 yearly cycle, but attempt to resurvey ponds, which are more likely to change, on a three year cycle. Some types of habitat (such as woodland) require little management and are less susceptible to change and older survey data, of up to 10 years, may remain valid. In relation to species-based sites, survey data no older than 5 years should be utilised.
- 6.3 As such, it is estimated that the process of reviewing all the existing sites against the new criteria, including any re-surveys, could be completed within 5 years (in addition to considering proposed new sites). In the meantime, it is proposed that both the old and new systems and sets of criteria should be maintained in parallel, with existing SBIs designated under the old criteria remaining valid until they are reassessed against the new criteria, at which point they would become Local Wildlife Sites.

7.0 PROPOSED NEW 'ALERT SITE' CATEGORY

- 7.1 Other districts in the Cheshire Region maintain a list of 'alert' sites which may host habitats or species of local/national importance but which have not yet been assessed against the Cheshire Region LWS criteria or subject to detailed ecological survey work and therefore have not been formally designated as a Local Wildlife Site. It is proposed that this approach is adopted in Wirral. The Wirral LWSP would be responsible for considering whether potential sites should be added to a list of 'alert sites'. There is an expectation that new alert sites would then be taken through the assessment process for local wildlife site designation as soon as possible, beginning with contact with the site owner to negotiate access for assessment. In exceptional circumstances, the Local Authority can request access under Section 324 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). If access to a site cannot be gained for assessment purposes, it would remain on the 'alert' list unless there is already enough evidence (for example other ecological data) to suggest that the LWS criteria will be met, in which case the site should go forward for designation as a LWS.
- 7.2 Planning officers would be made aware of alert sites through their inclusion on the hazards system as indicative points (in recognition of the fact that until a site is assessed, the exact area of ecological interest is not known). In planning terms, the 'alert sites' can only be used to highlight potential for ecological interest and enable officers to request planning applications to be accompanied by an ecological survey.

8.0 FINAL REVISED SCHEDULE OF SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

8.1 Since the Council formally adopted the revised schedule of Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) on the 14th February 2011, the Wirral LWSP has continued to monitor and survey existing and potential local sites using the existing selection criteria. This has identified a number of further proposed changes to the schedule of SBIs. Given that the local sites schedule is intended to be a comprehensive rather than representative list and that it will take time to review all existing sites under the new criteria as discussed above, it is proposed that a final revised schedule of SBIs be produced, incorporating all changes since 2011. The Wirral LWSP has agreed the following proposed changes to the schedule of SBIs. The endorsement of full Council is required for these changes to be adopted as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications.

New SBIs

8.2 It is proposed that the following sites should be added to the schedule of SBIs, as ecological surveys have found they now meet the original SBI selection criteria:

78. Heswall Fields (Heswall Ward)

79. Frankby Cemetery (Greasby, Frankby and Irby Ward)

8.3 Site Plans and citation sheets for these sites are attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

De-selected SBIs

8.4 It is proposed that the following sites should be removed from the schedule of SBIs, as ecological surveys have found that they no longer have sufficient ecological value to meet the LWS selection criteria and therefore no longer merit inclusion:

26. Backwood Hall Farm (Heswall Ward)

35. Rake Hey Covert Pond (Clatterbridge Ward)

75. The Rectory, Thurstaston (West Kirby and Thurstaston Ward)

Modified SBI Boundaries

8.5 It is proposed that the boundaries for the following existing SBIs should be amended so that all land that meets the selection criteria is selected and land which no longer meets the criteria is removed:

15. Wirral Way Caldy to Heswall (West Kirby and Thurstaston; and Heswall Wards)

19. Piper's Lane (Heswall Ward)

49. Holm Hill (West Kirby and Thurstaston Ward)

67. Meols Field (Moreton West and Saughall Massie Ward)

8.6 It had initially been proposed that Piper's Lane SBI should be removed from the schedule of sites following representations from one of the two land owners and a subsequent site visit. Some time has now passed since this site visit and this part of the site has changed ownership. In response to the land owner consultation on the

proposed de-selection of the site the Wirral LWSP received significant correspondence from local residents highlighting the ecological value of the site. Unfortunately members of the Wirral LWSP have been unable to gain further access to this part of the site, but a visual assessment from the site boundary indicates that the site may have retained sufficient ecological value to justify retention. As this site is already designated, it is proposed to adopt a precautionary approach and retain the SBI designation on this part of the site until it is possible to gain access to resurvey the land, but exclude the adjacent field in separate ownership from the SBI as originally planned.

- 8.7 Site Plans and citation sheets for these sites are attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

Modified SBI Citations

- 8.8 It is proposed that the citations sheets for the following existing SBIs should be amended to better reflect the current ecological value of the sites:

2. Grange Hill (West Kirby and Thurstaston Ward)
61. Leasowe Pond (revised title – Leasowe Reedmarsh) (Leasowe and Moreton East Ward)

- 8.9 Citation sheets for these sites are attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

- 8.10 The 'confidential' section on all the citation sheets appended to this report have intentionally been left blank on this occasion. Information on legally protected species normally included under this heading is restricted to copies of citations held by Council officers and members of the Wirral LWSP.

- 8.11 A draft revised schedule of all Sites of Biological Importance incorporating the above proposed changes is attached as Appendix 4 to this report.

9.0 LOCAL GEOLOGICAL SITES

- 9.1 Local Geological Sites provide protection for areas which can be demonstrated to have local importance for geological interest. Locally, the Cheshire RIGS Group review non-statutory sites of geological and geomorphological importance in line with nationally agreed criteria for the selection of Regional Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) and advise the Council on the designation of Local Geological Sites.

- 9.2 Wirral's local geological sites, originally known as Sites of Local Importance for Earth Science, were formally designated in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 2000. The UDP states that sites not identified in the document, but which are found to meet the criteria for selection should be afforded the same level of protection, consistent with the principle that Local Geological Site schedules are intended to be comprehensive rather than representative and that all areas which meet the selection criteria for designation should be included. As such, on 17th October 2011, Council approved changes to the schedule of sites included in the Wirral UDP put forward by the Cheshire RIGS group, including 4 new sites, deletion

of 2 sites plus some boundary alterations (minute 46 refers) with the revised schedule also viewable on the Council's web site: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/local>

9.3 While the Local Geological Site and Local Wildlife Site selection processes are discrete, there is considerable overlap with a number of sites carrying both designations. Representatives of the RIGS group attend the Wirral LWSP meetings to provide specialist advice on geology and geomorphology and to ensure a transparent and consistent approach to the operation of the local sites systems for biodiversity and geo-diversity conservation.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Wirral's local wildlife sites make an important contribution towards the biodiversity of the Borough. Following on from the earlier publication of the DEFRA Guidance on local sites systems and the establishment of the Wirral LWSP, the adoption of the site selection criteria for the wider Cheshire Region offer the potential to promote a more transparent and consistent approach to the operation of these systems across the Cheshire Region.

11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Local Planning Authority has a number of responsibilities in relation to local sites systems:

- To consider and adopt the recommendations of the Partnership in relation to local Wildlife Sites that have been selected;
- Draw up appropriate development plan policies for the protection of Local Wildlife sites which are consistent with national advice in the National Planning Policy Framework and associated planning guidance;
- Be responsible for all planning matters related to individual Local Wildlife Sites including defending individual Wildlife Sites at planning inquiries; and
- Ensuring that site boundaries are identified on the local searches system and on the local plan policies map.

12.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The local sites system is administered by Council officers on behalf of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership as part of their normal duties with no additional budgetary implications. Cheshire Wildlife Trust/Wirral Wildlife and the Cheshire Records Centre no longer receive any direct funding from the Council.

13.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Council has a wider statutory duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. This duty includes restoring or enhancing populations or habitats of principal importance which appear on the England

Biodiversity List produced under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act.

- 13.2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, part 2, section 39 provides guidance on nature conservation policy in planning contexts. Paragraph (3) encourages the management of features of the landscape which are linear/continuous or act as stepping stones essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. The regulations in part 3 refer to EU protected species and Local Wildlife Sites which support these species may be protected from disturbance and/or activities which destroy breeding sites or resting places.

14.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 14.1 The local sites system is administered by Council officers on behalf of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership as part of their normal duties. The majority of the survey work on sites which are not owned by the Council is undertaken by volunteers from Wirral Wildlife (the Wirral arm of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust).

15.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 15.1 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, places a duty on all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. If the Wirral local wildlife sites system were not operated in a way which is consistent with the DEFRA guidance, and Cheshire Region Site Selection Criteria, there is a risk that the basis for designating individual sites could be more vulnerable to challenge through the planning process.

16.0 CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT

- 16.1 In line with the agreed Terms of Reference, the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership has contacted the owners of sites proposed for designation (where known and contactable). Landowners have been advised of the purpose, significance and implications of designation and given the opportunity to comment on the basis for the selection of their site. Similarly, where surveys of existing sites have found that the nature conservation interest has deteriorated to such an extent that a site no longer meets the site selection criteria, owners have been notified and given the opportunity to comment.

17.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal been reviewed with regard to equality?
- (b) No because there is no relevance to equality.
- 17.2 The emerging Core Strategy Local Plan has been subject to ongoing Equality Impact Assessment.
- 17.3 Results of previous Equality Impact Assessments prepared at each stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy can be viewed at

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/core-strategy-local-plan-0>

- 17.4 A revised Equality Impact Assessment will be presented alongside the proposals to be included in the final Core Strategy Local Plan.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Revised Terms of Reference for the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership and Local Wildlife Site Selection Procedures

Appendix 2: Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria for the Cheshire Region

Appendix 3: Revised Boundaries and Citations for Sites of Biological Importance

Appendix 4: Revised Schedule of Sites of Biological Importance

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Local Sites – Guidance on their Identification, Selection and Management, (DEFRA 2006) can be viewed at:

<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/protected/localsites.pdf>

The Cheshire Local Wildlife Sites site selection criteria document can be downloaded from the Cheshire Wildlife Trust web site at:

<http://www.cheshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/files/Cheshire%20LWS%20criteria%20V40.pdf>

The existing schedule of Sites of Biological Importance can be viewed at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/sites>

The existing schedule of local geological sites can be viewed at:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/local>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None	

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APPENDIX 1 - TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WIRRAL LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES PARTNERSHIP AND LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WIRRAL LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES PARTNERSHIP

Role of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership:

The role of the Wirral Local Wildlife Sites Partnership ('Wirral LWSP') is to:

1. Agree, publish, monitor and review the criteria for selection of Local Wildlife Sites for Wirral, currently set out in Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria for the Cheshire Region ("Cheshire LWS criteria");
2. Co-ordinate site selection procedures including survey and identification of candidate sites for designation, deletion, or boundary alteration;
3. Consider whether potential sites should be added to or removed from a list of 'alert sites';
4. Actively promote and support site management;
5. Co-ordinate funding provision and/or identify and promote the taking up of funding opportunities;
6. Promote educational use where appropriate;
7. Establish a process for monitoring the condition of designated sites;
8. Review the operation of the Local Wildlife Sites system at suitable intervals;
9. Promote the role and importance of Local Wildlife Sites at a strategic level (for example in delivering Biodiversity Action Plan targets, targeting of agri-environment schemes);
and
10. Promote the enhancement of sites through buffering and increasing connectivity.

All sites which are selected, de-selected or amended by the Wirral LWSP will be submitted to Wirral Council (and where appropriate, Cheshire West and Chester Council) for inclusion in, or deletion from, the Local Plan and hazards mapping; Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) and RECORD.

Key functions of the Wirral LWSP in relation to site selection/ de-selection and amendments to existing sites

1. The evaluation and selection/de-selection of Local Wildlife Sites (and amendments to existing sites and identification of alert sites) is a central responsibility of the Wirral LWSP. The Partnership is the final arbiter for the evaluation and selection process.

2. The Wirral LWSP is responsible for developing and periodically reviewing the site selection criteria in line with published guidance.
3. The Wirral LWSP is responsible for ensuring all site surveys are undertaken by suitably trained staff or volunteers. The selection process must also be undertaken by suitably qualified personnel representing the Partnership.
4. The Wirral LWSP is responsible for maintaining a list of candidate/alert Local Wildlife Sites and periodically assessing these sites against the criteria set out in the Cheshire LWS Criteria document. Candidate/alert sites may hold habitat or species of local/national importance but have not been assessed against the Cheshire Region LWS criteria. Such sites may be proposed by members of the partnership or other stakeholders including the general public. The list should act as an alert for the planning process and may indicate that an ecological survey is required before determination of any application affecting the site.
5. Existing/candidate/alert sites should be assessed against the criteria by the Wirral LWSP. The objective of site selection is to select all sites that meet the criteria and to review all sites against these criteria at least once every 10 years.
6. The partnership should review on an annual basis whether sites are in positive management or potentially at risk by completing the questionnaire in appendix 5.2 of the Cheshire LWS guidance document. Reporting this figure contributes to the requirement for local authorities to report to central government on the proportion of Local Wildlife Sites in positive management as part of the 'single data list', specifically Local nature conservation/biodiversity (reference 160-00). This is the current reporting requirement for local authorities to central government, which replaces the Local Biodiversity Indicator NI197.
7. Site owners should, whenever possible, be contacted by the Wirral LWSP and asked for access permission to survey and monitor sites. Where access is denied those wishes should be respected and no change should be made to the site's status. However where there is a threat to a Local Wildlife Site, (existing or proposed), the Wirral LWSP may request the Local Planning Authority to exercise its powers of entry to land under section 324 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.
8. Prior to formal endorsement of sites by the Wirral LWSP, site owners will be given the opportunity to make observations, for example, on whether or not the site continues to host the listed features, provides the functions as stated and accords with the assessment made against the selection criteria. This liaison with the landowner relates to the Partnership's precise function of identifying appropriate sites and should, therefore be confined to factors relating directly to the application of the site selection criteria. Owners and occupiers should be given at least 4 weeks to comment on the proposed designation.
9. In the information sent to site owners, the Wirral LWSP should set out the process it will follow in considering any observations received from site owners relating directly to the application of the site criteria and how the partnership will respond.
10. For each site, the Wirral LWSP will consider the report and recommendation of the field surveyor; the field survey and appropriate background materials, including any representations made by, or on behalf of the landowner.

11. If queries are raised about supporting data or compliance with the selection criteria, the final decision is deferred to a future meeting to enable clarification of the issues raised or for additional information to be obtained. A clear minute of the issues, or additional data required, will be made.

12. The Wirral LWSP will make a consensus decision. Clear reasons for rejection of any proposed site designation/boundary change will be noted with the proposals form, and this will be kept by Wirral Wildlife and the Council.

13. The reasons for designating a particular site by the Wirral LWSP will be recorded, showing the species, habitats or features judged to be of substantive interest and how they were judged against the criteria and any functions the site supports. This information will be sent to the site owner and made available to others who may have an interest in the site.

14. Where an urgent decision is required about the status of a site including proposed 'Alert Sites', all Wirral LWSP members will be sent a report by email with recommendations and asked for their views. The views of the Partnership members would then normally be ratified at the next meeting.

15. The Cheshire LWS criteria have been devised so that sites with restoration potential should not be de-selected, however careful consideration must be given to such sites. If a site no longer meets the criteria and has low restoration potential then it should be de-selected. Site owners and other interested parties should be notified and given the opportunity to make observations. Formal de-selection, once agreed by the partnership, should be notified to owners and other interested parties where appropriate.

Alert Sites

16. The Wirral LWSP will be responsible for maintaining a list of 'alert sites' which may host habitats or species of local/national importance, but which have not yet been formally assessed against the Cheshire Region LWS criteria or subject to detailed ecological survey work and therefore have not been formally designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Details of proposed alert sites will be circulated to Wirral LWSP members by email with recommendations and a request for views which would then normally be ratified at the next available Wirral LWSP meeting. There is an expectation that new alert sites would then be taken through the assessment process for local wildlife site designation as soon as possible, beginning with contact with the site owner to negotiate access for assessment. In exceptional circumstances the Local Authority can request access under Section 324 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). If access to a site cannot be gained for assessment purposes, it would remain on the 'alert' list unless there is already enough evidence (for example other ecological data) to suggest that the LWS criteria will be met, in which case the site should go forward for selection as a LWS.

17. Planning officers will be made aware of alert sites through their inclusion on the hazards system as indicative points (in recognition of the fact that until a site is assessed, the exact area of ecological interest is not known). In planning terms the 'alert sites' can only be used to highlight potential for ecological interest and enable officers to request planning applications to be accompanied by an ecological survey.

Membership of the Wirral LWSP

With its statutory roles and responsibilities relating to nature conservation and biodiversity the lead partner for the Wirral LWSP is Wirral Council, with Wirral Wildlife/Cheshire Wildlife Trust and RECORD (the Cheshire Region Biological Records Centre) taking responsibility for overseeing site surveys, administration and data storage. The success of the Wirral LWSP is dependent on the input from volunteers with nature conservation expertise.

Members of the Wirral LWSP are selected on the basis of their technical expertise in ecology and nature conservation and include the following core members:

- Wirral Council (Forward Planning, Parks & Countryside)
- Wirral Wildlife/Cheshire Wildlife Trust
- Natural England,
- RECORD
- National Trust
- RSPB
- Liverpool Museum
- Environment Agency
- Species protection groups, for example, Wirral Barn Owl Trust
- Cheshire RIGS Group

Individual members of the Wirral LWSP will:

1. Represent their organisations at meetings of the Partnership, in respect of the organisation's functions relating to nature conservation and ecology;
2. Scrutinise the scientific content of the information used in the management of the local wildlife sites system for accuracy and precision and assess whether selection criteria have been applied correctly; and
3. Promote and raise awareness of the local wildlife sites system within their own organisations and externally where appropriate, particularly where they have land ownership and/or management responsibilities

The Wirral LWSP operates strictly within a technical remit and does not have any formal planning responsibility – for example, commenting on planning applications. Membership of the Wirral LWSP does not in any way restrict individual members from commenting or involvement on planning matters on behalf of their own organisations.

Wirral LWSP meetings will chaired on a rotating basis by partnership members held on a quarterly basis (including the annual review meeting), or as required. A quorum is five Wirral LWSP members.

The Partnership will regularly review its membership. Additional expertise can be co-opted onto the Wirral LWSP where required – the key principle is that the Partnership should have access to the relevant expertise and knowledge to enable it to come to an informed view on the designation of proposed sites. For example, representatives of the Cheshire RIGS Group attend the LWSP to provide specialist advice on geology and geomorphology and to ensure a transparent and consistent approach to the operation of the local sites systems for biodiversity and geodiversity conservation. The Cheshire RIGS Group propose non-

statutory sites of geological and geomorphological importance in line with nationally agreed criteria for the selection of Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) and advises the Council on the designation of Local Geological Sites.

Annual Meeting

An annual review meeting of the Wirral LWSP will be held in March each year to review and confirm changes from the previous year, to which a wider membership will be invited. Site assessments from the previous survey season will be considered and a revised Local Wildlife Site schedule agreed. The annual meeting will also consider how many of the sites are in positive management for reporting purposes.

LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR SITE SELECTION

1. Sites with a substantive nature conservation interest will be selected. What constitutes substantive nature conservation interest is set out in sections 2 and 3 of the document “Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria for the Cheshire Region” (“Cheshire LWS criteria”) which reflect the local context as well as national priorities. Sites where the social/aesthetic/educational interest of the site derives from the wildlife features present may also be selected. Only one criterion needs to be met in order for a site to qualify as a Local Wildlife Site (‘LWS’).

2. The Cheshire LWS Criteria have been developed in wide consultation with various naturalist organisations and their representatives. Criteria H1 – H30 are generally habitat based, whereas criteria S1-S13 are species specific. The criteria represent a set of clear guidelines with measurable thresholds and provide a structured and systematic approach to site selection. The set of criteria has been devised to reflect local and national priorities as set out above and takes into consideration the following attributes (based upon the Ratcliffe approach set out in the Nature Conservation Review 1977):

- Size or extent
- Diversity
- Naturalness
- Rare or exceptional value
- Fragility
- Typicalness
- Recorded history and cultural associations
- Connectivity with the landscape
- Value for appreciation of nature
- Value for learning

3. Criteria are weighted relative to each other and geographically so that the suite of Local Wildlife Sites (together with other networks such as SSSIs) can maintain the nature conservation interest of the Cheshire region by supporting viable populations and functioning ecological communities.

4. The habitat criteria in section 2 of the Cheshire LWS Criteria closely follow the definitions of UK BAP habitats. Several of these UK BAP habitats are also listed as European Annex 1 habitats as they are important in a European context as well as nationally. For a small number of sites the habitat may be excluded from the UK BAP but will appear on the Local BAP (lime-beds and some waxcap grasslands for example). Under the site selection criteria provision is also made for sites that provide important wildlife corridors or perform a buffering function for other important sites.

5. Sites may be selected for the species they support where these are of local or national conservation status, or if the site supports important species assemblages or a significantly

large population. Detailed guidance is provided in section 3 of the Cheshire LWS Criteria document.

LOCAL WILDLIFE SITE SELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Each year a number of existing or new sites are put forward for assessment. The target number for each local authority area in the Cheshire Region is 10% of existing sites to be surveyed each year. Where this rate is achieved sites are reviewed on a ten year rolling basis in line with DEFRA guidance. New candidate/alert sites can be put forward for survey by the Wirral LWS partnership or other stakeholders including private individuals. Both new and existing sites are surveyed using the same methodology.

2. Site surveys should be undertaken once site access has been negotiated. The survey process is similar to extended phase 1 methodology and requires the production of a phase 1 habitat map, and a completed LWS survey form (appendix 1 of the Cheshire LWS Criteria document). The form must include a concise description of the site and a list of indicator species (ideally with DAFOR score). In most cases the survey form will include brief management recommendations and a condition assessment of the site (based upon Higher Level Stewardship condition assessment methodology).

3. The review process decides whether a site meets any of the Cheshire LWS Criteria. Only one criterion needs to be met in order for a site to qualify. All criteria that are met should be recorded. If a site no longer meets the criteria it should be deleted.

4. The boundary of the site should be determined. This may include deletions or additions to existing sites. Further guidance is provided in the site selection criteria (sections 2 and 3 of the Cheshire LWS Criteria document).

5. The Wirral LWSP will determine if sites are in positive management according to the methodology set out in appendix 5.2 of the Cheshire LWS Criteria document. Site owners/managers must be sent management recommendations, or possess a similar document if a site is to be assessed as being in positive management. Sites that are in schemes such as Higher Level Stewardship would be deemed to be in positive management unless evidence suggests otherwise. Entry Level Stewardship participation does not qualify a site as being in positive management.

6. The database is updated and draft citations are produced.

7. Draft citations are circulated to landowners and other interested parties for comment on how the criteria were applied. Additionally the standard survey form should be given to landowners/managers. The form would normally include brief management recommendations which if implemented would maintain the features for which a site was selected.

8. The Wirral LWSP considers stakeholder comments and revisions may be made. A final decision on the status of each site is made.

9. An updated LWS register is finalised for the Council to incorporate into its Local Plans/hazards mapping system. The register will include the data on whether newly surveyed sites are considered to be in positive management. Designation of new sites or

changes to existing sites will need to be reported to Full Council, via Cabinet or Delegated decision, in order for them to be adopted as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of individual planning applications. This should be done - as a minimum - on an annual basis.

10. Copies of the final citation and boundary plan will be provided to landowners. Ongoing liaison with landowners which may include further site visits.

11. The Wirral LWSP currently aims to resurvey sites on a 10 yearly cycle, but attempt to resurvey ponds, which are more likely to change, on a three year cycle. Some types of habitat require little management and are less susceptible to change such as woodland. In this case older survey data, of up to 10 years, is likely to remain valid. In relation to species based sites survey data no older than 5 years should be utilised.

Transitional Arrangements

1. Both the existing SBI and new Cheshire LWS Criteria should be maintained in parallel, with existing SBIs designed under the old criteria remaining valid until they are reassessed against the new criteria when they will become Local Wildlife Sites. The aim would be to complete the process within 5 years.

Data Storage

1. Following the review and selection procedure the boundaries of Local Wildlife Sites will be transferred to GIS. In some instances (and where funding allows) the habitat data may be included in the GIS layer.

2. Electronic databases of the suite of Local Wildlife Sites are held by the Council and key partners. Copies will be made available to all partners. For sites which have been surveyed from 2012 onwards the database will also hold a list of each site's qualifying criteria.

3. Electronic copies of citations are held by partnership members and electronic copies of site survey reports (post 2010) and phase 1 habitat maps are held by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. Paper copies of reports pre 2010 are held by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. RIGs citations are held by Cheshire RECORD.

4. A list of alert/candidate sites should be maintained alongside the database for existing sites. Alert sites will be shown on the hazards system through indicative points rather than boundaries in recognition of the fact that until a site is assessed the exact area of ecological interest is not known

Access to information

The Wirral LWSP operates a general presumption in favour of making the information relating to LWSs available for public inspection, unless:

- The disclosure of such information could harm or pollute the environment, for example in the case of threatened or protected species.
- The person who has supplied the data has refused permission for disclosure.

Local Wildlife Site Selection Criteria for the Cheshire region.

Covering the districts of Cheshire West and Chester,
Cheshire East, Wirral, Halton and Warrington

November 2012

Updated February 2014



Cheshire
Wildlife Trust

RECORD



Cheshire West
and Chester



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1. The Cheshire region LWS system

1.1 Introduction

Local Wildlife Sites are sites with 'substantive nature conservation value'. They are defined areas identified and selected locally for their nature conservation value, based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species with a national, regional and (**importantly**) a local context. The purpose of selection is to provide recognition of the substantive nature conservation value and to help conserve those features for which the site was selected. Together with the statutory sites (such as National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Importance), they form the essential building blocks of an ecological network.

Found on both public and private land, Local Wildlife Sites vary in size and shape from small ponds and copses and linear features such as hedgerows, road verges and water courses to much larger areas of habitat such as ancient woodlands, heaths, wetlands and grassland.

Collectively they play a critical role in the conservation of the UK's natural heritage by providing essential wildlife refuges in their own right²¹ and by acting as stepping stones, corridors and buffer zones to link and protect other site networks and the open spaces of our towns and countryside.

The Cheshire Region LWS system ensures a consistent approach for identifying, selecting, assessing, monitoring and protecting Local Wildlife Sites. Administration of the system requires enabling access to the most up to date information for approximately one thousand sites across the region. It operates as a partnership organisation across five local authorities, Halton, Warrington, Wirral, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester. In addition to the local authorities the key partners include the Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Record, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Private landowners and other stakeholders are encouraged to participate in the partnership by attending annual site selection meetings. Typically stakeholders include organisations such as the Forestry Commission, the Woodland Trust and 'Friends of' groups.

This document outlines the role and purpose of the Cheshire Region LWS system and provides details of the management of the system including the site selection criteria and procedures. It is based upon the 2006 Defra publication 'Local Sites – Guidance on their identification, selection and management'.

1.2 Background and context

1. Non-statutory Local Sites include both Local Geological Sites (previously known as RIGGS) and Local Wildlife Sites (previously known as SBIs, SINCS or SNCVs). Statutory designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest provide a representative rather than a comprehensive suite of sites. Not all sites which meet the criteria for statutory designation can be designated and instead are selected under the Local Sites system. Consequently such Local Sites may be amongst the best sites in the region for the habitats, species or geology they support. It is essential, therefore, that the different status assigned to Local Sites compared to SSSIs should not lessen the perception of their importance and the vital role they play in conserving our natural heritage.
2. Local Wildlife Sites should be distinguished from the Local Green Space designation which was introduced in the 2011 Localism Act. Local Green Spaces may be selected for wildlife value, but unlike Local Wildlife Sites selection they could also be selected solely on their local community significance for beauty, historic importance, recreational value and tranquillity.
3. In the Cheshire region prior to 2012 each local authority had its own guidance and site selection criteria for Local Sites. In Halton and Warrington such sites were known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCS) and in Wirral, Cheshire East¹ and Cheshire West and Chester the sites were known as Sites of Biological Importance⁴ (SBIs). A smaller number of sites in Cheshire West and Chester were previously known as Sites of Nature Conservation Value (SNCVs).
4. In 2006 Defra issued comprehensive guidance on Local Sites¹¹. The Cheshire Region Local Wildlife Site system for site identification, selection and management is based upon this guidance and is set out in this document.

According to this guidance:

- Local Sites networks provide a comprehensive rather than representative suite of sites.
- Local Sites provide wildlife refuges for most of the UK's fauna and flora and through their connecting and buffering qualities, they complement other site networks.
- Local Sites have a significant role to play in meeting overall national biodiversity targets.
- Local Sites represent local character and distinctiveness.
- Local Sites contribute to the quality of life and the well-being of the community, with many sites providing opportunities for research and education.

¹Cheshire East LA refer to sites which have not been reviewed under the new criteria as SBIs. The CCC 2000 criteria remain valid for these sites until they are re-assessed under the new criteria.

1.3 Legislation and policy

Local sites are afforded a level of protection via the following policies and guidance:

- **NPPF – Sustainable development.** Local wildlife sites may provide building blocks and linkages of networks of biodiversity and as such the NPPF guidance advises that sustainable development requires such networks should be protected, enhanced and managed.
- **NERC act 2006. Biodiversity duty.** This places a duty on local authorities to conserve biodiversity in exercising its functions. This duty includes restoring or enhancing populations or habitats of principal importance which appear on the S41 list (UK BAP).
- **The conservation of habitats and species regulations 2010.** Part 2, section 39. This regulation provides guidance on nature conservation policy in planning contexts. Paragraph (3) encourages the management of features of the landscape which are linear/continuous or act as stepping stones essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. The regulations in part 3 refer to EU protected species and Local Wildlife Sites which support these species may be protected from disturbance and/or activities which destroy breeding sites or resting places.
- In addition to the legislation for European protected species referred to above other UK specific legislation may apply including: **Protection of Badgers act 1992, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (schedules 1, 5 and 8), Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (section 74) and the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.**
- **Good agricultural and environmental conditions for habitats and wildlife (GAECs).** Semi-natural habitat in the farmed environment is afforded some protection through the GAECs. These standards provide a baseline of environmental protection for habitats and wildlife in order to maintain biodiversity and sustainable farming and are linked to Cross Compliance requirements and the Single Payment Scheme.

By identifying sites which host priority and protected species and habitats the LWS system provides a robust evidence base. This enables the development of well-informed special planning policies and facilitates objective planning decisions so that local authorities can fulfil their biodiversity duty. Furthermore reporting on the management of Local Sites contributes to the Single Data List, specifically *Local nature conservation/biodiversity* (reference 160-00)

1.4 The LWS system – Key interests and the role of the partnership

1. With their statutory roles and responsibilities relating to nature conservation and biodiversity the lead partners for the Cheshire Region LWS system are the local authorities, with the Cheshire Wildlife Trust and Record taking responsibility for overseeing site surveys, administration and data storage.
2. Other stakeholders include statutory agencies and bodies (such as Natural England and the Environment Agency), landowners and the voluntary and community sector. Due to the large number of sites included within the system the success of the partnership is dependent on the input from volunteers with nature conservation expertise.
3. The role¹¹ of the LWS partnership is to
 - Agree the basis for site selection.
 - Co-ordinate site selection procedures including survey and identification of candidate sites.
 - Actively promote and support site management.
 - Co-ordinate funding provision and/or identify and promote the taking up of funding opportunities.
 - Promote educational use where appropriate.
 - Establish a process for monitoring the condition of the selected sites.
 - Review the operation of the Local Sites system at suitable intervals.
 - Promote the role and importance of Local Sites at a strategic level (for example in delivering BAP targets, targeting of agri-environment schemes).
 - Promote the enhancement of sites through buffering and increasing connectivity.
4. All sites which are selected or de-selected by the partnership are submitted to the relevant local authority for inclusion in, or deletion from, their Local Development Plan.

1.5 Evaluation and selection of LWS

1.5.1 Key functions of partnership in site selection and de-selection

1. The evaluation and selection of Local Wildlife Sites is a central responsibility of the LWS partnership. The partnership is the final arbiter for the evaluation and selection process.
2. The partnership is responsible for developing and periodically reviewing the site selection criteria in line with published guidance.
3. The partnership is responsible for ensuring all site surveys are undertaken by suitably trained staff or volunteers. The selection process must also be undertaken by suitably qualified personnel representing the LWS partnership.
4. The partnership is responsible for maintaining a list of candidate/alert LWSs and periodically assessing these sites against the LWS criteria. Candidate/alert sites may hold habitat or species of local/national importance but have not been assessed against the LWS criteria. Such sites may be proposed by members of the partnership or other stakeholders including the general public. The list should act as an alert for the planning process and may indicate that an ecological survey is required before determination of any application affecting the site.
5. Existing/candidate/alert sites should be assessed against the criteria by the LWS partnership. The objective of site selection is to select *all*¹¹ sites that meet the criteria and to review all sites against these criteria at least once every 10 years.
6. The partnership should decide whether sites are in positive management by completing the questionnaire in appendix 5.2. Reporting this figure contributes to the single data list, specifically *Local nature conservation/biodiversity (reference 160-00)*. The questionnaire has been compiled following the guidance set out in *Defra guidance on the improved Local Biodiversity indicator (NI197). Revised guidance note December 2008*.
7. Site owners should, whenever possible, be contacted by the partnership and asked for access permission to survey and monitor sites. Where access is denied those wishes should be respected and no change should be made to the site's status. However where there is a threat to a LWS (existing or proposed) section 324 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act indicates that any person duly authorised in writing by the Secretary of State or by a local planning authority may at any reasonable time enter land for the purpose of surveying it in connection with preparation of development plans or submission of a planning application. Although in the case of land which is 'occupied' 24 hours' notice of the intended entry has to be given to the occupier.
8. Prior to formal endorsement of sites by the LWS partnership, site owners should be given the opportunity to make observations, for example, on whether or not the site continues to host the listed features, provides the functions as stated and accords with the assessment

made against the selection criteria. This liaison with the landowner relates to the partnership's precise function of identifying appropriate sites and should, therefore be confined to factors relating directly to the application of the site selection criteria.

9. In the information sent to owners of a proposed site, the partnership should set out the process it will follow in considering any observations received from site owners and how the partnership will respond.
10. The criteria have been devised so that sites with restoration potential should not be de-selected, however careful consideration must be given to such sites. If a site no longer meets the criteria and has low restoration potential then it should be de-selected. Site owners and other interested parties should be notified and given the opportunity to make observations. Formal de-selection, once agreed by the partnership, should be notified to owners and other interested parties where appropriate.

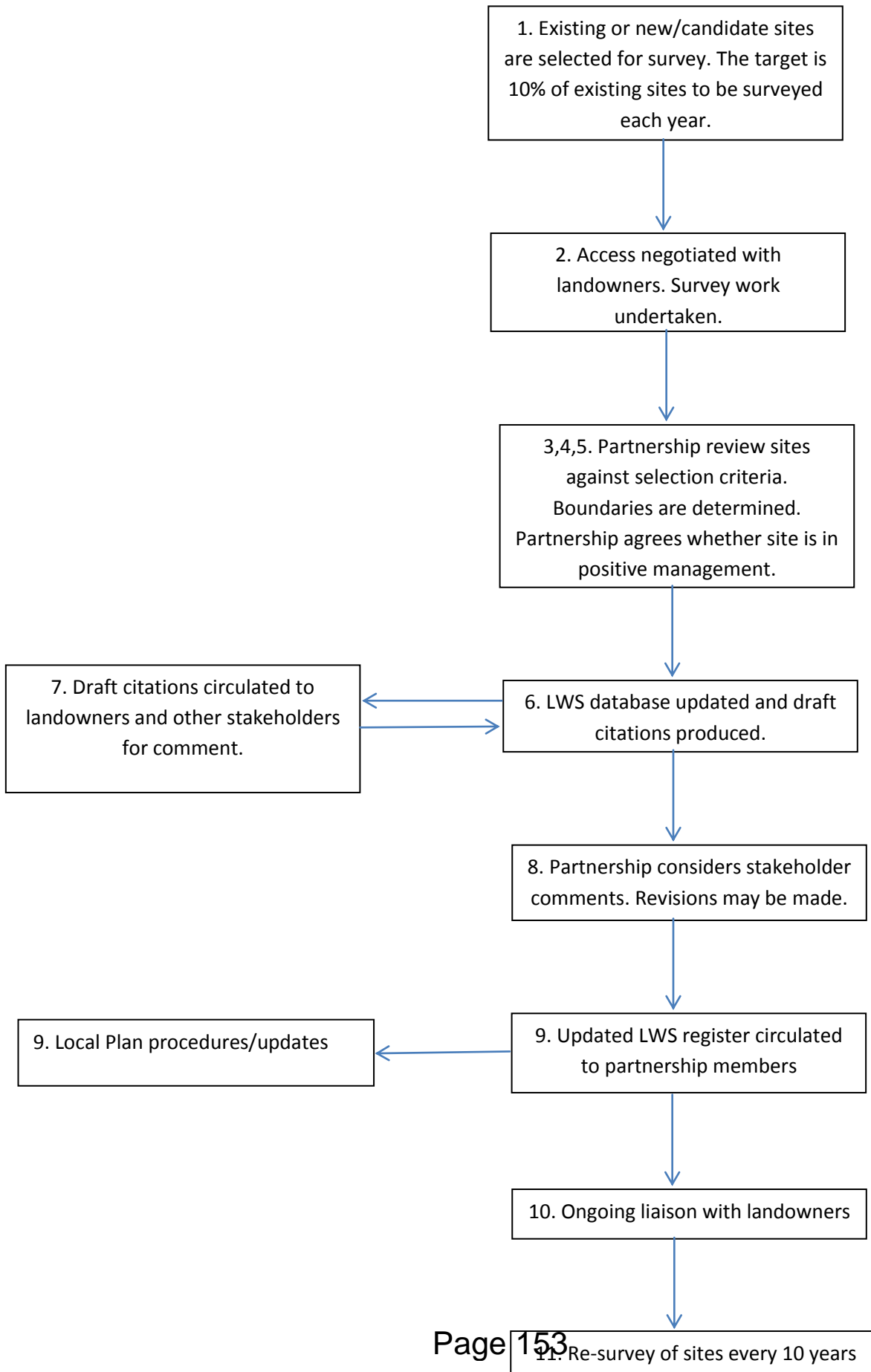
1.5.2 Key principles and priorities in site selection

1. Sites with a substantive nature conservation interest will be selected. What constitutes substantive nature conservation interest is set out in the site selection criteria (sections 2 and 3) and reflects the local context as well as national priorities. Sites where the social/aesthetic/educational interest of the site derives from the wildlife features present may also be selected. Only one criterion needs to be met in order for a site to qualify as a LWS.
2. The criteria have been developed in wide consultation with various naturalist organisations and their representatives. Criteria H1 – H26 are generally habitat based, whereas criteria S1-S13 are species specific. The criteria represent a set of clear guidelines with measurable thresholds and provide a structured and systematic approach to site selection. The set of criteria has been devised to reflect local and national priorities as set out above and takes into consideration the following attributes²:
 - Size or extent
 - Diversity
 - Naturalness
 - Rare or exceptional value
 - Fragility
 - Typicalness
 - Recorded history and cultural associations
 - Connectivity with the landscape
 - Value for appreciation of nature
 - Value for learning

² Based upon the Ratcliffe approach set out in the Nature Conservation Review 1977

3. Criteria are weighted relative to each other and geographically so that the suite of LWSs (together with other networks such as SSSIs) can maintain the nature conservation interest of the Cheshire region by supporting viable populations and functioning ecological communities.
4. The habitat criteria in section 2 closely follow the definitions of UK BAP habitats⁸. Several of these UK BAP habitats are also listed as European Annex 1 habitats as they are important in a European context as well as nationally. For a small number of sites the habitat may be excluded from the UK BAP but will appear on the Local BAP (lime-beds and some waxcap grasslands for example). Under the site selection criteria provision is also made for sites that provide important wildlife corridors or perform a buffering function for other important sites.
5. Sites may be selected for the species they support where these are of local or national conservation status, or if the site supports important species assemblages or a significantly large population. Detailed guidance is provided in section 3.

1.5.3 Procedures



1. Each year a number of existing or new sites are put forward for assessment. The target number for each local authority area is 10% existing sites to be surveyed each year. Where this rate is achieved sites are reviewed on a ten year rolling basis in line with Defra guidance. New candidate/alert sites can be put forward for survey by the partnership or other stakeholders including private individuals. Both new and existing sites are surveyed using the same methodology. Further guidance is given in 1.5.1.4.
2. Site surveys should be undertaken once site access has been negotiated. The survey process is similar to extended phase 1 methodology and requires the production of a phase 1 habitat map, and a completed LWS survey form (appendix 1). The form must include a concise description of the site and a list of indicator species (ideally with DAFOR score). In most cases the survey form will include brief management recommendations and a condition assessment of the site (based upon Higher Level Stewardship condition assessment methodology⁵).
3. The review process decides whether a site meets any of LWS criteria. Only one criterion needs to be met in order for a site to qualify. All criteria that are met should be recorded. If a site no longer meets the criteria it should be deleted.
4. The boundary of the site should be determined. This may include deletions or additions to existing sites. Further guidance is provided in the site selection criteria (sections 2 and 3).
5. The partnership will determine if sites are in positive management according to the methodology set out in appendix 2. Site owners/managers must be sent management recommendations, or possess a similar document if a site is to be assessed as being in positive management. Sites that are in schemes such as Higher Level Stewardship would be deemed to be in positive management unless evidence suggests otherwise. Entry Level Stewardship participation does not qualify a site as being in positive management.
6. The database is updated and draft citations are produced.
7. Draft citations are circulated to landowners and other interested parties for comment on how the criteria were applied. Additionally the standard survey form should be given to landowners/managers. The form would normally include brief management recommendations which if implemented would maintain the features for which a site was selected.
8. Partnership considers stakeholder comments and revisions may be made. A final decision on the status of each site is made.
9. Updated LWS registers are finalised for each local authority to incorporate into their Local Plans. The register will include the data on whether newly surveyed sites are considered to be in positive management.

10. Ongoing liaison with landowners which may include further site visits
11. Re-survey of site at least once every ten years.

1.5.4 Data storage

1. Following the review and selection procedure the boundaries of Local Wildlife Sites are transferred to GIS. Responsibility for this is agreed locally with individual local authorities. In some instances (and where funding allows) the habitat data may be included in the GIS layer.
2. Electronic databases of the suite of Local Wildlife Sites are held by all partners. For sites which have been surveyed from 2012 onwards the database will also hold a list of each site's qualifying criteria.
3. Electronic copies of citations are held by partnership members and electronic copies of site survey reports (post 2010) and phase 1 habitat maps are held by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. Paper copies of reports pre 2010 are held by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust.
4. A list of alert/candidate sites should be maintained alongside the database for existing sites.

1.5.5 Access to information

The partnership operates a general presumption in favour of making the information relating to LWSs available for public inspection, unless:

- The disclosure of such information could harm or pollute the environment, for example in the case of threatened or protected species.
- The person who has supplied the data has refused permission for disclosure.
- The site owner(s) specifically requested confidentiality
- Requests are unreasonable

There is a charge for supplying this information. This has been levied to cover the costs of administration and to provide support for the running of the LWS system

2. Habitat criteria

H1 –H3 Woodland - UK BAP priority habitat

- H1 Lowland mixed deciduous woodland** - UK BAP priority habitat (contains European Annex 1 habitats)
- H2 Wet woodland** - UK BAP priority habitat (contains European Annex 1 habitats)
- H3 Upland oakwood** - UK BAP priority habitat

Areas of locally native semi-natural lowland mixed deciduous woodland and/or wet woodland greater than 0.25ha should be selected as LWS. All areas of woodland listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory should be selected. Plantation on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) should be selected where there is survival of significant elements of the original woodland ecosystem²⁶. All areas of woodland on peat should be selected. Any site supporting species/species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S1 - 13 should be selected.

Guidance

Sites may meet multiple woodland criteria where mosaics of different habitat types occur (such as dry and wet woodland together).

Criteria **H1-H3** cover the following locally native deciduous NVC communities and community mosaics¹, all of which are BAP priority habitat:

H1 dry woodland : W8, W9, W10, W14, W15, W16 (canopy may have oak sp., birch sp., ash, elm, wych elm, sweet chestnut, lime, hornbeam, field maple, sycamore*, beech*)

H2 wet woodland : W2, W4, W5, W6, W7 (alder, willow sp. or downy birch dominant)

H3 upland oakwood : W11 (with sessile and/or pedunculate oak and birch sp.)

Although beech woodland (W14 and W15) is non-native to Cheshire², long established beech plantations that have acquired a high conservation value will be selected as LWS (see below). Upland oakwood is rare in Cheshire however areas may be found on the Pennine fringe and the Peckforton Ridge.

***Excluded are:**

- Small impoverished woodlands <1ha in size²⁶ with low species diversity (for their likely NVC community) or frequent non-native/invasive species; unless they act as wildlife corridors/stepping stones between areas of high wildlife value.
- Beech dominated woodland unless the canopy/ground flora has 2 or more of oak, birch, yew, bilberry, heather(s), great wood rush, bluebell, enchanter's nightshade, lords and ladies, honeysuckle, wood sorrel³ or a Cheshire class 1 AW indicator species⁴ from Table 1.

The above must be present **throughout** and not obviously planted and there must be few invasive/non native species.

- Conifer dominated woodland, including Scot's pine or other none locally native species, unless a Cheshire class 1 AW indicator⁴ species from Table 1 is present **throughout** and not obviously planted. There must be few invasive/non native species.
Deciduous woodland with small patches of conifer should be considered as restorable native woodland²⁶ (BAP habitat) and not excluded. Coniferous woodland may have rich ride fauna or significant bird interest and where this is the case it should be selected under the species selection criteria²⁶.
- Sycamore dominated woodland, unless the canopy/ground flora has:
 - Either both wood sorrel **and** creeping soft grass, **plus** at least one of ash, native bluebell or hazel (may suggest NVC community W10e). All must be at least occasional **throughout** and there must be few invasive/non native species.
 - Or has occasional sessile oak and supports a rich bryophyte community (such woodlands may be a European Annex 1 habitat).
 - Or a Cheshire class 1 AW indicator species⁴ from Table 1 rare/occasional **throughout** and not obviously planted. There must be few invasive/non native species.
 - Or there is a rich (typical NVC community) woodland ground flora (which may suggest invasion of sycamore into established woodland). There must be few invasive/non native species.
- Immature plantation woodland (usually less than 30 years old). Mature plantation woodland should broadly conform to one or more of the above NVC communities and have few invasive/non-native species in order to qualify.

Woodland containing **extensive** areas of native bluebells (LBAP species) and which do not otherwise meet criteria H1-H3 may be selected using criterion S13.

A woodland is dominated by a particular tree species if that tree occurs more frequently in the canopy than any other tree species.

Justification

Britain is one of the least well wooded countries in Europe and with around 5% woodland cover Cheshire is a particularly poorly wooded county. Much of Cheshire's semi-natural woodland is thought to be ancient in origin and often survives in steep sided valleys which have afforded it a degree of protection. Many sites have been felled in the past but still retain much of the original ground flora. Larger woods are generally more valuable than similar smaller woods and the fewer exotics and the greater the range of typical flora, the more valuable the site is. This should be taken into consideration during the selection process.

Several of Cheshire's woodland habitats are also EU Annex 1 habitats and therefore important on an international scale. These include areas of long established alluvial alder woodland which are periodically inundated (though not riparian trees or secondary woodland) and areas of sessile oak woodland (typically NVC communities W10e and W16b). Cheshire also has important areas of secondary woodland which have developed on heathlands, grasslands and wetlands following

changes in traditional management practices. Peatlands are a finite resource and may have restoration potential; therefore any woodland on peat would qualify under the woodland criteria.

The semi-natural woodlands in Cheshire are highly fragmented which compromises the long term survival of specialised woodland species and communities. Therefore woodland that provides a stepping stone between other important woodlands, or links areas of wildlife value, should be selected. This may be done using criterion **H24** if the woodland criteria are not met.

H4 Wood pasture and parkland – UK BAP priority habitat

Wood pasture and parkland with occasional veteran or ancient trees and an open grassland or heathland ground flora should be selected as LWS. Where the parkland/pasture has been changed to arable there must be significant remaining nature conservation interest in the veteran or ancient trees and their associated flora and fauna. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S1-13 should be selected.

Guidance

The parkland or wood pasture may show some correspondence to the following NVC communities: W10, W14, W15, W16². The ground flora may host important communities which may also qualify under grassland, heathland or waxcap grassland criteria **H7-H16**.

Veteran trees may be native or non-native and display attributes associated with late maturity; whereas the term ancient refers to a developmental stage beyond late maturity²⁶ (refer to criterion **H5**).

Excluded are:

- Sites originating from the 19th century or later which do not have veteran/ancient trees or were not derived from earlier parklands or forests.
- Upland sheep grazed closed-canopy woodland (refer to woodland criteria **H1/H3**).

Justification

Wood-pasture and parkland are mosaic habitats valued for their trees, especially veteran and ancient trees, and the plants and animals that they support. Grazing animals are fundamental to the existence of this habitat. The varied habitats within wood-pasture and parkland provide a home for a wide range of species (many of which occur only in these habitats) such as invertebrates, lichens, bryophytes and fungi which depend on dead and decaying wood. Individual trees, some of which may be of great size and age, are key elements of the habitat and many sites are also of national historic, cultural and landscape importance.

H5 Veteran and Ancient trees

Veteran trees are trees which are in late maturity and should be selected as LWS where they display one or more of the following:

- **The tree has a large girth relative to other mature trees of the same species (see table 2 for guidance)**
- **The tree displays characteristic age related features such as hollowing or crown die back.**
- **The tree supports important populations of invertebrates, lichens, fungi or bryophytes.**
- **Historical records of the individual tree exist.**

The land lying directly under the canopy should also be selected.

Ancient refers to a developmental stage beyond late maturity and such trees are likely to meet more than one of the above.

Guidance and Justification

Veteran and ancient trees may have a cultural and/or landscape value but they are also important for the species they support, particularly invertebrates, lichens, bryophytes and fungi. All qualifying species criteria should be recorded.

Veteran and ancient trees usually have a girth measurement which is larger than other trees of the same species⁵; however other characteristic features should also be taken into consideration. Such features may include trunk cavities, a large quantity of dead wood in the canopy or physical damage including bark loss.

H6 Traditional orchards – UK BAP priority habitat

Traditional orchards should be selected as LWS when all of the following apply:

- **The orchard consists of at least 5 fruit or nut trees planted at low density (3-20m apart).**
- **At least 50% of the trees in the orchard are traditional varieties of fruit or nut (not dwarf varieties).**
- **The ground flora consists of permanent grassland.**
- **The orchard is managed in a low intensity way without the wide use of pesticides, herbicides or inorganic fertilisers.**

Orchards listed on the national orchard inventory should be selected as Local Wildlife Sites providing they meet all the above.

Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance and Justification:

Most Cheshire farms and larger houses historically had an orchard. Although many orchards have been removed there are still areas of the county, such as Vale Royal, where numerous orchards still survive. A recent survey by PTES recorded 455 traditional orchards in the county covering an area of 90.2 hectares.

Traditional varieties of fruit trees (not modern dwarf varieties) may be unusual or highly localised cultivars² of species such as apple, damson, plum and pear. Traditional orchards are normally managed at low intensity, without the use of pesticides and inorganic fertilisers. Such orchards usually contain numerous micro habitats and are hotspots for biodiversity often supporting rare and declining species. The orchard may consist of several habitat features such as scrub, ponds, walls, hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

Windfall fruit is an important food source for populations of over wintering birds such as fieldfare and redwing. The presence of dead wood is particularly important as it may support rare species of saproxylic invertebrates, fungi, bryophytes and lichens⁶. The flowering trees provide an important source of pollen and nectar for numerous species of declining pollinators including bees, hoverflies and moths.

H7 – H15 Grassland and Heathland – UK BAP priority habitats

H7 Neutral grassland – Lowland meadows UK BAP (contains an EU Annex 1 habitat)

H8 Marshy grassland – Purple moor grass and rush pasture UK BAP habitat

H9 Acid grassland – Lowland dry acid grassland UK BAP habitat

H10 Calcareous grassland – Lowland calcareous grassland UK BAP habitat (contains LBAP limebed communities)

H11 Restorable grassland – good semi-improved (restorable to BAP grassland)

H12 Undetermined grassland – species rich (UK BAP habitat)

H13 Lowland heathland (dry) – Lowland heathland UK BAP habitat, EU Annex 1 habitat

H14 Lowland heathland (wet) - Lowland heathland UK BAP habitat, EU Annex 1 habitat

H15 Upland heathland – Upland heathland UK BAP habitat

Areas of semi-natural grassland which support 4 or more indicator species* (from table 3) should be selected as LWS. Areas of upland heath (above 300m) > 5ha should be selected as LWS. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S1-13 should be selected.

*Refer to guidance. Thresholds lower for acid grassland/heathland.

Guidance

Apart from semi-improved indicator species, all indicators (in table 3) can be used interchangeably and a judgement made as to which grassland type best describes the site⁵; however where clear mosaics of different habitat types occur all relevant criteria codes should apply. If a judgement on grassland type is not possible (for example on post-industrial sites) the criterion **H12** may be used. Sites with >25% dwarf shrub should be recorded as heathland **H13/H14**, above approximately 300m this should be recorded as Upland heathland **H15**.

Minimum thresholds for BAP priority grassland habitats (and LWS criteria) are listed below together with the corresponding NVC communities and community mosaics^{2,7}. **Indicator species must not be confined to the field edges.** DAFOR score is referred to (details in table 3).

H7 Neutral grassland, NVC MG4, MG5, MG8. Threshold to qualify as Lowland meadow BAP priority habitat⁵ (and LWS status) requires a minimum of:

Four 'occasional' indicator species (from table 3), at least 3 of which are listed as neutral grassland indicators.

OR

Four 'rare' neutral grassland indicators (from table 3).

Where the above minimum thresholds are just met the habitat is classified as 'good quality semi-improved neutral grassland' and corresponds to code B2.2 in phase 1 terminology. Where the above thresholds are clearly exceeded the habitat is likely to correspond to code B2.1 in phase 1 (unimproved neutral grassland).

H8 Marshy grassland, NVC M22, M23, M23. Threshold to qualify as Purple moor grass and rush pasture BAP priority habitat⁵ (and LWS status) requires a minimum of:

- *Four 'occasional' indicator species (from table 3), at least 3 of which are listed as marshy grassland indicators.*

OR

- *Four 'rare' marshy grassland indicators (from table 3).*

There may be some overlap with NVC M27 but where dominated by meadowsweet, yellow iris or tussocky sedges the area should be selected under criterion **H18** Fens, swamps, bogs and reedbeds.

Marshy grassland corresponds to code B5 in phase 1 terminology.

H9 Acid grassland, NVC U1, U2, U4. Threshold to qualify as Lowland acid grassland BAP priority habitat⁵ (and LWS status) requires a minimum of:

- *Three 'occasional' acid grassland/heathland indicator species (from table 3).*

OR

- *Four 'rare' acid grassland/heathland indicators (from table 3).*

Where the above minimum thresholds are just met the habitat is classified as 'good quality semi-improved acid grassland' and corresponds to code B1.2 in phase 1 terminology. Where the above thresholds are clearly exceeded the habitat is likely to correspond to code B1.1 in phase 1 (unimproved acid grassland). Lowland acid grassland is often present in mosaics with Lowland heath. It occurs on enclosed land below approximately 300m (although particularly good examples may be considered if they lie above 300m and are enclosed). Above 300m unenclosed acid grassland is likely to be either degraded upland heath (<0.5m peat) or degraded blanket bog (>0.5m peat) and should be assessed against these criteria.

H10 Calcareous grassland, Examples of calcareous grassland in Cheshire (post industrial sites) do not generally conform to existing NVC communities. Threshold to qualify as Lowland calcareous grassland BAP priority habitat⁵ (and LWS status) requires a minimum of:

- *Four ‘occasional’ indicator species (from table 3), at least 3 of which are listed as calcareous grassland indicators.*

OR

- *Four ‘rare’ calcareous grassland indicators (from table 3).*

Where the above minimum thresholds are just met the habitat is classified as ‘good quality semi-improved calcareous grassland’ and corresponds to code B3.2 in phase 1 terminology. Where the above thresholds are clearly exceeded the habitat is likely to correspond to code B3.1 in phase 1 (unimproved calcareous grassland).

H11 Restorable grassland⁵ – (moderately species rich semi-improved, where there is good potential to restore to BAP quality). Threshold to qualify as restorable grassland habitat⁵ (and LWS status) requires a minimum of:

- *Four 4 ‘occasional’ indicator species present from table 3, but 2 or fewer occur from the lists given for neutral/acid/marshy/calcareous grassland.*

Restorable semi-improved grassland should have less than 30% cover of white clover and rye grass and generally host at least 3 of the following grasses: common bent, crested dog’s tail, false oat grass, meadow fescue, meadow foxtail, red fescue, sweet vernal grass, tufted hair grass (rarer grasses more typical of unimproved grassland may be counted).

This criterion includes degraded examples of the above NVC communities e.g. more species rich examples of MG1, MG6, MG9, MG10, MG11, MG13. The latter two are typical of coastal or floodplain grazing marsh and may be selected under criterion **H17**.

Where the above minimum threshold of indicator species are present the habitat is classified as ‘good quality semi-improved grassland of moderate species richness’⁵ and corresponds to either code B1.2, B2.2 or B3.2 in phase 1 terminology.

H12 Undetermined species rich grassland, Threshold to qualify as BAP priority grassland habitat⁵ (and LWS status) requires a minimum of:

- *Four ‘occasional’ indicator species (from table 3), only one of which may be a semi-improved indicator.*

OR

- *Any four ‘rare’ neutral, marshy, acid or calcareous grassland indicators (from table 3).*

This type of grassland is still considered BAP priority habitat as indicator species are interchangeable⁵. Species rich arable field margins may be selected using this criterion providing they are not sown.

Sown wildflower grasslands may qualify under this criterion once they have proved to be sustainable e.g. retaining a species-rich sward approximately 20 years after sowing.

Where the above minimum thresholds are just met the habitat is classified as 'good quality semi-improved grassland'⁵ and is likely to best correspond to code B2.2 in phase 1 terminology. Where the above thresholds are clearly exceeded the habitat is likely to correspond to code B2.1 in phase 1.

H13 Lowland heathland – dry, may correspond to NVC H1, H2, H4, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, H12, H16, H18 (usually present as a mosaic with acid grassland **H9**)

Lowland heath generally occurs below 300m. There should be at least 25% cover of heathers and other dwarf shrubs with fine grasses, wildflowers and lichens in a complex mosaic. Areas with less than 25% dwarf shrub may qualify under criterion **H9** Acid grassland.

H14 Lowland heathland – wet, may correspond to NVC M15, M16 (wet heath may grade to wetter, sphagnum rich habitat which should be recorded as **H18**)

Lowland heath generally occurs below 300m. There should be at least 25% cover of heathers and other dwarf shrubs with fine grasses, wildflowers and lichens in a complex mosaic. Areas with less than 25% dwarf shrub may qualify under criterion **H9** Acid grassland.

H15 Upland heathland, may correspond to NVC M3, M15, M17, M18, M19, M20 (where wet upland active bog with bog mosses and cottongrass record as **H18**)

Upland heath generally occurs above 300m, on <0.5m of peat and above the line of enclosure. Above 600m (tree-line) it is considered to be a montane heath. On peats depths > 0.5m it is considered to be blanket bog (**H18**). There should be at least 25% cover of dwarf shrubs including heathers, bilberry, crowberry and western gorse.

Other grasslands

Roadside verges can be selected as LWS where they qualify under the grassland criteria. The calcareous grasslands on post-industrial sites e.g. those associated with the salt industry in mid-Cheshire, are recognised in the LBAP and may qualify under **H10** or **H12**.

Excluded are:

- Sites sown from a seed mix. However these sites may qualify once they have proved to be sustainable e.g. retaining a species-rich sward approximately 20 years after sowing. (Sown sites may be important habitats for terrestrial invertebrates and should be assessed against the species criteria. Such sites may also qualify under criterion **H26** Accessible natural greenspace.)
- Areas of degraded heath and mire above 300m where dwarf shrubs are less than frequent in **species poor** grassland (typically with bent and fine leaved fescues, mat

grass and purple moor grass). But consider if likely to qualify as waxcap grassland (H16).

Condition

The above criteria list the **minimum** thresholds required for a site to be considered as BAP priority habitat (or restorable to BAP priority habitat – **H11**) and to qualify as a LWS. A number of grassland sites exceed these quality thresholds and are therefore considered to be in ‘favourable condition’, which in phase 1 terminology is likely to be classified as ‘unimproved’. For neutral and marshy grassland ‘favourable condition’ requires the presence of at least two frequent and two occasional indicator species (not including those listed as semi-improved indicators). For acid grassland there should be at least one frequent indicator and three occasional and for calcareous grassland there should be at least two frequent indicators and three occasional. The amount of scrub and undesirable species such as thistle and dock will also affect the condition assessment. Further information is given by Defra⁵

Justification

Semi-natural grassland and heathland can be hundreds or even thousands of years old and many sites have survived due to a long history of traditional management practices. Such habitats often support rich species assemblages, both above and below ground, with complex webs of beneficial associations of flowering plants, soil mycorrhizae and invertebrates. This complexity means that such habitats are difficult or impossible to replace once destroyed, yet semi-natural lowland grassland is being lost faster than any other habitat type in the UK. As a consequence of this rapid loss semi-natural grassland supports more priority species than any other habitat.

Due to the twin pressures of intensification of landuse and neglect Cheshire has lost 99% of its species rich grassland compared to a national average of 97% and there are now less than 60 hectares of lowland heath remaining in the county. For this reason all remaining areas of these important habitats should be considered for site selection.

Dry and wet lowland heaths and *Alopecurus – Sanguisorba* meadows (NVC MG4) are internationally important EU Annex 1 habitats.

H16 Waxcap grasslands – Local BAP habitat

Sites should be selected as LWS where²⁴:

- they host one or more of the following: *Hygrocybe calptriformis*, *Hygrocybe punicea*, *Hygrocybe ovina*, *Hygrocybe ingrata*, *Hygrocybe spadicea* (BAP and British Red list species)

OR

- they host at least **8** Waxcap species identified on a single visit
- they host at least **12** Waxcap species (from table 4) identified on multiple visits

Two visits are recommended during the fruiting period, mid-Sept to mid-November

Guidance²⁴

"Waxcap grassland" is so called because it is the specific habitat of a distinct assemblage of macrofungi which includes members of the genus *Hygrocybe*, otherwise known as waxcaps. The particular character of this habitat is that it is long-standing, unimproved, nutrient poor, well-drained, semi-natural grassland. It can occur in a variety of situations e.g. as pastures, reservoir embankments, churchyards or old cricket pitches. The sward is usually kept short by grazing or mowing and can be mossy. Given the low nutrient levels, waxcap grasslands often have a rich vascular plant flora. Indeed because of this they may be selected as Local Wildlife Sites even if their mycological importance is unappreciated. However, waxcap grasslands may also be botanically impoverished and thus their conservation value could be overlooked altogether.

To determine whether a grassland site should be selected as a Local Wildlife Site for its mycological importance, and to complement the criteria suggested for the selection of grassland sites as SSSIs based on mycological interest²³ these LWS selection criteria have been based primarily on the *Hygrocybe* (waxcap) species present.

There are several other fungal families whose species are also grassland specialists, and which occur alongside the *Hygrocybe* species in the distinct assemblages of macrofungi found in waxcap grasslands. These are the Clavariaceae (Fairy Clubs), Entolomataceae (Pink Gills) and Geoglossaceae (Earth Tongues). Although threshold figures are not provided for these species here, they should be identified and recorded if possible and will serve to further confirm the importance of a site (see Table 4 for several examples).

Justification

Grassland specialist fungi are vulnerable primarily through loss, fragmentation or changes to management of their grassland habitat. Research suggests that waxcap grasslands would take decades to re-establish. Evidence from surveys indicates that the UK is particularly important for grassland fungi compared with other European countries. Many species relatively common in the UK are on one or more European red lists. The UK therefore has an international responsibility for the conservation of these fungi and their special grassland habitat.

H17 Coastal and Floodplain grazing marsh -UK BAP priority habitat

Areas of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh that are subject to seasonal inundation should be selected. Areas of floodplain hosting a semi-natural, predominantly grassland flora that have the potential to be seasonally inundated should be selected. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance and Justification

Floodplains which retain a high water table for at least part of the year provide important habitat for populations of over wintering wildfowl and breeding waders. Where ditches retain water these can provide important habitat for populations of dragonflies, water voles and specialised wetland flora.

Coastal and floodplain grassland can be species poor (typically NVC communities MG9, MG10, MG11, MG13)⁸ with species such as Yorkshire fog, tufted hair grass, soft rush, creeping bent, common fleabane and silverweed. However there may be areas with a richer flora which also meet the criteria for wetlands/grasslands. Where this is the case all criteria that are met should be recorded in addition to **H17**. If the site is predominantly fen it should be selected under criterion **H18** rather than as floodplain grazing marsh.

Many floodplains are no longer seasonally inundated due to changes in water management, however if the site retains a semi-natural, predominantly grassland flora and has the potential to be restored to grazing marsh, then it should be selected as a LWS.

H18 Fens, swamps, bogs and reedbeds - Fens UK BAP priority habitat, Lowland raised bog UK BAP priority habitat, Reedbeds UK BAP priority habitat, (contains EU Annex 1 habitat)

Areas of fens, swamps, reedbeds, lowland raised bogs and blanket bogs with sphagnum moss, cotton grasses or abundant tall vegetation such as common reed, tall sedges and grasses or wetland plants from table 5 should be selected as LWS. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance

Wetland communities exist on soil that is waterlogged with the water table close to, or above the surface for most of the year. Fens are wetlands found on flood plains, on the fringes of open water, in valleys and basin-like depressions and around springs and flushes. Fens occur on both peat and mineral soils. Lowland raised bogs are found in similar locations but are only fed by rainwater and always occur on peat. Blanket bog is present in the uplands usually between 250 and 600m above sea level lying on >0.5m of peat (<0.5m it is considered to be upland heath).

Fens encompass a wide range of wetland communities including narrow fringes of tall herb vegetation (e.g. meadowsweet, yellow flag iris) alongside water bodies, sphagnum rich flushes and areas of tall swamp vegetation with common reed or sedges. Upland blanket bog and Lowland raised bogs are peatland communities dominated by bog mosses, cotton grasses and heathers. Schwingmoor is a very rare habitat developed from a raft of peat vegetation sitting on top of open water.

This criterion may correspond with the following NVC communities² which often occur in complex mosaics with marshy grasslands, wet heathland, wet woodland and open water.

M18, M17, (also M1, 2, 3, 15, 19, 20, 25) - raised bog communities.

M1-14, M18, 19, 27, S1-28, - fen and swamp communities

M17-20, M25 – upland blanket bog whether it is active or not.

Excluded are:

- Large/significant areas dominated by willowherb, butterbur, nettle or invasives such as Himalyan balsam.
- Areas of upland blanket bog which no longer contain semi-natural bog vegetation unless such areas are important for the protection and/or enhancement of the adjacent bog.
- Areas of degraded heath and mire above 300m where dwarf shrubs are less than frequent in **species poor** grassland (typically with bent and fine leaved fescues, mat grass and purple moor grass).

Justification

The wetlands of the Cheshire plain form part of a unique and internationally important landscape known as the 'Meres and Mosses Natural Area' which formed as glaciers retreated after the last ice age. Several wetlands have their origins in a post industrial landscape following extraction of sand and salt, whilst others sit on river floodplains such as the Mersey and the Dee.

These fragile landscapes with their suite of specialised wetland species, are just a fragment of their former size. Losses have occurred as land has been drained for agriculture and development, or as a result of diffuse pollution. Further losses have occurred as changes in traditional agricultural practices have led to the scrubbing over and drying out of former wetlands. In the uplands of east Cheshire the extent of blanket bog has been reduced through overgrazing, burning and pollution although restoration projects are helping to reverse the decline.

Reedbeds are amongst the most important habitats for birds in the UK. They support a distinctive breeding bird assemblage including nationally rare Red Data Birds such as the bittern, marsh harrier, Cetti's warbler and bearded tit. They also provide roosting and feeding sites for migratory species and are used as roost sites for several raptor species in winter. Reedbeds are also important havens for invertebrates, particularly moths and beetles.

Upland blanket bog, Lowland raised bogs and closely related 'Transition mires' are all present in Cheshire and are internationally important EU Annex 1 habitats.

H19 Meres, lakes, reservoirs, canals – Eutrophic standing water UK BAP priority habitat, Mesotrophic lakes UK BAP priority habitat (contains European Annex 1 habitat)

- **Any mesotrophic or naturally eutrophic lake, mere, reservoir or canal greater than 2ha in size with an abundance of native floating, submerged and emergent plants should be selected. Qualifying emergent species are listed in table 5. Marshy grassland species may also be present.**
- **Any mere or lake which supports species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.**

Guidance

Mesotrophic lakes and meres have relatively low levels of plant nutrients whereas naturally eutrophic standing waters have plentiful nutrients. Mesotrophic water bodies are rare and are now normally confined to the margins of upland areas. In Cheshire much of the open water is highly eutrophic due to artificially increased levels of phosphorous and nitrogen leading to an increase in algae and a loss of other aquatic organisms.

Where the vegetation (or other aquatic species assemblages) suggests the level of nutrient enrichment is lower, the site should be selected as a LWS. Naturally eutrophic waters can be identified by the presence of aquatic species such as pondweeds, spiked watermilfoil, yellow water lily and stoneworts and are often fringed by common reed⁸.

Reservoirs and canals may also be considered under this category, so long as they meet the selection criteria by supporting an abundance of native floating, submerged and emergent plants. Where this is not the case such sites may qualify under the species selection criteria or **H26** Accessible natural greenspace or **H24** Wildlife corridors/buffers.

There are various corresponding aquatic, swamp and fen NVC communities² including OV28-OV35.

Justification

The meres of the Cheshire plain form part of a unique and internationally important landscape known as the 'Meres and Mosses Natural Area' which formed as glaciers retreated after the last ice age. Many of Cheshire's lakes have their origins in a post industrial landscape following extraction of sand and salt and have since developed into important wildlife habitats.

Naturally eutrophic lakes are internationally important EU Annex 1 habitats.

H20 Ponds and ditches – contains UK BAP priority habitat

All seasonal or permanent ponds or ditches of <2ha should be selected as LWS providing one or more of the following criteria are met:

- **High value⁵ ponds* or ditches which support species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 and are dependent on the pond.**
- **Ponds or ditches which sit within 250m of a high value pond or ditch, which have a strong likelihood of hosting the qualifying species or species assemblages.**
- **All ponds which sit within 250m of a high value pond where they form part of ‘an exceptional pond density or pond network**’.**
- **Ponds/pond clusters* or ditches with at least 9 species⁹ of native floating or submerged aquatic or emergent wetland species and a good physical structure***. Qualifying emergent species are listed in table 5. Marshy grassland species from table 3 may be substituted.**

*Including all ponds within the **immediate** cluster (with connectivity of water bodies at times of high water levels) unless there is a reason to exclude.

**According to Pondlife

***Excludes ponds where the majority of the flora has been introduced unless the pond has a good physical structure/water quality, with conditions suitable for supporting healthy populations of invertebrates or amphibians or breeding wetland birds. Ponds stocked with high numbers of fish are unlikely to meet this requirement.

Guidance

The most valuable ponds/pond clusters have a diverse flora and a good physical structure with areas of open water and a good marginal marsh. The selected area must contain the whole pond (or pond cluster) and sufficient habitat to enable the species or species assemblages to be maintained as a minimum viable population. Where this cannot be estimated a minimum 6 metre riparian zone around the pond should be selected. Where ponds host *good* breeding populations of great crested newts (refer to criterion **S5**), any habitat suitable for foraging which sits within 250m of the pond could be considered for selection.

Ditches can be considered as linear ponds and should be selected as LWS where they meet the above criterion. Ditches which do not meet the above criterion may meet criterion **H24** Wildlife corridors/buffers. Where a pond is part of another habitat (e.g. part of a larger wetland), or was selected using species criteria, all qualifying criteria should be listed on the site citation, including **H20**.

There are various corresponding aquatic, swamp and fen NVC communities² including OV28-OV35.

The criteria for selecting ponds have been set following an audit of Local Wildlife Sites in Cheshire West and Chester LA³⁵ and subsequent review of the quality of ponds present on these sites.

Justification

Cheshire has approximately 16,000¹⁵ ponds which is approximately 10% of the total number for England and Wales¹⁰. Most are farm ponds many of which originate from flooded marl pits. Today only 40% of those existing in 1870 remain¹⁰ and numbers are continuing to decline through natural succession, deliberate infilling and runoff from agricultural practices.

Ponds often sit within intensively managed grasslands and provide important stepping stones for the movement of wetland species through the landscape. They also provide open water for birds and mammals to drink from and feeding areas for bats. In south Cheshire ponds form an integral part of the internationally important landscape known as the 'Meres and Mosses Natural Area'.

H21 Rivers – contains UK BAP priority and European Annex 1 habitat

All *near natural*² sections of rivers and larger streams will be selected as LWS where they display one or more of the following features:

- Display signs of active erosion and /or meandering, such as extensive areas of gravel, pebble and sand beds, eroding cliffs or the presence of ox bow lakes. Many of these features will be unvegetated reflecting their dynamic nature.
- Support an abundance of water crowfoots (*Ranuncion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation – a European Annex 1 habitat)
- Support invertebrate species that are strongly indicative of river shingle.
- Support species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13.

Guidance and justification

The LWS should include all areas of the active river system such as floodplains, ox bow lakes and ponds which were formed as part of the natural river evolution process. Consideration should be given to areas of historic floodplain which may be essential to the functioning of the river system². In the absence of adjacent qualifying areas a 6 metre riparian zone from the top of the riverbank should be included.

Sections of the river of >250m away from any qualifying features should be excluded unless there is potential for re-colonisation or restoration, for example when considering the restoration of areas of the river which sit between two qualifying sections.

Sections of several rivers in Cheshire support an abundance of river water crowfoot. These are internationally important Annex 1 habitats and therefore should be selected as LWS.

There are various corresponding aquatic, swamp and fen NVC communities including A2, A8-9, A11-20, S4-9, S11-14, S16-19, S22 and others². Where there is a good marginal vegetation present but the above river criterion is not met, the site should be selected under **H18** Fens, swamps, bogs and reedbeds.

Excluded are:

Canals
Ditches

H22 Rock outcrop and stone structures – contains LBAP habitat and UK BAP priority habitat

Areas of rock, scree and stone structures supporting a rich assemblage of ferns, lichens and bryophytes will be selected as LWS. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance and justification

This type of vegetation can occur in areas of low atmospheric pollution and is associated with acidic rock surfaces (both sedimentary and igneous), usually at moderate altitudes below 600m. Often these surfaces are found on man-made structures such as stone walls and gravestones, but also on glacial erratics which are pieces of rock that differ from the native rock of the area. The vegetation may correspond with the NVC U21 community.

Rock ledges and cliff faces which are inaccessible to grazing animals often develop a specialised flora and support rare species. Such habitats may host numerous terrestrial invertebrates such as beetles, diptera and spiders. Raptors such as the peregrine falcon also favour this particular habitat.

H23 Open mosaics on previously developed land- UK BAP priority habitat

Sites should be selected that fulfil the following criterion (where other habitat criteria are not met):

- **The site supports species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13.**

Where the above is not fulfilled all of the following must apply²:

- **The site is an open mosaic habitat of at least 0.25ha.**
- **There is a known history of disturbance or evidence material has been added or removed.**
- **The vegetation comprises early successional communities of mainly stress tolerant species such as annuals, mosses/liverworts, lichens, ruderals, inundation species, open grassland, flower rich grassland, heathland.**
- **The site contains some loose bare substrate (very small areas will qualify).**

Guidance and justification

Open mosaics may include areas of scattered scrub or other communities such as reedbed or open water however early successional communities should comprise the majority of the habitat. Such communities often contain numerous niches within a relatively small area and can be particularly important for invertebrates, reptiles and amphibians with many sites hosting rare or declining species. Open mosaic vegetation sites may also be important for birds such as little ringed plover, skylark and grey partridge. These primary successions are generally rare in the wider landscape and may persist for decades without active management as edaphic conditions can severely limit plant growth. However with appropriate management these sites can persist indefinitely. The plant species of such areas are often declining in the wider countryside but there are also likely to be exotic species which may contribute to the value of the site for invertebrates and birds. Typical sites include disused quarries, former railway sidings and landfill sites. Such sites tend to be concentrated in urban or urban fringes or former industrial landscapes.

All selection criteria that apply should be recorded.

H24 Wildlife corridors/buffers

Areas of land including hedges and ditches may be selected for inclusion within (or extension to) LWS where they fulfil at least one of the following:

- **Provide a physical link between two or more areas of high wildlife value and has favourable conditions for the movement of species between these habitats.**
- **Provide a buffer zone protecting vulnerable sites from disturbance, pollution or development/recreational pressure.**
- **Provide additional buffering habitat for species associated with existing wildlife sites.**
- **Provide a significant physical extension to an area of high wildlife value and has favourable conditions for the movement of species out into the wider countryside.**

Guidance and Justification

The movement of species through the countryside is vital for the sustainability of ecosystems by facilitating the genetic exchange of species and enabling movement in response to climate change²¹. Important wildlife sites should be connected to other wildlife habitats and the wider countryside^{11, 21}, although it is recognised that some sites may consist of fragments of discontinuous habitat which cannot be linked.

Sites should be selected as LWS using criterion **H24** where they fail to meet other selection criteria but have the potential to act as wildlife corridors. This criterion can also be used to buffer wildlife sites from existing or potential factors that may adversely affect the site, or to provide additional habitat for species associated with an existing wildlife site.

Hedges and ditches of *high value* may meet criteria **H20** Ponds and ditches or **H25** Hedges.

H25 High value hedges – UK BAP priority habitat

***High value*⁵ species rich hedges at least 20m in length should be selected as LWS where either of the following apply:**

- If they have a least 4 native woody species in a 30metre section within 2m of the centre of the hedge (excluding bramble and honeysuckle)²
- Or
- A high biodiversity value within the hedge and surrounding ground flora.

Guidance and Justification

Many hedges are protected by the hedgerow regulations and should not require further protection; however *high value*⁵ species rich hedges can be considered for selection. Such hedges are likely to be ancient and may date back to before the enclosures act and are usually associated with historic features such as green lanes, banks, ditches, walls or relic woodland boundaries. They often provide refuges for species such as woodland plants, butterflies, moths, farmland birds, bats, amphibians and dormice and may contain ancient or veteran trees. Adjacent verges, ditches and field margins should also be included within the LWS boundary.

Hedges of lower value may meet criterion **H24** Wildlife corridors/buffers.

H26 Accessible natural greenspace

Sites should be selected as LWS under criterion H26 when the social/aesthetic/educational interest of the site derives from the wildlife features of the site.

Guidance

Where local space provides primarily for social and community benefits *not* related to a site's nature conservation interest, it should *not* be selected as a LWS, but should be recognised for these in relation to local open space policies¹¹. The Open Space Strategy should make provision elsewhere for the demand for other functions which would have an adverse effect on Local Sites' biodiversity or geological value¹¹.

The social/aesthetic/educational values of a site *related to nature* include:

- Recorded biological history (especially valuable as habitats change with climate change).
- Opportunities for public access for appreciation of nature.
- Educational value in relation to nature (both formal and informal and at all ages/levels).

H27 Mosaics

This criterion is only to be used to select mosaic sites which fail to reach the minimum size specified in the habitat criteria (e.g. woodlands which have a size threshold). The total area of the site must be equivalent to the minimum size specified for the component habitat. The majority of the site must meet the LWS criteria. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance

Where a habitat mosaic complements/buffers an adjacent LWS through provision of additional habitat for species associated with the LWS, it should be incorporated into the existing LWS or selected independently using criterion **H24 Wildlife corridors/buffers**.

All selection criteria that apply should be recorded.

H28 Saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats, UK BAP priority habitat, contains European Annex 1 habitat.

All zones of saltmarsh and intertidal mudflats which support characteristic flora shall be selected. All areas of anthropogenic or naturally occurring inland saltmarsh/salt meadows should be selected. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected

Guidance

There is a natural zonation of plant communities from species poor lower saltmarsh at the edge of estuarine mudflats through the mid saltmarsh to the upper tidal limit swamp or transitional communities. Salt tolerant plants of the lower salt marsh are adapted to regular immersion by the tides, whereas upper salt marsh plants may only be inundated occasionally. Mudflats and saltmarsh are particularly important habitats for wading birds and wildfowl but also provide feeding grounds for species such as skylark and meadow pipit.

Sites which support characteristic species of mud flats and saltmarsh should be selected as LWS. Accreting areas should be included as they develop the characteristic flora and fauna. Many sites would additionally qualify on the grounds of species criteria, particularly bird assemblages. Where this is the case the relevant species criteria should also be recorded. Where coastal grassland is present this should be assessed using criterion **H17**.

Justification

The majority of saltmarsh and mudflats of the Dee and Mersey estuaries are internationally important areas and protected through legally designated sites including SPAs, SSSIs and SACs. However some areas remain unprotected and should be considered for LWS selection if they support characteristic species.

Inland salt marsh and salt meadows are post-industrial habitats which have developed following salt extraction. There are a small number in mid-Cheshire. Very rarely such habitats may occur naturally due to brine springs enabling the development of saltmarsh vegetation. Inland salt marsh is a European Annex 1 habitat.

H29 Sand dunes and estuarine rocky habitats UK BAP priority habitat (contains Annex 1 habitat)

All sites that support characteristic species of sand dunes or estuarine rocky habitats shall be selected. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance

Sand dunes depend upon dune building grasses such as marram grass which traps sand above the high water mark. There is a natural zonation of plant communities from species poor lower dunes through to the more stable upper dunes which can be species rich.

The reduced salinity of an estuarine rocky habitat allows specialised communities to develop, often with rare species of algae and lichens. Estuarine rocky habitat is a European Annex 1 habitat.

Sites which support characteristic species of dunes and estuarine rocky habitats should be selected as LWS. Accreting areas should be included as they develop the characteristic flora and fauna. Many sites also would qualify on the grounds of species criteria, particularly bird assemblages. Where this is the case the relevant species criteria should also be recorded.

Justification

The majority of sand dunes and rocky habitats of the Dee and Mersey estuaries are internationally important areas and protected through legally designated sites including SPAs, SSSIs and SACs. However some areas remain unprotected and should be considered for LWS selection if they support characteristic species.

H30 Maritime cliff and slopes UK BAP priority habitat

All sites that support characteristic species of maritime cliff and slopes should be selected as LWS. Any site supporting species or species assemblages which qualify under the species selection criteria S 1-13 should be selected.

Guidance

Maritime cliff and slope comprises sloping to vertical faces on the coastline. This habitat broadly fits into one of two categories:

- Soft cliffs and slopes which can be colonised relatively easily by maritime or inland species particularly grassland, ruderal and scrub vegetation.
- Hard cliffs which may be rich in lichens but have fewer higher plants apart from on ledges.

The vegetation can vary substantially depending upon substrate and prevailing conditions and can extend inland for a considerable distance to the limit of salt spray deposition. The edge of this habitat on the seaward side extends to the limit of the supralittoral zone and includes the splash zone lichens.

Sites which support characteristic species of maritime cliff and slope habitats should be selected as LWS. The boundaries should include all cliff top areas which are influenced by salt deposition. Sites may also qualify on the grounds of species criteria. Where this is the case the relevant species criteria should also be recorded.

Justification

Maritime cliffs and slopes are particularly important for the species they support. Hard cliffs may support populations of breeding seabirds and characteristic species of lichens. Soft cliffs may host populations of sandmartins as well as rare invertebrates including species of solitary bees, wasps, weevils and beetles.

The majority of maritime cliff and slope habitats of the Dee and Mersey estuaries are internationally important areas and protected through legally designated sites including SPAs, SSSIs and SACs. However some areas remain unprotected and should be considered for LWS selection if they support characteristic species.

Table 1 Class 1 Ancient Woodland indicator species for Cheshire⁴.

Taxon	Vernacular	Comment
<i>Allium ursinum</i>	Ramsons	May also be found in non-ancient alder woodland (NVC W6d)
<i>Campanula latifolia</i>	Giant bellflower	Blue flowered form only
<i>Campanula trachelium</i>	Nettle-leaved bellflower	
<i>Carex strigosa</i>	Thin-spiked wood sedge	
<i>Carex sylvatica</i>	Wood sedge	
<i>Chrysosplenium alternifolium</i>	Alternate-leaved golden saxifrage	
<i>Crataegus oxyacanthoides</i>	Woodland hawthorn	Beware of plantings
<i>Daphne laureola</i>	Spurge laurel	Beware of plantings
<i>Elymus caninus</i>	Bearded couch	
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle	
<i>Festuca altissima</i>	Wood fescue	
<i>Gagea lutea</i>	Yellow star of Bethlehem	
<i>Galium odoratum</i>	Woodruff	
<i>Hordelymus europaeus</i>	Wood barley	
<i>Lathraea squamaria</i>	Toothwort	
<i>Lathyrus sylvestris</i>	Wild pea	
<i>Luzula pilosa</i>	Hairy woodrush	
<i>Melica uniflora</i>	Wood melick	
<i>Paris quadrifolia</i>	Herb Paris	
<i>Poa nemoralis</i>	Wood meadow grass	
<i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i>	Solomon's seal	Beware 'Solomon's Walrus' <i>Polygonatum x hybridum</i> – the garden form
<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Hard shield fern	Also in relict hedges
<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	Soft shield fern	
<i>Prunus padus</i>	Bird cherry	Also in relict hedges. Beware of plantings.
<i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>	Purging buckthorn	Also in relict hedges
<i>Sanicula europaea</i>	Sanicle	
<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>	Wild service tree	Also in relict hedges
<i>Stellaria neglecta</i>	Greater chickweed	
<i>Stellaria nemorum</i>	Wood stitchwort	
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	Small-leaved lime	Beware of plantings
<i>Viola odorata</i>	Sweet violet	
<i>Viola reichenbachiana</i>	Early dog violet	

Species such as greater stitchwort, barren strawberry, dog's mercury, yellow archangel and wood speedwell (class 2 indicators) are often found in ancient woodlands but may survive long periods after a wood has been felled and subsequently re-invade secondary woodland.

Table 2 Minimum tree girth for trees to be considered 'very large'⁵.

Tree girth (minimum)	Species
80 cm	Holly
133cm	Rowan
160cm	Birch spp. hawthorn, field maple
200cm	Alder, white/crack willow
213cm	Goat willow, hornbeam, holm oak
266cm	Scots pine
320cm	Ash, small-leaved lime, beech
373cm	Elm, sycamore
400cm	Oaks, yew, sweet chestnut

These measurements represent a guide and where trees have obviously lost girth due to great age this should be taken into account

Table 3 Indicators and thresholds for grassland and heathland UK BAP priority habitat (Defra⁵).

Indicator species Refer to descriptions for H1-H12 for full explanation. In summary DAFOR 'occasional' occurrence of any 4 species from list below denotes LWS status grassland. For acid grassland the threshold is 3 'occasional' acid grassland indicators. Indicators should not be confined to field edges	Habitat type (indicators are all interchangeable⁵)				
	Neutral grassland (lowland meadows and other neutral grassland). At least 4 DAFOR 'rare' neutral indicators (or 3 'occasional' neutral indicators plus one other 'occasional' indicator from the table).	Marshy grassland (purple moor grass and rush pasture) At least 4 DAFOR 'rare' marshy indicators (or 3 'occasional' marshy indicators plus one other 'occasional' indicator from the table).	Acid grassland or acid grassland/heathland mosaics (dry and wet) At least 4 DAFOR 'rare' or 3 'occasional' acid indicators should be present.	Lowland Calcareous grassland At least 4 DAFOR 'rare' calcareous indicators (or 3 'occasional' calcareous indicators plus one other 'occasional' indicator from the table).	Semi-improved grassland^a The presence of at least 4 DAFOR 'occasional' indicators denotes grassland which may be restored to BAP quality. Indicators should not be confined to field edges
Adder's tongue fern	✓				
Agrimony	✓				
Autumn hawkbit	✓				✓
Betony	✓		✓	✓	
Bilberry			✓		
Biting stonecrop			✓		
Bitter vetch	✓		✓		
Black knapweed	✓				
Black medick					✓
Bloody crane's-bill				✓	
Blue fleabane			✓		
Bog asphodel		✓	✓		
Bog pimpernel		✓			
Bristle club rush		✓			
Buck's-horn plantain			✓		
Bugle	✓	✓			
Bulbous buttercup					✓
Burnet saxifrage	✓				
Carline thistle				✓	
Clustered bellflower				✓	
Common bird's-foot trefoil	✓		✓	✓	
Common bistort	✓				
Common catsear					✓
Common centaury			✓	✓	
Common meadow-rue	✓				
Common rock-rose			✓	✓	
Common sorrel					✓
Common stork's-bill			✓		
Common valerian		✓			
Cotton grasses		✓	✓		
Cowberry			✓		

Cowslip	✓			✓	
Cranberry			✓		
Crowberry			✓		
Cuckoo flower					✓
Devilsbit scabious	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dropwort (s)	✓			✓	
Dyer's greenweed	✓				
Eyebrights	✓		✓	✓	
Fairy flax				✓	
Field scabious	✓			✓	
Field woodrush					✓
Gentians				✓	
Germander speedwell					✓
Globeflower		✓			
Goatsbeard	✓				
Greater bird's-foot trefoil	✓	✓			
Greater burnet	✓	✓			
Greater knapweed				✓	
Hairy violet				✓	
Harebell			✓	✓	
Heath bedstraw			✓		
Heath speedwell			✓		
Heathers ^b		✓	✓		
Hemp-agrimony		✓			
Hoary Plantain				✓	
Hoary Rock-rose				✓	
Horseshoe vetch				✓	
Jointed rushes		✓			
Kidney vetch				✓	
Lady's bedstraw	✓		✓	✓	
Lady's mantle sp.	✓				
Lesser hawkbit			✓	✓	
Lesser spearwort		✓			
Lesser trefoil					✓
Lesser water-parsnip		✓			
Lichens			✓		
Lousewort		✓	✓		
Marjoram				✓	
Marsh cinquefoil		✓			
Marsh hawk's-beard		✓			
Marsh marigold	✓	✓			
Marsh pennywort		✓			
Marsh valerian	✓	✓			
Marsh violet		✓			
Marsh/fen bedstraw	✓	✓			
Meadow buttercup					✓
Meadow rue		✓			
Meadow saxifrage	✓			✓	
Meadow thistle		✓			
Meadow vetchling	✓				

Meadowsweet	✓	✓			
Milkwort sp.	✓		✓	✓	
Mountain pansy			✓		
Mouse-ear hawkweed			✓	✓	
Narrow leaved water dropwort	✓	✓			
Orchids	✓	✓		✓	
Ox-eye daisy	✓			✓	
Parsley-pierts			✓		
Pepper saxifrage	✓				
Pignut	✓				
Purple Milk-vetch			✓	✓	
Ragged robin	✓	✓			
Red clover					✓
Restharrow				✓	
Ribwort plantain					✓
Rough hawkbit	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Salad burnet	✓			✓	
Saw-wort	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Selfheal					✓
Sheep's bit			✓		
Sheep's-sorrel			✓		
Shepherd's cress			✓		
Small sedges ^c	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Small scabious				✓	
Sneezewort	✓	✓			
Spagnum sp.		✓	✓		
Squinancywort				✓	
Stemless/Dwarf thistle				✓	
Sundew			✓		
Thyme-leaved sandwort				✓	
Thymes			✓		
Tormentil (s)		✓	✓		
Violets			✓		
Water avens	✓	✓			
Water mint	✓	✓			
Western gorse			✓		
Whorled caraway		✓			
Wild angelica		✓			
Wild basil				✓	
Wild strawberry				✓	
Wild Thyme			✓	✓	
Wood anemone	✓		✓		
Wood sage			✓		
Yarrow					✓
Yellow rattle	✓				
Yellow-wort				✓	

^aRestorable semi-improved grassland should generally host at least 3 of the following grasses: common bent, crested dog's tail, false oat grass, meadow fescue, meadow foxtail, red fescue, sweet vernal grass, tufted hair grass (rarer grasses typical of unimproved grassland also count) and should have less than 30% cover of white clover and rye grass.

^b Including cross leaved heath *Erica tetralix*, bell heather *Erica cinerea*, ling *Calluna vulgaris*.

^c Excluding hairy sedge *Carex hirta* .

Indicators should not be confined to field edges. 'Occasional' on the DAFOR scale of relative abundance equates to a minimum cover of 11% or the occurrence of a species in at least 3 random samples from a total of ten assessments⁵. Cheshire grassland axiophytes²⁸ not listed above and species listed under S13 can be considered as indicators.

Table 4 Cheshire waxcap grassland species

Species	Vernacular
<i>Hygrocybe colemanniana</i>	Toasted Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe fornicata</i>	Earthy Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe russocoriaceae</i>	Cedarwood Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe flavipes</i>	Yellow Foot Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe nitrata</i>	Nitrous Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe reidii</i>	Honey Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe pratensis</i> ³	Meadow Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe quieta</i>	Oily waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe vitellina</i>	
<i>Hygrocybe coccinea</i>	Scarlet Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe irrigata</i>	Slimy Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe insipida</i>	Spangle Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe glutinipes</i>	Glutinous Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe ceracea</i>	Butter Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe acutoconica</i>	Persistent Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe chlorophana</i>	Golden Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe laeta</i>	Heath Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe psittacina</i>	Parrot Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe virginea</i>	Snowy Waxcap
<i>Hygrocybe conica</i>	Blackening waxcap
+ any other <i>Hygrocybe</i> species	
Other examples of CHEG species which may be commonly encountered	
<i>Clavulinopsis corniculatus</i>	Meadow Coral
<i>Clavulinopsis helvola</i>	Yellow Club
<i>Clavulinopsis fusiformis</i>	Golden Spindles
<i>Clavaria fragilis</i>	White Spindles
<i>Entoloma conferendum</i>	Star Pinkgill
<i>Entoloma serrulatum</i>	Blue Edge Pinkgill

The table does not contain a complete list of *Hygrocybe* species but includes those which have been recorded in Cheshire. If several varieties of a species have been recorded at a site then these should not be counted separately e.g. *Hygrocybe pratensis* var. *pratensis* and *Hygrocybe pratensis* var. *pallida* should only be counted as one species. Where *Hygrocybe calyptriformis*, *Hygrocybe punicea*, *Hygrocybe ovina*, *Hygrocybe ingrata* or *Hygrocybe spadicea* (BAP and British red list) are present the site should qualify as a LWS.

Table 5

Indicator species for wetland – Cheshire list³²

Amphibious bistort	Marsh pennywort
Arrowhead (native only)	Marsh valerian
Bittersweet	Marsh woundwort
Blinks	Marsh/fen bedstraw
Bogbean	Marsh-marigold
Bog-mosses (<i>Sphagnum</i>)	Marsh yellow cress
Brooklime	Meadowsweet
Bur marigold (nodding, trifid),	Pondweeds (native – bog, broadleaved, curled, blunt leaved, small, red)
Bur-reeds	Ragged robin
Celery-leaved buttercup	Reed canary-grass
Clubrushes (grey, common, floating)	Reed sweet-grass
Common butterwort	Reedmace (common and lesser)
Common reed	Rushes (excluding soft/hard rush)
Common skullcap	Sedges
Cottongrass	Spearwort sp.
Cowbane	Speedwells (marsh, pink water, water),
Crowfoot sp.	Spiked water milfoil
Duckweeds (common, ivy leaved, fat, greater)	Spike rushes
Figwort (water)	St John's wort sp.
Flowering rush	Water cress
Fools water cress	Water dropworts
Frogbit	Forget-me-not (water and tufted)
Greater bladderwort	Horsetails (water and marsh)
Gypsywort	Valarian (common, marsh)
Hemp-Agrimony	Water mint(s)
Hornworts (soft, rigid),	Water pepper
Iris sp. (native only)	Water plantains (common, lesser water)
Lesser marshwort	Water purslane
Lesser water parsnip	Water violet
Loosestrife (yellow, purple)	Whorl grass
Marsh arrowgrass	Wild angelica
Marsh cinquefoil	Yellow water lily

Other emergent/wetland specialist species not appearing on this list may be considered if native

3. Species criteria

The criteria for species will be based on the following considerations:

Sites should be selected that support or have supported in the past 5 years:

- **Nationally or globally critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, or near threatened species according to IUCN guidelines. Or nationally rare or scarce according to non-IUCN designation.**
- **All species and habitats listed on the European Birds Directive and European Habitats directive.**
- **Locally rare or scarce plant species^{18,20} i.e. those which occur in:**
 - **≤ 6 sites in the county (rare). Approximates to ≤ 1% of tetrads/monads in Cheshire and should be based upon distribution records less than 20 years old.**
 - **≤ 7-16 sites in the county (scarce). Approximates to ≤ 1-3 % of tetrads/monads in Cheshire and should be based upon distribution records less than 20 years old.**
- **Edge of range species¹¹.**
- **Native species fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Schedules 5 and 8 (but refer to relevant species class).**
- **UK BAP or Local LBAP species – (but refer to relevant species class as not all BAP species necessarily qualify). Note the UK BAP has now been superseded by the S41 list (section 41 of the 2006 NERC act). The S41 list for England has all the species and habitats on the previous UK BAP which are present in England plus one additional species (hen harrier). As the UK BAP terminology is still widely recognised it has been used in this document and should be considered interchangeable with the S41 list.**
- **Species assemblages deemed to be important.** (The number of species which constitutes a 'locally outstanding assemblage' will be set for each species criterion).
- **≥ 0.5% of the British breeding population of any species.**

All qualifying population sizes/assemblages are best approximations according to current knowledge, however in many cases the data is poor or out of date. Where there is doubt expert opinion should always be taken into account.

The area of the site must contain sufficient habitat to enable the species to be maintained as a minimum viable population¹¹ (MVP). For animal species this approximates to a minimum of 50 *breeding* individuals (or a key life stage thereof) for the short term avoidance of inbreeding. A population of 500 is considered the MVP for the long term survival of many groups of species¹². These figures provide a cautionary guideline only as many other factors may influence survival.

S1 Butterflies

Sites should be selected that regularly support:

- Probable breeding populations of white letter hairstreak, small pearl bordered fritillary, small heath, wall, grayling or dingy skipper.

Or

- An assemblage of species with a minimum total score of 16 points²² calculated from table 6.

Guidance and justification

Sites which qualify for LWS status under criterion **S1** are also likely to qualify under the habitat selection criteria. All qualifying criteria should be recorded on the site citation.

Table 6

List of butterflies in the Cheshire region with their local, national or global significance

Species	Global status IUCN 2011	UK red list status ¹⁶ 2010	BAP status 2011	Tetrads in Cheshire (based on 2005-2009)	Points
Speckled Wood				401	1
Green-veined White				384	1
Red Admiral				382	1
Small Tortoiseshell				380	1
Peacock				365	1
Large White				359	1
Meadow Brown				355	1
Small White				332	1
Gatekeeper				332	1
Orange Tip				321	1
Comma				300	1
Holly Blue				205	1
Brimstone				203	2
Small Copper				185	2
Small Skipper				160	2
Large Skipper				156	2
Common Blue				151	2
Wall	Not evaluated	Near threatened	UK BAP	57	20
Purple Hairstreak				57	5
Small Heath	Not	Near	UK BAP	51	20

	evaluated	threatened			
White-letter Hairstreak	Not evaluated	Endangered	UK BAP	43	20
Green Hairstreak				33	5
Ringlet	Not evaluated		LBAP	28	5
Grayling	Least concern	Vulnerable	UK BAP	14	20
Dingy Skipper	Not evaluated	Vulnerable	UK BAP	10	20
Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary	Not evaluated	Near threatened	UK BAP	1	20

S2 Birds

Sites should be selected that support either:

- Any **regular** probable breeding or over wintering* bird species listed in table 7.
- Any **regular** over wintering population as listed in table 8.
- Any established colony as listed in table 8.
- At least 10 probable breeding species from tables 7 and 9 (these records can be from a single visit). Where a site is exceptional on a county-wide basis it may be selected with a lower number of breeding species.
- $\geq 0.5\%$ of the British breeding population of any species.

* Unless listed as breeding only

Guidance

For birds listed in tables 7 and 8 **regular** probable breeding/over wintering records should generally equate to data from any three years out of the preceding five years. However it is recognised that past records are not always available and where missing the presence of at least **five** additional probable breeding or overwintering species/populations (as described in tables 7, 8 and 9) is required for the site to qualify as a LWS.

Probable breeding evidence³³ includes:

Pair observed in suitable nesting habitat in breeding season; Permanent territory presumed through registration of territorial behaviour (song etc.) on at least two different days a week or more apart at the same place or many individuals on one day; Courtship and display (judged to be in or near potential breeding habitat - be cautious with wildfowl); Visiting probable nest site; Agitated behaviour or anxiety calls from adults suggesting probable presence of nest or young nearby; Brood patch on adult examined in the hand suggesting incubation; Nest building or excavating nest-hole.

Table 7 Rare or scarce bird species in the Cheshire region – probable breeding or* over wintering

Species	Global status IUCN 2011	UK Birds of conservation concern ³¹	Status 2011	Rare breeding birds 2004-2006 ³⁰ (<20 confirmed breeding pairs in Cheshire)	Scarce breeding birds 2004-2006 ³⁰ (20-100 confirmed breeding pairs in Cheshire)
Avocet	Least concern	Amber	Schedule 1		✓
Bearded tit	Least concern	Amber	Schedule 1	✓	
Bittern	Least concern	Red	UK BAP, Schedule 1	✓	
Black necked grebe	Least concern	Amber	LBAP, Schedule 1	✓	
Common Redstart	Least concern	Amber			✓

Corn bunting	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Cuckoo	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Dunlin*	Least concern	Red		✓	
Eurasian curlew	Near threatened	Amber	UK BAP	✓	
Gadwall	Least concern	Amber		✓	
Garganey*	Least concern	Amber	Schedule 1	✓	
Golden plover	Least concern	Amber		✓	
Goshawk*	Least concern	Green	Schedule 1	✓	
Hen harrier	Least concern	Red	S41 NERC, Schedule 1	✓	
Lesser spotted woodpecker	Least concern	Red	UK BAP		✓
Little ringed plover	Least concern	Green	Schedule 1	✓	
Long-eared owl	Least concern	Green		✓	
Marsh harrier	Least concern	Amber	Schedule 1	✓	
Marsh tit	Least concern	Red	UK BAP		✓
Merlin	Least concern	Amber	Schedule 1	✓	
Nightjar	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Peregrine	Least concern	Green	Schedule 1	✓	
Pied flycatcher	Least concern	Amber			✓
Pochard*	Least concern	Amber		✓	
Red grouse	Least concern	Amber	UK BAP		Estimate of 300 pairs in 2006 following reintroduction programme
Redshank	Least concern	Amber		✓	
Ring ouzel	Least concern	Red	UK BAP		✓
Short-eared owl	Least concern	Amber		✓	
Snipe	Least concern	Amber			✓
Tree pipit	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Turtle dove	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Twite	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Warblers*				Assemblages of 6+ probable breeding species	Assemblages of 6+ probable breeding species
Water rail*	Least concern	Green			✓
Whinchat	Least concern	Amber			✓
Willow tit	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Wood warbler	Least concern	Red	UK BAP	✓	
Woodcock*	Least concern	Amber		✓	
Woodlark	Least concern	Amber	Schedule 1	✓	
Yellow wagtail	Least concern	Red	UK BAP		✓

* Breeding only

Table 8 Rare, scarce and notable over wintering and colonial bird species in the Cheshire region

Species	Global Status IUCN 2011	UK Red list Birds of conservation concern	Local status Confirmed breeding tetrads ³⁰	Status 2011	Comment
Bewick's swan	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 5+ individuals
Black tailed godwit	Near threatened	Red	0	UK BAP. Schedule 1.	Passage sites and over wintering/ summering 50+ individuals.
Cormorant spp.	Least concern	Green	6		Established colonies only
Duck species					Regular over wintering sites with 5+ species of dabbling* ducks or 3+ species of diving** ducks
Greater white fronted goose	Least concern	Green	0	UK BAP	Regular over wintering 5+ individuals
Green sandpiper	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 3+ individuals
Grey heron	Least concern	Green	641 apparently occupied nests		Established colonies only
Gull species (any groups of any species)					Winter roost sites with 1000+ individuals
Jack snipe	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 5+ individuals
Light bellied brent goose (race <i>hrota</i>)	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 7+ individuals
Little egret	Least concern	Amber	2		Established colonies only
Pink footed goose	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 100+ individuals
Pintail	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 50+ individuals
Rook	Least concern	Green	205		Established colonies only (70+ nests)
Sand martin	Least concern	Amber	42		Established colonies only
Swift	Least concern	Amber	119		Established colonies only (20+ pairs)
Teal	Least concern	Amber	2		Regular over wintering 200+ individuals
Whooper swan	Least concern	Amber	0	Schedule 1	Regular over wintering 5+ individuals.
Wigeon	Least concern	Amber	0		Regular over wintering 200+ individuals

Dabbling ducks* – shelduck, mandarin, Eurasian wigeon, gadwall, Eurasian teal, mallard, pintail, shoveler. *Diving ducks* – pochard, goldeneye, red-breasted merganser, goosander, tufted duck.

Table 9 Notable birds in the Cheshire region - probable breeding

Species	Global Status IUCN 2011	UK Red list Birds of conservation concern	Local status Confirmed breeding tetrads ³⁰	Status 2011	Comment
Barn owl	Least concern	Amber	142	LBAP. Schedule 1	
Black headed gull	Least concern	Amber	13		
Bullfinch	Least concern	Amber	95	UK BAP	
Common sandpiper	Least concern	Amber	1		
Common tern	Least concern	Amber	0		10+ breeding pairs only
Common whitethroat	Least concern	Amber	282		
Dipper	Least concern	Green	13		
Dunnock	Least concern	Amber	428	UK BAP	Spp.occidentalis is endemic to the British Isles
Firecrest	Least concern	Amber	1	Schedule 1	
Grasshopper warbler	Least concern	Red	10	UK BAP	
Green woodpecker	Least concern	Amber	39		
Grey partridge	Least concern	Red	47	UK BAP	
Grey wagtail	Least concern	Amber	114		
House sparrow	Least concern	Red	559	UK BAP	
Kestrel	Least concern	Amber	183		
Kingfisher	Least concern	Amber	38	Schedule 1	
Lapwing	Least concern	Red	263	UK BAP	
Lesser redpoll	Not evaluated	Red	3	UK BAP	
Linnet	Least concern	Red	125	UK BAP	
Little grebe	Least concern	Amber	61		
Mallard	Least concern	Amber	499		
Meadow pipit	Least concern	Amber	70		
Mistle thrush	Least concern	Amber	380		
Oyster catcher	Least concern	Amber	45		
Reed bunting	Least concern	Amber	171	UK BAP	
Ringed plover	Least concern	Amber	10		
Shelduck	Least concern	Amber	29		
Shoveler	Least concern	Amber	3		
Skylark	Least concern	Red	141	UK BAP	
Song thrush	Least concern	Red	461	UK BAP	
Spotted flycatcher	Least concern	Red	101	UK BAP	
Starling	Least concern	Red	573	UK BAP	
Stock dove	Least concern	Amber	150		
Tree sparrow	Least concern	Red	182	UK BAP	
Tufted duck	Least concern	Amber	63		
Wheatear	Least concern	Amber	9		
Willow warbler	Least concern	Amber	163		
Yellowhammer	Least concern	Red	119	UK BAP	

S3 Mammals

Sites should be selected that regularly support:

- Likely breeding/hibernating populations of hazel dormouse, otter, Nathusius pipistrelle, lesser horseshoe bat, serotine bat.
- Likely breeding/hibernating populations of at least 2 species of bat.
- Assemblages of mammals from table 10 which score a total of 12 points.

In Wirral sites should be selected that support a breeding badger sett which has been occupied for any three years out of the preceding five years.

Warrington is a regionally key area for water voles, therefore any Warrington site that supports a likely breeding population should be selected.

Guidance and justification

Domestic gardens or buildings housing mammals will not be considered for LWS selection unless the site is critical to that species' survival in the borough, or supports exceptional populations⁹.

Temporary bat night roosts and feeding roosts should not be considered. The boundaries of any site selected for mammals should contain key foraging areas and commuting routes to such areas.

In contrast to the majority of Cheshire, Wirral badgers have a small, stable but not expanding population which struggles with fragmented habitat, development and significant levels of illegal persecution. Therefore in Wirral sites should be selected when they support a regular breeding badger sett.

The presence of water vole latrines indicates that there is a likely breeding population.

Table 10

List of mammals in the Cheshire region with their local, national or global significance

Mammal	Score based on local status (Cheshire mammal group)	Global Status IUCN 2011	UK Red list	BAP status 2011	Other
Common pipistrelle bat	2	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species
Soprano pipistrelle bat	2	Least concern		UKBAP	European protected species
Noctule bat	3	Least concern		UKBAP	European protected species
Brown long eared bat	3	Least concern		UK BAP	European protected species
Whiskered bat	3	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species

Brandts bat	3	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species
Daubentons bat	2	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species
Leislers bat	4	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species
Natterers bat	3	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species
Serotine bat	12	Least concern		LBAP	European protected species
Lesser horseshoe bat	12				
Nathusius pipistrelle	12				
Otter	12	Near threatened		UK BAP	European protected species
Hazel dormouse (native wild populations only)	12	Least concern		UK BAP	European protected species
Harvest mouse	4	Least concern		UK BAP	
Water vole	4	Least concern		UK BAP	Wildlife and Countryside Act
Mountain hare	4				
Red deer (not captive populations)	4				
Roe deer	3				
Polecat	3	Least concern		UK BAP	
European hedgehog	3	Least concern		UK BAP	
Brown hare	3	Least concern		UK BAP	
Badger	2	Least concern			Protection of Badgers act 1992 and protected from persecution under WCA 1981
Water shrew	3				
Bank vole	2				
Pygmy shrew	2				
Stoat	2				
Weasel	2				
Badger	2				
Field vole	1				
Wood mouse	1				
House mouse	1				
Common rat	1				
Rabbit	1				
Mole	1				
Common shrew	1				
Fox	1				

S4 Dragonflies and damselflies (*Odonata*)

Sites should be selected that regularly support either:

- Probable breeding populations of variable damselfly, common club-tail, downy emerald, golden-ringed dragonfly, white-legged damselfly, beautiful demoiselle, common hawker, black darter, black tailed skimmer, hairy dragonfly, white-faced darter.

OR

- Species assemblages (probable breeding) scoring 8 points or more from table 11.

Guidance and justification

The variable damselfly is 'near threatened' in the UK and the common club tail has a restricted distribution in Cheshire. Both species are listed on the LBAP and sites where either is probably breeding should be selected as a LWS.

All sites still supporting the endangered white faced darter should be selected as LWS, although this species is now thought to be extinct in Cheshire. Any sites supporting 'edge of range' species (white legged damselfly and golden ringed dragonfly) should be selected as LWS. Other notable species for the region include downy emerald, beautiful demoiselle, common hawker, black darter, black tailed skimmer and hairy dragonfly and where probably breeding sites should be selected as a LWS.

Table 11

List of *Odonata* in the Cheshire region which are of local, national or global significance

Vernacular	Species	Global status IUCN 2011 (where information available)	UK Status ¹⁷ 2008	BAP status 2011	Relative distribution and breeding status value for Cheshire (2006-2010) ²⁹	Score
Azure damselfly (Azure bluet)	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>		Least concern		1.6	1
Banded demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>		Least concern		3.6	4
Beautiful demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>		Least concern		33.3	10
Black darter	<i>Sympetrum danae</i>		Least concern		11.1	10
Black tailed skimmer	<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>		Least concern		7.1	10
Blue tailed	<i>Ischnura</i>		Least		1.8	1

damselfly (Common bluetail)	<i>elegans</i>		concern			
Broad bodied chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>		Least concern		3.3	4
Brown hawkler	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>		Least concern		2.2	1
Common blue damselfly (Common bluet)	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>		Least concern		2.5	1
Common club tailed	<i>Gomphus vulgatissimus</i>	Not evaluated	Near threatened	LBAP	25	10
Common darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	Least concern	Least concern		1.7	1
Common hawkler	<i>Aeshna juncea</i>		Least concern		11.1	10
Downy emerald	<i>Cordulia aenea</i>	Not evaluated	Least concern	LBAP	50	10
Emerald damselfly (Common spreadwing)	<i>Lestes sponsa</i>		Least concern		5.3	4
Emperor (Blue Emperor)	<i>Anax imperator</i>	Least concern	Least concern		2.3	1
Four spotted chaser	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>		Least concern		2.4	1
Golden-ringed dragonfly (Common goldenring)	<i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i>		Least concern		50	10
Hairy dragonfly (Hairy hawkler)	<i>Brachytron pratense</i>		Least concern		6.7	10
Large red damselfly (Large red damsel)	<i>Pyrhosoma nymphula</i>		Least concern		2.0	1
Migrant hawkler	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>		Least concern		3.4	4
Red-eyed damselfly (Large Red-eye)	<i>Erythromma najas</i>		Least concern		4.5	4
Ruddy darter	<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>	Least concern	Least concern		5.3	4
Southern hawkler (Blue hawkler)	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>		Least concern		2.8	1
Variable damselfly (Variable bluet)	<i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i>	Not evaluated	Near threatened	LBAP	20	10

White faced darter	<i>Leucorrhinia dubia</i>	Least concern	Endangered	LBAP (archive)	Assumed extinct in Cheshire	10
White legged damselfly (blue featherleg)	<i>Platycnemis pennipes</i>	Least concern	Least concern		100	10

S5 Amphibians

Sites should be selected that regularly support any of the following:

- Populations of Natterjack toad.
- Exceptional/good²⁷ populations of > 100 individuals palmate newts or toads.
- Good²⁷ populations of great crested newts (5+ day time count, 10+ night time count)
- Assemblages with four or more (probable breeding) species of amphibian or two or more where palmate newts are present.

In Wirral sites should be selected that support two or more probable breeding species of amphibian.

Guidance and justification

Great crested newts are common in Cheshire and they are afforded high levels of protection under UK and European legislation. Medium or small populations do not warrant additional protection within the LWS system; however a good population (5+ individuals caught in the day time during 15 minutes netting per 50m water's edge. Or 10+ individuals caught at night)²⁷ should be selected as a LWS.

The common toad is a UK BAP species and sites with good populations of at least 100²⁷ individuals should be selected as LWS. The Palmate newt is Cheshire's second rarest¹⁴ amphibian after the Natterjack Toad and sites hosting exceptional populations of at least 100²⁷ individuals should be selected as LWS. Natterjack toads were present until recently at Red Rocks marsh on the Wirral and any site found to still be supporting this species should be selected as a LWS.

In Wirral the majority of ponds have lost one or more species of amphibian so any site supporting two or more species should be selected.

The boundaries of any site selected for amphibians should contain key foraging areas and commuting routes to such areas.

Table 12 List of amphibians in the Cheshire region which are of local, national or global significance

Species	Global status IUCN 2011	UK red list	Local status	BAP status 2011	Other
Natterjack toad	Least concern			UK BAP	European protected species
Common toad	Least concern			UK BAP	
Common frog	Least concern				
Great crested newt	Least concern			UK BAP	European protected species
Palmate newt	Least concern				
Smooth newt	Least concern				

S6 Reptiles

Sites should be selected that regularly support significant populations of common lizard and provide suitable habitats for breeding, basking and hibernation. All sites supporting populations of grass snakes, adders or slow-worms should be selected as LWS.

Guidance and justification

Grass snakes, adders and slow worms are infrequent in Cheshire therefore sites which support populations should be considered as LWS. Any site which supports a significant population of common lizards should be selected.

Reptiles tend to favour the following habitats: rough grassland, heathland, moorland, hedgerows, woodland edges, coastal dunes, disused quarries and railway embankments. Grass snakes feed almost entirely on amphibians and are normally present close to areas of fresh water.

Table 13

List of reptiles in the Cheshire region which are of local, national or global significance

Species	Global Status (IUCN data 2011)	UK Red list	Local status	BAP status
Common lizard	Least concern			UK BAP
Adder	Least concern			UK BAP
Grass snake	Least concern			UK BAP
Slow-worm	Not evaluated			UK BAP

S7 Fresh water fish

Sites should be selected that regularly support any of the following:

- The European eel, the Allis shad or the Twaite shad
- *Significant populations* of river lamprey or Atlantic salmon.
- *Significant naturally sustaining populations* of brown trout/sea trout.

Guidance and justification

Any site that supports the European eel, Allis shad or the Twaite shad should be selected as LWS. The European eel is critically endangered worldwide making it likely to be Cheshire's most threatened species. Rivers and still waters are frequently stocked with brown trout so only sites with naturally sustaining populations should be selected.

Sites that support UK red list species (excluding 'least concern') should be selected as LWS.

Table 14 Fish species in the Cheshire region listed on the UK BAP.

Species	Global status (IUCN data 2011)	UK Red list	Local status	BAP status
Allis shad	Least concern			UK BAP
Twaite shad	Least concern			UK BAP
European eel	Critically endangered			UK BAP
River lamprey	Least concern			UK BAP
Brown trout/sea trout	Least concern			UK BAP
Atlantic salmon	Least concern			UK BAP

S8 White clawed crayfish

Sites should be selected that regularly support populations of white clawed crayfish.

Guidance and justification

The white clawed crayfish is globally endangered according to the IUCN red data book and it is also a UK BAP species. This rare species was once widespread but has declined rapidly largely due to the introduction of the American Signal crayfish. This alien species carries crayfish disease to which the native crayfish has little immunity. American signal crayfish will also out-compete the native crayfish for food and shelter.

White clawed crayfish are dependent on good quality water and are particularly susceptible to pollution events such as sewage leaks, milk spillages, sheep dip contamination. For this reason in particular sites selected for white clawed crayfish should include a 6 metre riparian zone from the top of the riverbank.

The white clawed crayfish can live in various watercourses including rivers, streams, lakes and canals and survives in small isolated populations mainly in south Cheshire.

S9 Terrestrial/freshwater invertebrates

Sites should be selected that regularly support either:

- Significant populations of any UK BAP species, or red data book listed species, or national rare/scarce species (present in 1-100 hectads in the UK).
- OR
- Significant assemblages* of any terrestrial or freshwater invertebrates. (A locally significant bee assemblage is 8+ species of social bumble bee or 4+ species of cuckoo bee. A locally significant assemblage of macro-moths is 350 species which equates to 65% of the current list for VC58³⁶)

*Refer to Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society

Guidance and justification

A large number of species have suffered severe declines nationally and these are listed as UK BAP species (table 15). The BAP list is likely to be incomplete as little research has been undertaken on invertebrate populations particularly when compared to other groups of species.

Consideration should also be given to species which are locally or nationally rare/scarce but may currently have stable populations. A list of conservation designations for UK taxa may be found on the JNCC website using the following link <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-3408>

Expert opinion (e.g. Lancashire and Cheshire Entomological Society) should always be sought when determining what constitutes a significant assemblage of invertebrates.

Butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies have their own selection criteria **S1** and **S4**.

Table 15 Terrestrial invertebrates in the Cheshire region listed on the UK BAP

Vernacular	Species	Global status IUCN	UK Red list	Local status	Status
Belted Beauty	<i>Lycia zonaria britannica</i>				UKBAP
Cuckoo bee	<i>Coelioxys mandibularis</i>				UK BAP
Depressed river mussel	<i>Pseudanodonta complanata</i>				UK BAP
Leaf beetle	<i>Bromius obscurus</i>				UK BAP
Lesser silver water beetle	<i>Hydrochara caraboides</i>				UK BAP and WCA
Linyphilid spider	<i>Carolita limnaea</i>				UK BAP
Longhorn	<i>Acmaeops collaris</i>				UK BAP

beetle					
Mining beetle	<i>Colletes cunicularis</i>				UK BAP
Mud snail	<i>Omphiscola glabra</i>				UK BAP
Rove beetle	<i>Lathrobium rufipenne</i>				UK BAP
Sand wasp	<i>Podalonia affinis</i>				UK BAP
Sandhill rustic	<i>Luperina nickerlii gueneei</i>				UK BAP
Small egger	<i>Eriogaster lanestris L.</i>				UK BAP
Ten spot pot beetle	<i>Cryptocephalus decemmacultus</i>				UK BAP
Stag beetle	<i>Lucanus cervus</i>				UK BAP
Thick-legged flower beetle	Thick-legged flower beetle				UK BAP
Peus's Long-back spider	<i>Mecopisthes peusi</i>				UK BAP
Broad Groove-head Spider	<i>Monocephalus castaneipes</i>				UK BAP
Swamp Lookout Spider	<i>Notioscopus sarcinatus</i>				UK BAP
Argent and sable	<i>Rheumaptera hastata</i>				UK BAP
Triangle Hammock Spider	<i>Saaristoa firma</i>				UK BAP
Heath Rustic	<i>Xestia agathina</i>				UK BAP
Ashworth's Rustic	<i>Xestia ashworthii</i>				UK BAP
Neglected Rustic	<i>Xestia castanea</i>				UK BAP
Sword-Grass	<i>Xylena exsoleta</i>				UK BAP

S10 Bryophytes

Sites supporting significant populations of any notable bryophytes from table 16 should be selected as LWS.

Guidance and justification

Sites should be selected which host populations of nationally or locally rare, or conservation status bryophytes listed in table 16. The table lists all the notable bryophytes identified in VC 58 up to 2012.

Table 16

List of bryophytes in the Cheshire region which are of local or national significance⁴²

Species	Vernacular	UK Red list	BAP status
<i>Bryum calophyllum</i>	Matted bryum	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Bryum knowltonii</i>	Knowlton's Thread Moss	Nationally scarce	UK BAP
<i>Bryum uliginosum</i>	Ceruous bryum	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Bryum warneum</i>	Sea bryum	Nationally scarce	UK BAP
<i>Cephaloziella nicholsonii</i>	Greater Copperwort	Nationally scarce	UK BAP
<i>Dicranum bergeri</i>	Waved Fork-moss	?	UK BAP
<i>Orthodontium gracile</i>	Slender Thread Moss	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Rhytidiadelphus subpinnatus</i>	Scarce Turf-moss	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Riccia canaliculata</i>	Channelled Crystalwort	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Sphagnum balticum</i>	Baltic Bog-moss	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Tortula cernua</i>	Flamingo moss	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Tortula freibergii</i>	Freiberg's Screw-moss	Nationally scarce	UK BAP
<i>Tortula wilsonii</i>	Wilson's Pottia	Nationally scarce	UK BAP
<i>Weissia multicapsularis</i>	Moss	Nationally rare	UK BAP
<i>Weissia squarrosa</i>	Spreading-leaved beardless-moss	Nationally scarce	UK BAP
<i>Aloina ambigua</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Aloina brevisrostris</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Aloina rigida</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Amblyodon dealbatus</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Atrichum tenellum</i>		Nationally	

		scarce	
<i>Brachydontium trichodes</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Bryum creberrimum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Bryum intermedium</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Buxbaumia aphylla</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Calypogeia azurea</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Calypogeia integristipula</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Campylostelium saxicola</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Cephalozia macrostachya</i> var. <i>macrostachya</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Cephaloziella elachista</i>		Nationally rare	
<i>Cladopodiella francisci</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Dicranella crispa</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Dicranum polysetum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Dicranum undulatum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Didymodon acutus</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Discelium nudum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Distichium inclinatum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Ditrichum pusillum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Drepanocladus sendtneri</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Ephemerum sessile</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Fissidens fontanus</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Fossombronia caespitiformis</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Fossombronia foveolata</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Fossombronia incurva</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Hamatocaulis vernicosus</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Henediella stanfordensis</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Hygroamblystegium humile</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Lophozia capitata</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Moerckia flotoviana</i>		Nationally	

		scarce	
<i>Nardia geoscyphus</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Philonotis arnellii</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Philonotis caespitosa</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Physcomitrium sphaericum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Plagiothecium laetum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Platyhypnidium lusitanicum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Pohlia lescuriana</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Pterygoneurum ovatum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Racomitrium affine</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Riccardia incurvata</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Riccia cavernosa</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Riccia huebeneriana</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Riccia rhenana</i>		Nationally rare	
<i>Ricciocarpos natans</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Sphagnum pulchrum</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Sphagnum riparium</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Tomentypnum nitens</i>		Nationally scarce	
<i>Weissia rostellata</i>		Nationally scarce	

S11 Lichens

Sites supporting significant populations of any notable lichens from table 17 should be selected as LWS. Where new species are recorded in Cheshire then the more comprehensive UK list should be consulted.

Guidance and justification

There are several thousand species of lichen recorded in Cheshire however only a small number of these are designated at a national level. Many of the species listed below originate from churchyards including Handley, Acton and Pott Shrigley.

Table 17 List of lichens in the Cheshire region which are of local, national or global significance⁴⁰

Species	UK Red list (contains both IUCN and non-IUCN methodology)	BAP/S.41 status/WCA
<i>Acarospora nitrophila</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Acarospora umbilicata</i> <i>f. congregians</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Aspicilia contorta</i> subsp. <i>hoffmanniana</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Calicium quercinum</i>	Extinct (tbc)	
<i>Caloplaca crenulatella</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Caloplaca ferruginea</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Candelariella aurella</i> f. <i>smaragdula</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Carbonea vorticosa</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Cladonia merochlorophaea</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Cladonia uncialis</i> ssp. <i>uncialis</i>	Nationally rare	
<i>Ephebe hispidula</i>	Nationally rare	
<i>Fossombronia foveolata</i>		UK BAP and England NERC S.41
<i>Lecania aipospila</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Lecania cuprea</i>	Nationally scarce	

<i>Lecanora fuscescens</i>	Extinct (tbc)	
<i>Lecanora handelii</i>	Near threatened	
<i>Lecanora subaurea</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Lecanora subcarnea</i>	Nationally scarce	
<i>Lecidella viridans</i>	Data deficient	
<i>Melanelia subargentifera</i>	Critically endangered	
<i>Peltigera lepidophora</i>		WCA schedule 8
<i>Pyrenula nitida</i>		England NERC S.41
<i>Rhizocarpon furfurosum</i>	Near threatened	
<i>Usnea subscabrosa</i>	Vulnerable	

S12 Fungi

Sites supporting populations of conservation status fungi³⁴ listed in table 18 should be selected as LWS. Where new species are recorded in Cheshire then the more comprehensive British lists³⁴ should be consulted.

OR

Sites should be selected where they support 50+ species of woodland fungi recorded on a single visit. Assemblages should contain examples from all the different fungal groups (refer to guidance).

Guidance and justification

Sites should be selected which host populations of conservation status British Fungi³⁴. Conservation status fungi which have been recorded in Cheshire (VC58) are listed in table 18.

Table 18 Conservation status fungi recorded in Cheshire 1980 - 2012⁴¹

Species	Vernacular	British red list	BAP status 2011	Other
<i>Boletopsis perplexa</i>	Black Falsebolete		UK BAP	
<i>Caloscypha fulgens</i>	Golden Cup	Vulnerable/D2		
<i>Cantharellus friesii</i>	Orange/velvet Chanterelle		UK BAP	NERC 2006
<i>Cortinarius violaceus</i>	Violet Webcap	Near threatened		
<i>Gastrum campestre</i>	Field Earthstar	Endangered/B		
<i>Gloeoporus dichrous</i>	<i>Gloeoporus dichrous</i>	Near threatened		
<i>Gyrodon lividus</i>	Alder Bolete	Near threatened		
<i>Hericium erinaceus</i>	Bearded Tooth		UK BAP	NERC 2006
<i>Leucoagaricus barssii</i>	<i>Leucoagaricus barssii</i>	Near threatened		
<i>Lycoperdon ericaeum</i>	Heath Puffball	Extinct (tbc)		
<i>Onygena equina</i>	Horn Stalkball	Near threatened		
<i>Phylloporus pelletieri</i>	Golden-gilled Bolete	Annex	UK BAP	NERC 2006
<i>Polyporus umbellatus</i>	Umbrella Polypore	Near threatened		
<i>Pycnoporus cinnabarinus</i>	Cinnabar Polypore	Extinct (tbc)		

Good assemblages of woodland fungi⁴¹

An assemblage of woodland fungi regarded as having conservation value will usually have four groups of fungi represented. These groups are indicative of the execution of important beneficial ecological activities/processes and thus of the self-sustainability of the woodland:

Ectomycorrhizal fungi are associated with particular tree species. Their mycelium grows over the surface of a tree's roots enabling an exchange of minerals and carbohydrates with the tree, and providing protection from attack by pathogens. Not all mycorrhizal species produce visible fruitbodies.

*Living wood decay fungi*³⁸ establish themselves within living trees and help to create crevices and exposed wood which may then host a variety of fauna including invertebrates. They are often visible as brackets on the outside of tree trunks or branches. Affected trees may ultimately die, but this can increase structural diversity in a woodland.

*Dead wood rotting fungi*³⁸ are found on dead wood, usually lying on the woodland floor. They are able to break down the wood structure enabling other taxa to establish themselves and also facilitating the recycling of nutrients. There is some evidence that these species occur in succession as wood becomes more decayed.

Ground fungi (soil humus/leaf litter fungi) are found on the woodland floor breaking down leaf litter and soil humus and facilitating the recycling of nutrients.

The particular fungal species composition will depend to an extent on the vascular plant species composition of the woodland but generally species richness and composition will be greater where:

- there is a greater diversity of trees and shrubs
- there is abundant dead wood of varying dimensions from small twigs to large tree trunks
- there is older woodland, particularly ancient woodland
- there is greater diversity of habitat providing more niches for colonisation by fungi e.g. in larger woodland

There are a number of undesirable fungi which can have a serious and rapid deleterious effect on a woodland e.g. ash dieback *Chalara fraxinea* which, if identified, should be reported to the appropriate authority.

Table 19 Examples^{37,39} of ectomycorrhizal, living wood decay, dead wood decay and ground fungi:

Vernacular	Species name	Comment
Ectomycorrhizal fungi*		
Under Oak		
Oakbug Milkcap	<i>Lactarius quietus</i>	
Scarletina Bolete	<i>Boletus luridiformis</i>	Can occur with Pine
Death Cap	<i>Amanita phalloides</i>	Can also occur with Beech
Under Birch		
Brown Birch Bolete	<i>Leccinum scabrum</i>	
Fly Agaric	<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Can also occur with Pine
The Blusher	<i>Amanita rubescens</i>	Can also occur with other species
Birch Milkcap	<i>Lactarius tabidus</i>	Especially with Birch
Woolly Milkcap	<i>Lactarius torminosus</i>	
Tawny Grisette	<i>Amanita fulva</i>	Can also occur with other species
Brown Rollrim	<i>Paxillus involutus</i>	Can also occur with other species
Common Earthball	<i>Scleroderma citrinum</i>	Also Oak and Beech
Under Alder		
Ochre Aldercap	<i>Naucoria escharioides</i>	
Alder Milkcap	<i>Lactarius obscuratus</i>	
(Alder) Rollrim	<i>Paxillus rubicundulus</i>	
Under Beech		
Lilac Bonnet	<i>Mycena pura</i>	Especially with Beech
Beech Milkcap	<i>Lactarius blennius</i>	
Beechwood Sickener	<i>Russula nobilis</i>	
Under Pine/Larch		
Slippery Jack	<i>Suillus luteus</i>	Pine
Larch Bolete	<i>Suillus grevillei</i>	

Sickener	<i>Russula emetica</i>	
Under both Deciduous and Coniferous species		
Ochre Brittlegill	<i>Russula ochroleuca</i>	
Penny Bun or Cep	<i>Boletus edulis</i>	
Purple Brittlegill	<i>Russula atropurpurea</i>	
Poisonpie	<i>Hebeloma crustuliniforme</i>	
Butter Cap	<i>Collybia butyracea</i>	
The Deceiver	<i>Laccaria laccata</i>	
Amethyst Deceiver	<i>Laccaria amethystina</i>	
Chanterelle	<i>Cantharellus cibarius</i>	
Living wood decay fungi		
Birch Polypore	<i>Piptoporus betulinus</i>	Can be seen on dead wood too
	<i>Peniophora quercina</i>	On Oak
Alder bracket	<i>Mensularia radiata</i>	
Oyster Mushroom	<i>Pleurotus ostreatus</i>	Can be seen on dead wood too
Bleeding Broadleaf Crust	<i>Stereum rugosum</i>	Particularly Hazel, Beech, Birch. Can be seen on dead wood too
Hoof Fungus	<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>	Especially on Birch
Honey Fungus	<i>Armillaria sp</i>	Can also be found on or near dead wood
Root Rot	<i>Heterobasidion annosum</i>	Usually on conifers but can also occur on dead broadleaved trees
Southern Bracket	<i>Ganoderma australe</i>	Usually on Beech
Beeswax Bracket	<i>Ganoderma pfeifferi</i>	Usually on Beech but can occur on dead wood too
Shaggy Scalycap	<i>Pholiota squarrosa</i>	Can occur on dead wood too
Dead wood decay fungi		
Hairy Curtain Crust	<i>Stereum hirsutum</i>	
Sulphur Tuft	<i>Hypholoma fasciculare</i>	
Split Porecrust	<i>Schizopora paradoxa</i>	
Elder Whitewash	<i>Hyphodontia sambuci</i>	On dead Elder wood
Candlesnuff Fungus	<i>Xylaria hypoxylon</i>	
Jelly Ear	<i>Auricula auricularia-judae</i>	
King Alfred's Cakes	<i>Daldinia concentrica</i>	On dead Ash wood
Blushing Bracket	<i>Daedaleopsis confragosa</i>	
Turkeytail	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Can occur on living wood too
Oak Mazegill	<i>Daedalea quercina</i>	
Smoky Bracket	<i>Bjerkandera adusta</i>	
Stump Puffball	<i>Lycoperdon pyriforme</i>	
Deer Shield	<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>	
Velvet Shank	<i>Flammulina velutipes</i>	
Common Bonnet	<i>Mycena galericulata</i>	
Glistening Inkcap	<i>Coprinellus micaceus</i>	
Oysterling sp.	<i>Crepidotus variabilis/cesatii</i>	
Bleeding Oak Crust	<i>Stereum gausapatum</i>	
Scarlet Elf Cup	<i>Sarcoscypha austriaca</i>	
Coral Spot	<i>Nectria cinnabarina</i>	

Yellow Brain	<i>Tremella mesenterica</i>	
Orange spot	<i>Dacrymyces stillatus</i>	
Birch/Beech/Hazel Woodwart	<i>(Annulo)Hypoxylon sp.</i>	
Lumpy Bracket	<i>Trametes gibbosa</i>	
Waxy Crust	<i>Vuilleminia comedens</i>	
Common Rustgill	<i>Gymnopilus penetrans</i>	
Ground fungi (Soil humus/leaf litter fungi)		
Stinkhorn	<i>Phallus impudicus</i>	
Collared Earthstar	<i>Geastrum triplex</i>	
Horsehair Parachute	<i>Marasmius androsaceus</i>	
Collared Parachute	<i>Marasmius rotula</i>	
Milking Bonnet	<i>Mycena galopus</i>	
Clouded Funnel	<i>Clitocybe nebularis</i>	
Slender club	<i>Macrotyphula juncea</i>	

* Ash, Sycamore, Yew and Elm tend not to form visible mycorrhizal relationships with fungal species

S13 Vascular plants

Sites should be selected that regularly support:

- Populations of any species listed in table 20¹⁸.
- Significant or viable populations of any species listed in table 21¹⁸.

Guidance and justification

Many sites that host rare or scarce vascular plants will also qualify for LWS selection under the habitat criteria. This is particularly true when considering assemblages of vascular plants.

Sites should be selected which host populations of nationally or locally rare, or conservation status plants listed in table 20. Any site which hosts significant or viable populations of plants which are scarce in Cheshire (table 21) should be considered for selection as a LWS. A significant or viable population is one that could be considered self-sustaining in the medium term (this will require a subjective judgement to be made taking into consideration the population size and the likely future management of the site).

Table 20 Rare and conservation status plants in the Cheshire region¹⁸

Species	Global status IUCN	UK Red list ¹⁹ 2005	Kay's classification ¹⁸	BAP status	1 km Squares
<i>Luronium natans</i>			Internationally rare	UK BAP	1
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i> ssp <i>pachyrachis</i>		Near threatened	Nationally rare		4
<i>Baldellia ranunculoides</i>		Near threatened	Nationally rare		4
<i>Calamagrostis stricta</i>		Vulnerable	Nationally rare		1
<i>Mentha pulegium</i>		Endangered	Nationally rare	UK BAP	3
<i>Rubus wolley-dodii</i>		Threatened	Nationally rare		1
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Carex elongata</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Cicuta virosa</i>			Nationally scarce		37
<i>Coincya monensis</i>			Nationally scarce	LBAP	2
<i>Elatine hexandra</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Equisetum variegatum</i>			Nationally scarce		2
<i>Equisetum x meridionale</i>			Nationally scarce	LBAP	3
<i>Euphorbia portlandica</i>			Nationally scarce		3
<i>Fritillaria meleagris</i>		Vulnerable	Nationally scarce		?
<i>Fumaria purpurea</i>			Nationally scarce		Rare casual
<i>Gentiana pneumonanthe</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Hieracium vagense</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>			Nationally scarce		1 (but widely planted –

					native population probably confined to one site)
<i>Hordelymus europaeus</i>			Nationally scarce		2-3
<i>Impatiens noli-tangere</i>			Nationally scarce		2
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>			Nationally scarce		2
<i>Limonium celticum</i> ssp <i>britannicum</i>			Nationally scarce	BAP	1
<i>Limosella aquatica</i>			Nationally scarce		5
<i>Medicago sativa</i> ssp <i>falcata</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Puccinellia rupestris</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Ribes alpinum</i>			Nationally scarce		1
<i>Silene gallica</i>		Endangered	Nationally scarce		Casual
<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>			Nationally scarce		5
<i>Vaccinium x intermedium</i>			Nationally scarce		2
<i>Verbascum lychnitis</i>			Nationally scarce (possibly not native in Cheshire)		1
<i>Verbascum virgatum</i>			Nationally scarce		Casual
<i>Vicia lutea</i>		Near threatened	Nationally scarce (possibly not native in Cheshire)		2
<i>Allium oleraceum</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare		3
<i>Allium scorodoprasum</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>			Locally rare		5
<i>Andromeda polifolia</i>			Locally rare		6
<i>Arabis hirsuta</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Asplenium marinum</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Atriplex laciniata</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Brachypodium pinnatum</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Bromopsis erecta</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Bromus commutatus</i>			Locally rare		14
<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i> ssp <i>thominei</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Bromus racemosus</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Bromus secalinus</i>			Locally rare		16
<i>Calystegia sepium</i> ssp. <i>Roseata</i>			Locally rare		5
<i>Carex acuta</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Carex hostiana</i>			Locally rare		¾
<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Carex limosa</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Carex muricata</i> ssp <i>pairae</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Carex muricata</i> ssp <i>lamprocarpa</i>			Locally rare		?
<i>Carex viridula</i> ssp <i>viridula</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Carlina vulgaris</i>			Locally rare		Extinct?
<i>Centaureum pulchellum</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Chenopodium bonus-henricus</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare		1

<i>Circaea x intermedia</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Cirsium dissectum</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Cirsium heterophyllum</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Clinopodium ascendens</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Crambe maritima</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i>			Locally rare		½
<i>Dactylorhiza incarnata</i>			Locally rare		?
<i>Daphne laureola</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Dipsacus pilosus</i>			Locally rare		5
<i>Drosera intermedia</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Eleocharis multicaulis</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Eleocharis quinqueflora</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Eleocharis uniglumis</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Eleogeton fluitans</i>			Locally rare		6
<i>Epipactis palustris</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Equisetum hyemale</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Erodium lebelii</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Euphorbia exigua</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		1
<i>Festuca altissima</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Festuca rubra ssp juncea</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Filago minima</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Filago vulgaris</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		3
<i>Gagea lutea</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Glaucium flavum</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Hippuris vulgaris</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Huperzia selago</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare		casual
<i>Hypericum elodes</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Hypopitys monotropa</i>		Endangered	Locally rare		1
<i>Juncus compressus</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		2?
<i>Lathyrus nissolia</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Limonium vulgare</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Linum bienne</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Meum athamanticum</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		1
<i>Myosurus minimus</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare		3
<i>Myrica gale</i>			Locally rare		5
<i>Myriophyllum alterniflorum</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Nuphar pumila/x spenneriana</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Oenanthe fistulosa</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare	UK BAP	Many
<i>Orobanche hederæ</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Paris quadrifolia</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Persicaria minor</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare		3
<i>Phegopteris connectilis</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Pilosella x stolonifera</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		2
<i>Polygonum oxyspermum ssp raii</i>			Locally rare		?

<i>Polygonum rurivagum</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Populus nigra ssp betulifolia</i>			Locally rare	LBAP	?
<i>Potamogeton alpinus</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Potamogeton compressus</i>			Locally rare	UK BAP	?
<i>Potamogeton lucens</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Potamogeton pusillus</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Potamogeton trichoides</i>			Locally rare		?
<i>Pyrola minor</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Pyrola rotundifolia ssp maritima</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Ranunculus baudotii</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Ranunculus circinatus</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Ranunculus fluitans</i>			Locally rare (EU Annex 1 habitat)	UK BAP	?
<i>Ranunculus hederaceus</i>			Locally rare	LBAP	?
<i>Rhynchospora alba</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Rosa agrestis</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		1
<i>Rosa micrantha</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Rosa mollis</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Rosa x hibernica</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Rosa x margerisonii</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Rubus chamaemorus</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Rumex longifolius</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Rumex alpinus</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare (possibly not native in Cheshire)		3
<i>Ruppia maritima</i>			Locally rare		?
<i>Sagina nodosa</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Salix triandra</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Salsola kali</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare	UK BAP	3
<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Saxifraga tridactylites</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Schoenoplectus triquetus</i>			Locally rare	UK BAP	?
<i>Scleranthus annuus</i>		Endangered	Locally rare		4
<i>Scutellaria minor</i>			Locally rare		5
<i>Sedum anglicum</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Serratula tinctoria</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Silene uniflora</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Spergula arvensis</i>		Vulnerable	Locally rare		Many
<i>Spergularia rupicola</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Stachys arvensis</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		Many
<i>Teesdalia nudicaulis</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		3
<i>Thalictrum minus</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Thymus polytrichus ssp britannicus</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Trifolium ornithopodioides</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>Utricularia minor</i>			Locally rare		2
<i>Utricularia vulgaris</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Vicia lathyroides</i>			Locally rare		4
<i>Vicia sylvatica</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Viola canina ssp canina</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		2

<i>Vulpia fasciculata</i>			Locally rare		3
<i>Wahlenbergia hederacea</i>		Near threatened	Locally rare		4
<i>xAgropogon littoralis</i>			Locally rare		1
<i>xFestulpia hubbardii</i>			Locally rare		1

Table 21 Locally scarce plant species in Cheshire (present in 4-16 x 1 km² sites)¹⁸

<i>Alchemilla glabra</i>	<i>Carex extensa</i>	<i>Erigeron acer</i>	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i> ssp	<i>Sagina maritima</i>
<i>Alopecurus aequalis</i>	<i>Carex laevigata</i>	<i>Erophila glabrescens</i>	<i>pseudonarcissus</i>	<i>Samolus valerandii</i>
<i>Allium vineale</i>	<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>	<i>Erophila majuscula</i>	<i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>	<i>Sanicula europaea</i>
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	<i>Carex pallescens</i>	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	<i>Neottia ovata</i>	<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>
<i>Anagallis tenella</i>	<i>Carex pulicaris</i>	<i>Fumaria bastardii</i>	<i>Oenanthe lachenalii</i>	<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>
<i>Anthriscus caucalis</i>	<i>Carex spicata</i>	<i>Fumaria capreolata</i>	<i>Ononis repens</i>	<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>
<i>Apium graveolens</i>	<i>Carex strigosa</i>	<i>Galium mollugo</i> ssp <i>erectum</i>	<i>Ononis spinosa</i>	<i>Scirpus sylvaticus</i>
<i>Apium inundatum</i>	<i>Carex vesicaria</i>	<i>Galium uliginosum</i>	<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	<i>Sison amomum</i>
<i>Arctium lappa</i>	<i>Catabrosa aquatica</i>	<i>Gentianaella amarella</i>	<i>Orchis mascula</i>	<i>Spartina anglica</i>
<i>Armeria maritima</i>	<i>Catapodium marinum</i>	<i>Geranium sanguineum</i>	<i>Orobanche minor</i>	<i>Spergularia media</i>
<i>Artemisia absinthium</i>	<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	<i>Geum rivale</i>	<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	<i>Spergularia rubra</i>
<i>Asplenium ceterach</i>	<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	<i>Gymnadenia conopsea</i>	<i>Parapholis strigosa</i>	<i>Spirodella polyrhiza</i>
<i>Atriplex glabriuscula</i>	<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	<i>Helictotrichon pubescens</i>	<i>Phleum arenarium</i>	<i>Stellaria nemorum</i>
<i>Atriplex littoralis</i>	<i>Ceratophyllum submersum</i>	<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>	<i>Picris echioides</i>	<i>Stellaria pallida</i>
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	<i>Chaenorhinum minus</i>	<i>Hottonia palustris</i>	<i>Poa angustifolia</i>	<i>Suaeda maritima</i>
<i>Botrychium lunaria</i>	<i>Chenopodium ficifolium</i>	<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>	<i>Polygonatum multiflorum</i>	<i>Thalictrum flavum</i>
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> ssp <i>maritima</i>	<i>Chenopodium polyspermum</i>	<i>Hypericum hirsutum</i>	<i>Polypodium interjectum</i>	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
<i>Brassica nigra</i>	<i>Chrysosplenium alternifolium</i>	<i>Inula conyzae</i>	<i>Polypodium x mantoniae</i>	<i>Trifolium fragiferum</i>
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	<i>Cladium mariscus</i>	<i>Iris foetidissima</i>	<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	<i>Trifolium micranthum</i>
<i>Calamagrostis canescens</i>	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	<i>Juncus ambiguus</i>	<i>Polystichum setiferum</i>	<i>Trifolium striatum</i>
<i>Calamagrostis epigejos</i>	<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>	<i>Juncus gerardii</i>	<i>Potamogeton polygonifolius</i>	<i>Triglochin maritimum</i>
<i>Callitriche hermaphroditica</i>	<i>Cochlearia anglica</i>	<i>Juncus maritimus</i>	<i>Ranunculus lingua</i>	<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>
<i>Callitriche obtusangula</i>	<i>Crepis paludosa</i>	<i>Juncus subnodulosus</i>	<i>Ranunculus peltatus</i>	<i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i>
<i>Callitriche platycarpa</i>	<i>Cystopteris fragilis</i>	<i>Lathraea squamaria</i>	<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> ssp <i>maritimus</i>	<i>Valeriana dioica</i>
<i>Campanula trachelium</i>	<i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>	<i>Lavatera arborea</i>	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	<i>Valerianella locusta</i>
<i>Carduus nutans</i>	<i>Dactylorhiza purpurella</i>	<i>Lepidium campestre</i>	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i> ssp <i>stenophyllus</i>	<i>Veronica polita</i>
<i>Carduus tenuiflorus</i>	<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>	<i>Lepidium heterophyllum</i>	<i>Rosa caesia</i> ssp <i>caesia</i>	<i>Viola lutea</i>
<i>Carex arenaria</i>	<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> ssp <i>affinis</i>	<i>Leymus arenarius</i>	<i>Rosa caesia</i> ssp <i>vosagiaca</i>	<i>Viscum album</i>
<i>Carex binervis</i>	<i>Dryopteris affinis</i> ssp <i>cambrensis</i>	<i>Littorella uniflora</i>	<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>	<i>Viola reichenbachiana</i>
<i>Carex distans</i>	<i>Echium vulgare</i>	<i>Lythrum portula</i>	<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>	<i>Zannichellia palustris</i>
<i>Carex disticha</i>	<i>Eleocharis acicularis</i>	<i>Melampyrum pratense</i>	<i>Rubus caesius</i>	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scriptus</i> Extensive areas only
<i>Carex divulsa</i> ssp <i>divulsa</i>	<i>Elytrigia atherica</i>	<i>Myosotis ramosissima</i>	<i>Rumex crispus</i> ssp <i>littoreus</i>	
<i>Carex elata</i>	<i>Elytrigia juncea</i>	<i>Myosotis secunda</i>	<i>Rumex maritimus</i>	


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5. Appendices

5.1 LWS survey form

		
Local Wildlife Site Description and Management Form		
Site name:	Site code:	Grid reference:
Date(s) of visit:	Surveyor(s)	Data submitted to rECOrd?
Land owner/tenant		
<i>Include name, address and contact number/email for owner and/or tenant/agent. Where there is more than one owner, indicate ownership boundaries clearly on site map.</i>		
Selection Criteria		
<i>List all criteria that apply. Give brief justification here or in target notes.</i>		
Site Characteristics		
<i>Topography: undulating; irregular; slopes; aspects etc.</i>	<i>Any public access to site?</i>	
<i>Hydrology/Geomorphology/Soils(if known): wet, flushes, streams, outcrops, mineral, peat, clay etc.</i>	<i>Surrounding area information: urban, semi-rural, rural, intensively farmed etc.</i>	
Site Summary		
<i>Give BRIEF description/summary of the site. Include information on most important habitats, important or dominant species and other important aspects of the site. May update existing citation.</i>		
Additional information		
<i>e.g. species lists, species diversity, notable or indicator species (approximate NVC communities may be suggested), suggested boundary changes (mark on map), recommendations for future surveys. List any target notes with species information (e.g. indicators, invasives, species lists). All botanical species information should be recorded with DAFOR score where possible.</i>		

Condition assessment	
Overall impression of the condition of site. Good, fair or poor? Give reasons.	
Social Issues	
Issue	Comment where applicable
Litter/fly tipping/pollution	
Vandalism/anti-social use	
Recreational damage	
Other	
Grassland/Heathland	
Issue	Comment where applicable. Complex sites may need to be assessed in compartments/fields – annotate map.
Grazing (animal sp.) - Any suggestion of over/under grazing?	
Poaching	
Scrub encroachment (% cover, include young plants)	
Mowing	
Ridge and furrow/anthills	
Re-seeding/fertiliser application? Record % of white clover/rye grass.	
Undesirables (% cover e.g. bracken, thistles, nettles, docks, ragwort, invasives/ non-natives – list sp.)	
Bilberry/heathers/western gorse (% cover)	
Other	
Woodland	
Issue	Comment where applicable. Complex sites may need to be assessed in compartments/fields – annotate map.
Tree cover (estimate % cover where possible)	
Invasives/non-natives (list sp. and approx. frequency)	
Coppicing/felling	
Grazing (livestock and/or deer, give details)	
Pheasant rearing	
Regeneration of locally native tree species?	
Fallen/standing dead wood	
Fencing	
Other	

Wetland	
Issue	Comment where applicable. Complex sites may need to be assessed in compartments/fields – annotate map.
<i>Invasives/non-natives (list sp. and estimate % cover)</i>	
<i>Scrub encroachment (% cover, include young plants)</i>	
<i>Any good populations of wetland flora/fauna?</i>	
<i>Suggestion of eutrophication e.g. algal blooms?</i>	
<i>Other</i>	
Management plan / stewardship agreement / any management suggestions?	
<i>Comment where known</i>	

5.2 Checklist for Single Data List SDL ref 160 (previously NI 197)

	Measure	Yes	No	Not known
1.	Have the conservation features for which the site has been selected been clearly documented?			
2.	Is there documented evidence of a management plan/ management scheme/advisory document which is sufficiently targeted to maintain or enhance the above features?			
3.	Are the management requirements set out in the document being met sufficiently in order to maintain the above features? This should be assessed at 5 year intervals (minimum). Record 'not known' if interval is greater than 5 years.			
4.	Has the Local Sites Partnership verified the above evidence?			

For a site to score positive for ref 160 all four measures listed above MUST be YES⁴³.

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Appendix 3: Revised Boundaries and Citations for Sites of Biological Importance

DRAFT



Site name: Heswall Fields

Ward: Heswall

Area: 4.6 ha

Date of Notification: 2017

Date of Revision:

Status: Owned by National Trust, managed by local farmer

Site code: B78 (NEW)

Grid Reference: SJ245824

Description:

A clifftop field, managed for hay, which has had little agricultural improvement and supports a high diversity of plants, though few uncommon species. There are also good butterfly populations. The pond supports breeding toads. The low clay cliffs support plants typical of the Dee cliffs e.g. common agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*), centaury (*Centaureum erythraea*) and restharrow (*Ononis repens*). Both field and cliffs need survey for invertebrates as they could support important species.

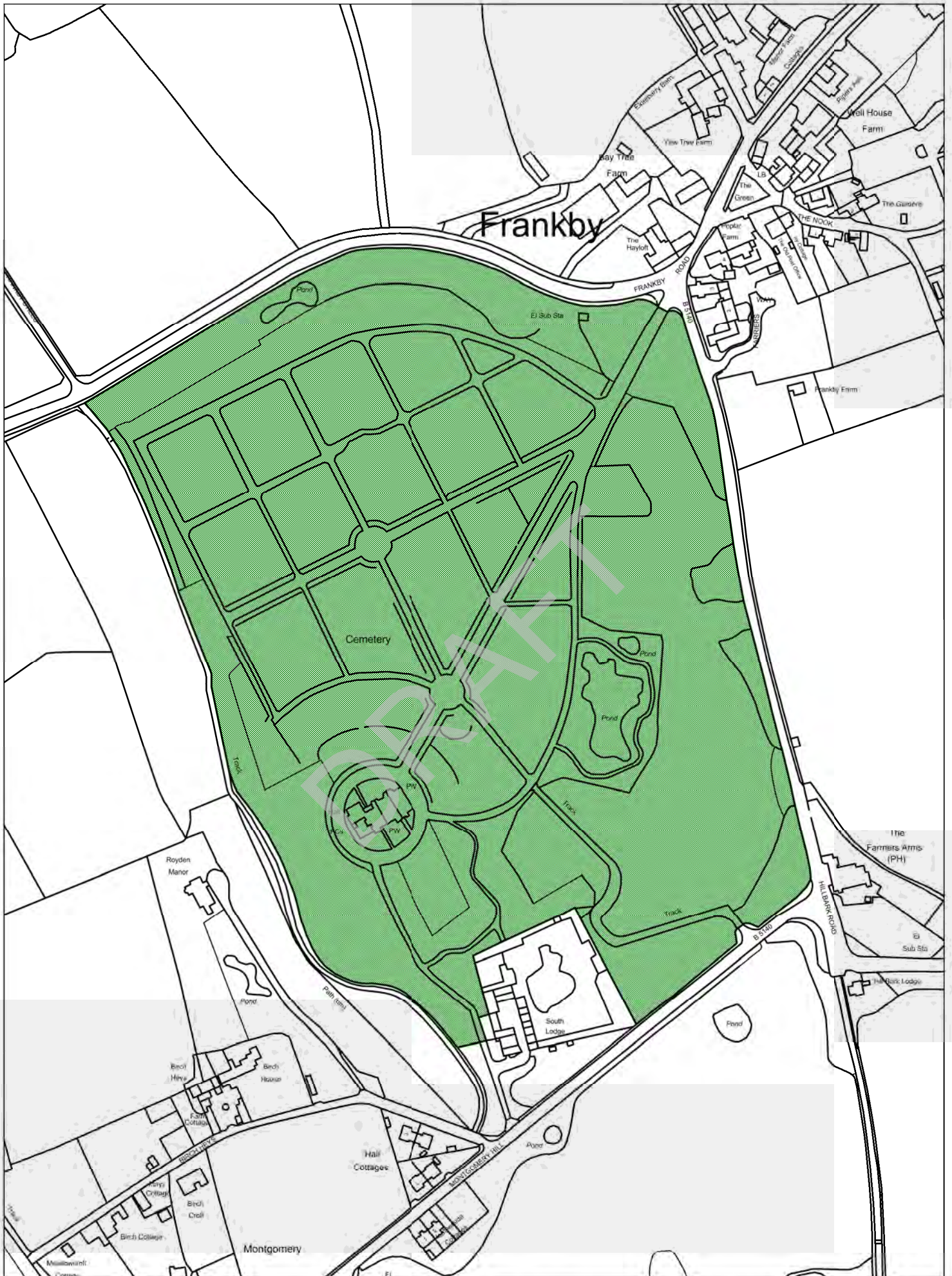
A second field is included (at the end of Broad Lane). It is less diverse but likely to improve now it is under suitable management.

Criteria for selection: (i), (ii), (iv)

Habitats:	Grassland	Percentage:	95%
	Pond		2%
	Hedges		3%

Most recent survey:	Plants	2011
	Amphibians	2011

CONFIDENTIAL:



Frankby

Cemetery

Frankby Cemetery Proposed Site of Biological Importance Boundary

Page 234

Scale 1:3,000



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Site name: Frankby Cemetery
Ward: Greasby, Frankby & Irby
Area: 14.3 ha
Date of Notification: 2017
Date of Revision:
Status: Wirral Borough Council owned.

Site code: B79 (NEW)
Grid Reference: SJ243865

Description:

Cemetery, in use late 19th century to present. Supports mature trees, grassland and legally protected species.

Criteria for selection: (iv)

Habitats: Grassland
Mature trees
Percentage: data not available

Most recent survey: Mammals 2015

CONFIDENTIAL:

Sites of Biological Importance - Modified Boundaries



Site name: Wirral Way (Caldy-Heswall)
Ward: Heswall; and West Kirby & Thurstaston
Area: 17.8 ha
Date of Notification: 1980
Date of Revision: 1999, 2017
Status: Owned by WMBC

Site code: B15
Grid Reference: SJ222850

Description:

The line of the disused railway line, now part of Wirral Country Park, has developed into a variety of secondary damp and neutral grassland habitats, as well as scrub and associated hedge features, all of value to wildlife.

Cubbin's Green has many locally uncommon plants, including pignut (*Conopodium majus*), yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), and harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*). Other rarities are fine-leaved sandwort (*Minuartia hybrida*), pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), and Dyer's greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*).

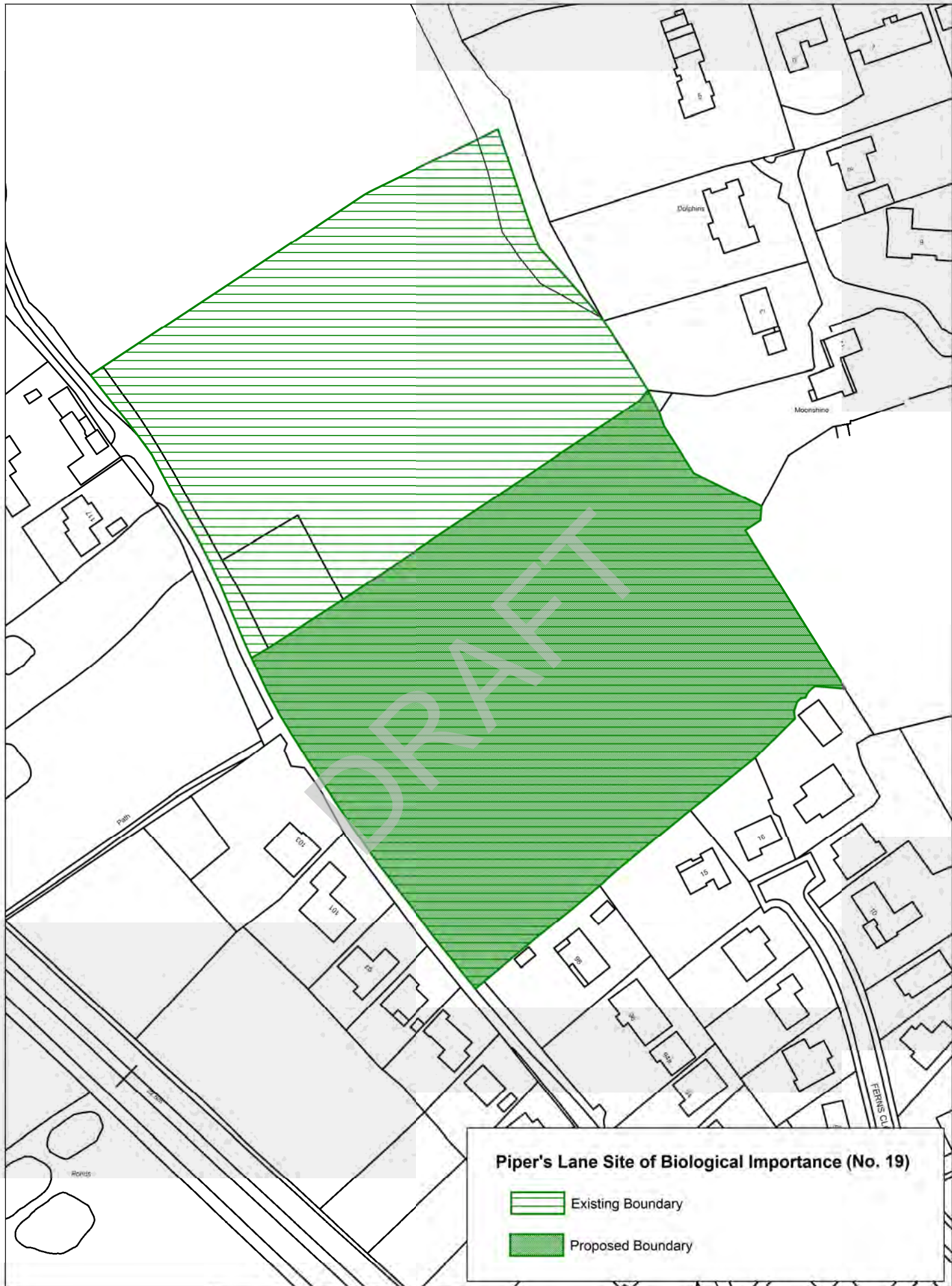
Butterflies are numerous in the warmer railway cuttings, and traditional hedge management techniques have proved of value to bird species.

Criteria for selection: (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)

Habitats:	Scrub	Percentage:
	Grassland - neutral (unimproved)	

Most recent survey:	Plants	2006
	Butterflies	1999
	Invertebrates	1998

CONFIDENTIAL:



Site name: Piper's Lane, Heswall
Ward: Heswall
Area: 1.7 ha
Date of Notification: 1992
Date of Revision: 2017
Status: Private owner

Site code: B19
Grid Reference: SJ253823

Description:

Sandy field with gorse scrub. Supports a legally protected species and a variety of birds.

Criteria for selection: (iv)

Habitats: Scrub
Grassland - improved



Percentage: data not available

Most recent survey: Mammals 1999

CONFIDENTIAL:



Holm Hill Site of Biological Importance (No. 49)

-  Existing Boundary
-  Proposed New Boundary



Site name: Holm Hill
Ward: West Kirby & Thurstaston
Area: 1.5 ha
Date of Notification: 1992
Date of Revision: 1999, 2017
Status: Private owner

Site code: B49
Grid Reference: SJ222863

Description:

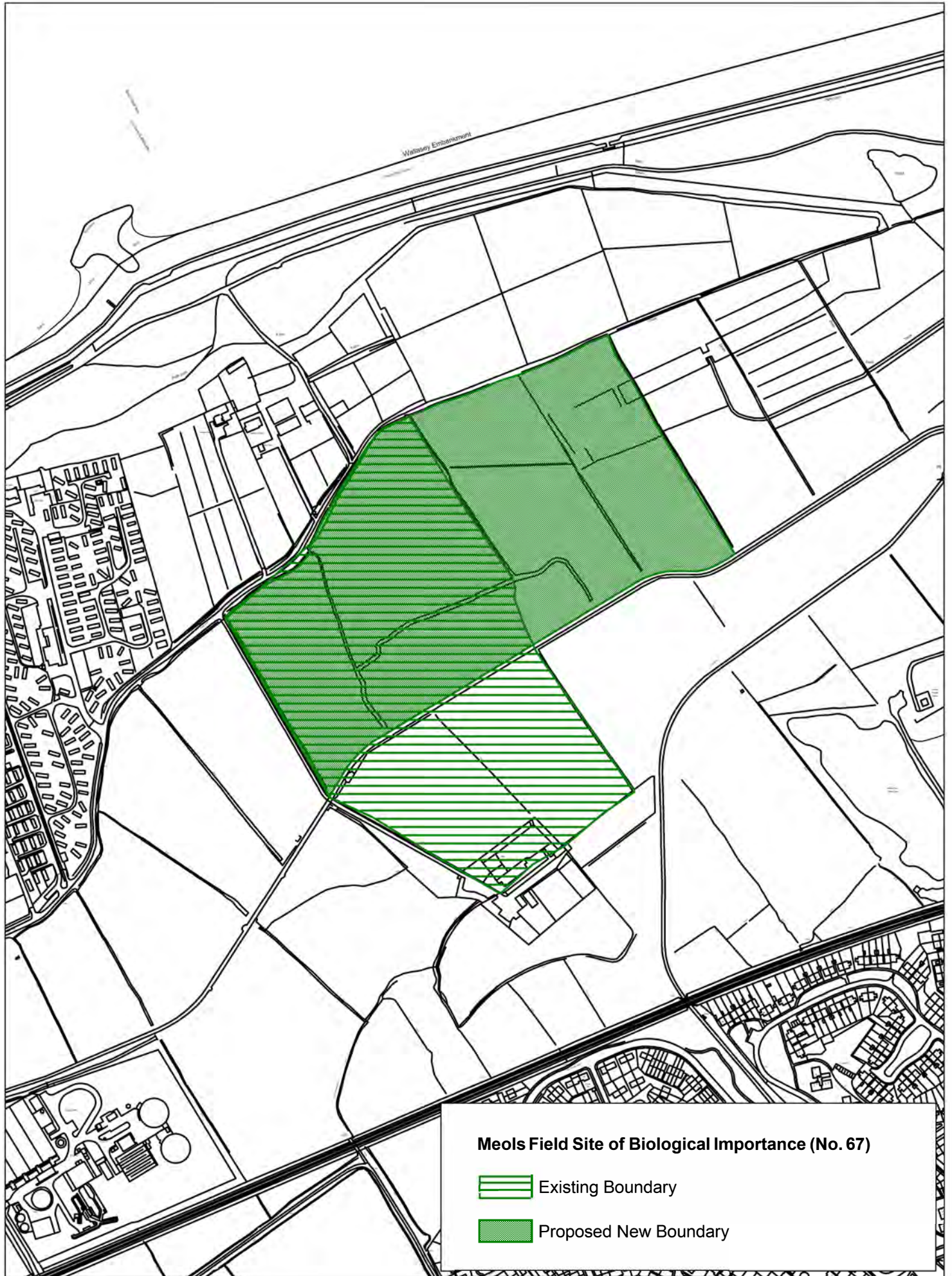
Remnant of grounds of country houses, including mixed woodland, scrub and grassland. Supports a legally protected species, also the locally uncommon Yellow Meadow Ant (*Lascius flavus*).

Criteria for inclusion: (iv)


Habitats:		Percentage:
Woodland - mixed (plantation)		
Scrub		
Grassland - acidic (semi-improved)		


Most recent survey:	Mammals	2016
	Plants	1996

CONFIDENTIAL:



Meols Field Site of Biological Importance (No. 67)

 Existing Boundary

 Proposed New Boundary



Site name: Meols Field
Ward: Moreton West and Saughall Massie
Area: 10.2 ha
Date of Notification: 1990
Date of Revision: 2013, 2017
Status: Private owner

Site code: B67
Grid Reference: SJ244907

Description:

Sandy, coastal floodplain meadows with abundant sand sedge (*Carex arenaria*) and yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), together with frequent brown sedge (*Carex disticha*).

The central field is the richest, supporting some uncommon species characteristic of unimproved grassland such as pepper saxifrage (*Silaum silaus*), ragged robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), meadow rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) and divided sedge (*Carex divisa*). The ditches are strips of common reed (*Phragmites australis*). Reed bunting and skylark are regularly recorded.

Criteria for selection: (i) (ii) (iv)

Habitats: Grassland - neutral (unimproved)

Percentage: 100%

Most recent survey: Plants 2013
Invertebrates 1988

CONFIDENTIAL:

Sites of Biological Importance - Modified Citations

Site name: Grange Hill
Ward: West Kirby & Thurstaston
Area: 9.8 ha
Date of Notification: 1983
Date of Revision: 2017
Status: Owned by WMBC

Site code: B2
Grid Reference: SJ219871

Description:

Former remnant lowland heath, now mainly gorse scrub (*Ulex europaeus*) and grassland. There is a significant population of common lizard and other protected species. Bracken, heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), western gorse (*U. galii*) and bell heather (*Erica cinerea*) occur in small amounts among the gorse.

Broad-leaved woodland occurs on lower slopes and hollows, particularly west, south and old quarry (north). Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) is dominant with silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). Fires occur, sometimes frequently, during the summer. Geological interest centres on the exposures showing the contact between the Bunter and Keuper sandstones, along with interesting sedimentary features.

Criteria for selection: (iv)

Habitats:	Percentage:
Scrub	
Woodland - broadleaved (plantation)	
Heathland - dry heath	<10%

Most recent survey:	Plants	2005
	Birds	2007
	Invertebrates	1988

CONFIDENTIAL:

Site name: Leasowe Reedmarsh
Ward: Leasowe & Moreton East
Area: 0.4 ha
Date of Notification: 1983
Date of Revision: 2017
Status: Situated on Bidston Golf Course. Private owner

Site code: B61
Grid Reference: SJ27989110

Description:

Former pond, now a reedmarsh dominated by Common reed (*Phragmites australis*). The banks support some unusual grassland species eg common agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*).

Criteria for selection: (i)

Habitats: Reedmarsh **Percentage:** 100%

Most recent survey: Plants 2013
Invertebrates 2008
Amphibians 2005

CONFIDENTIAL:

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Appendix 4 - Revised Schedule of Sites of Biological Importance 2017

Site Number	Name	Grid Reference	UDP Proposal Number
B1	Royal Liverpool Golf Course, Hoylake	SJ.208885	NC6/1
B2	Grange Hill, West Kirby	SJ.219871	NC6/2
B3	Caldy Hill, West Kirby [#]	SJ.225860	NC6/3
B4	Stapledon Wood, West Kirby [#]	SJ.231857	NC6/4
B5	Newton Common, West Kirby [#]	SJ.230862 SJ.231864 SJ.230866	NC6/5
B6	Caldy Golf Course [#]	SJ.227843	NC6/6
B7	Caldy Hospital Grounds	SJ.227854	NC6/7
B9	Irby Quarry	SJ.252859	NC6/9
B11	Harrock Wood, Irby	SJ.263845	NC6/11
B12	Backford Road Pond, Irby	SJ.25508415	NC6/12
B13	Royden Park, Frankby [#]	SJ.242858	NC6/13
B15	Wirral Way (Caldy-Heswall) ^{#+}	SJ.219854	NC6/15
B16	Wirral Way (Heswall-Borough Boundary)	SJ.267806	NC6/16
B18	The Dungeon, Thurstaston	SJ.251831	NC6/18
B19	Piper's Lane, Heswall ⁺	SJ.253823	NC6/19
B20	Quarry Road East, Heswall [#]	SJ.266827	NC6/20
B21	Heswall Beacons [*]	SJ.271813	NC6/21
B22	Wittering Lane, Heswall	SJ.258816	NC6/22
B23	Bush Way, Heswall [*]	SJ.261818	NC6/23
B24	Gayton Wood	SJ.276802	NC6/24
B25	Gayton Hall Wood	SJ.275805	NC6/25
B28	Benty Heath Lane Ponds, Raby [#]	SJ.322791	NC6/28
B29	Willaston Copse, Raby	SJ.321788	NC6/29
B30	Barnston Dale	SJ.282837	NC6/30
B31	Murrayfield Hospital, Thingwall [#]	SJ.284842	NC6/31
B32	Manor Wood, Thornton Hough	SJ.294815	NC6/32
B33	Thornton Hough Ponds	SJ.298821	NC6/33
B34	Stanley Wood, Landican Lane, Storeton	SJ.293847	NC6/34
B36	Arrowe Park [*]	SJ.266864	NC6/36
B37	Limbo Lane Pond, Irby	SJ.26508530	NC6/37
B38	Arrowe Brook Farm Ponds, Greasby	SJ.265865	NC6/38
B39	Greasby Copse and Ponds	SJ.258866	NC6/39
B40	Storeton Wood, Higher Bebington	SJ.313846	NC6/40
B41	Old Sewage Works, Clatterbridge	SJ.323819	NC6/41
B42	Thornton Common [*]	SJ.322814	NC6/42
B43	Raby Mere	SJ.330808	NC6/43

B44	The Marfords, Brookhurst	SJ.339811	NC6/44
B45	Bromborough Golf Course [#]	SJ.33718027 SJ.33058040 SJ.33808023	NC6/45
B46	Hargrave House Farm Ponds, Brookhurst	SJ.339797	NC6/46
B47	Plymyard Dale, Brookhurst	SJ.339804	NC6/47
B48	Lowfields, Eastham	SJ.350791	NC6/48
B49	Holm Hill, West Kirby ^{#+}	SJ.222863	NC6/49
B50	Eastham Woods ^{#*}	SJ.363816	NC6/50
B51	Old Hall Road Woods, Bromborough	SJ.357822	NC6/51
B53	New Ferry Butterfly Park [*]	SJ.333852	NC6/53
B55	Burrell Road, Prenton	SJ.311860	NC6/55
B56	Wirral Ladies Golf Course, Noctorum	SJ.293884	NC6/56
B57	Bidston Hill [#]	SJ.285894	NC6/57
B59A	Wallasey Golf Course [#]	SJ.284928	NC6/59
B59B	Leasowe Gun Site [#]	SJ.277925	NC6/59
B60	Old Birket, Leasowe	SJ.284914	NC6/60
B61	Leasowe Reedmarsh [*]	SJ.27989110	NC6/61
B62	Bidston Marsh	SJ.285910	NC6/62
B63	Sandbrook Lane Pond, Upton	SJ.27208943	NC6/63
B64	Paulsfield Drive Woodland, Overchurch	SJ.262890	NC6/64
B65	Overchurch Park Woodland, Upton	SJ.264889	NC6/65
B66	Leasowe Common	SJ.252913	NC6/66
B67	Meols Field ^{#+}	SJ.244907	NC6/67
B68	Pasture Farm Ponds, Moreton [#]	SJ.25429095 SJ.25379090	NC6/68
B69	Upton Bridge Wood [#]	SJ.265875	NC6/69
B70	Colley's Farm, Thurstaston	SJ.248835	NC6/70
B71	Prenton Dell and Claypit	SJ.295858	2011 addition
B72	Former RAF Camp, Greasby	SJ.243877	2011 addition
B73	Lower Heath Wood, Thingwall	SJ.290847	2011 addition
B74	Tom's Paddock, Clatterbridge	SJ.328813	2011 addition
B76	Former Hotel Victoria, Lower Heswall	SJ.269808	2011 addition
B77	Manor Farm, Frankby	SJ.245876	2011 addition
B78	Heswall Fields	SJ.245824	NEW
B79	Frankby Cemetery	SJ.243865	NEW

* Original UDP site names have been amended.

Original UDP site boundary amended in 2011.

+ Original UDP site boundary amended in 2017.

MINUTE EXTRACT

CABINET

26 JUNE 2017

16

FINANCIAL MONITORING OUT-TURN REPORTS FOR 2016/17



Councillor Janette Williamson, Cabinet Member for Finance and Income Generation, said:

“The continuing effective management of the Council’s financial position throughout the year has helped the Council deliver an overall underspend of £2.9 million in 2016-17 – a huge achievement considering our financial position.

Our pro-active approach to treasury management has allowed us to provide additional funding to meet the rising demand for social care, in both Adults and Children’s Services, and we have continued to improve our income collection performance.

Our intentions in the Wirral Plan are clear and this is supported through investment from the Capital Programme. This year over £25 million has been used to support improvements to schools, improving roads and bridges, improving our popular leisure facilities and investing in our technology”.

Councillor Janette Williamson introduced a report which set out the Out-turn for the 2016/17 Financial Year. Appended to the report were appendices for Revenue (including details of the reserves), Capital (including resources used to fund the Programme) and the Collection Summary (including Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts). Appended to the report were three appendices:

- Outturn 2016-17 Revenue
- Outturn 2016/17 Capital
- Outturn 2016/17 Collection Summary

The Cabinet was reminded that local authorities had to produce an Annual Statement of Accounts which demonstrated the financial performance of the Council for the year and the financial position at the end of the period. The full Statement was approved by Audit and Risk Management Committee on behalf of the Council. The report informed of the key elements.

The Collection Summary provided details on income collection performance and it was noted that any sums which were deemed irrecoverable needed to be written off in accordance with the authorisation processes set out in the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Williamson informed that throughout the Financial Year the Cabinet had received Revenue Monitoring reports for each quarter. In setting the Budget for 2016/17 it had been recognised that there were on-going financial pressures mainly within Adults and Children's social care and it had been acknowledged that the savings programme was ambitious. These risks had been recognised and mitigated through the Revenue Budget Contingency of £12 million.

The use of this Contingency had been monitored through the regular Financial Monitoring reports. This had been allocated to People comprising Adult Social Services (£3.9 million) and Children's Services (£5.25 million) and to Business comprising Assets (£0.5 million) and Remodelling (£1.7 million). At the end of the year the balance remaining of £0.65 million had been reflected as an underspend.

The Monitoring report for Quarter 3 (Cabinet 20 February 2017) had projected a General Fund underspend of £0.4 million and the final position for the year had been an underspend of £2.9 million. Whilst overspending had been principally due to demand pressures within People for Adult and Children Care Services, this had been more than mitigated by underspending within Environment and Business Services. The latter largely attributable to the changes in Treasury Management and the adoption of the annuity method for calculating Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in respect of capital financing which had resulted in a significant one-off saving in 2016/17.

The Outturn showed the final figure to be £25.7 million for General Fund Balances. This included the release of Earmarked Reserves which had been agreed as part of the Council Budget for 2017/18. However, of this sum £15.7 million had been agreed to be applied to fund the 2017/18 Revenue Budget so the net result was £10 million which was in line with the required level of Balances.

It was also noted that the Balances would be supplemented in 2017/18 by the receipt of the Collection Fund surplus of £4.6 million. This would see the Balances available being £14.6 million which was above the target figure for General Fund Balances of £10 million for 2017/18.

During the year Earmarked Reserves decreased by £18.8 million (from £73.9 million at 31 March 2016 to £55.1 million at 31 March 2017). Over the last two years reserves had reduced by over £32 million which reflected their use to not only support specific projects but also, to support the annual Budget.

Councillor Williamson informed that finding ways to increase its income was now extremely important to the Council as it was faced with ongoing cuts and opportunities to do this were being explored.

Councillor Williamson reported on Capital spend on a range of projects to enhance the Council's assets. £25.3 million had been used to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan. Capital spend had been funded from borrowing of £7.2 million,

government grants of £11.8 million, useable capital receipts of £6 million and revenue/reserves £0.3 million.

Capital Receipts of £3.5 million had been received in 2016/17. There had been further progress made on the disposal of major sites including Acre Lane, Manor Drive and the former Rock Ferry High School. At 31 March 2017 £5.5 million had been available to support the Capital Programme (£2.5 million) and to support the Transformation Programme (£3 million).

Councillor Williamson reported that the Council Tax Collection Rate had been 95.4% in 2016/17. Work backlogs had reduced throughout the year and various steps had been taken to improve processing time. As a consequence, the in-year collection rate had increased from 95.3% in 2015/16. A review of Single Person Discount awards had been carried out in January 2017, and at April 2017 resulted in the removal/cessation of 1,431 discounts, which had generated additional revenue of £0.4 million. Due to the timing of the review exercise, with ceases/amendments being made up to the end of March, this inevitably impacted on collection.

The Cabinet noted that the Business Rates collection rate had been 97.6% in 2016/17. This was an increase from 97.2% in 2015/16. This improvement was also against an increase in the sum collectable which had increased from £76 million to £86 million. It had previously been reported that the Valuation Office Agency finalised a number of outstanding assessments which included two major sites.

The level of Sundry Debt arrears had been £26 million at 31 March 2017 which included £7.6 million of invoices raised in the final week of the financial year. At 31 March 2016 the arrears stood at £22.6 million which included £7 million of invoices raised in the final days of March. During 2016/17 invoices totalling £97.5 million had been raised and income of £93.2 million had been collected, including the Birkenhead Improvement District and Selective Licensing scheme processed through Debtors with the changes in Social Care funding resulting in deferred debtors increasing.

The Cabinet also considered details of further write-offs comprising mainly of Adult Social Services debtors. Members noted that whilst all attempts to recover debts had been undertaken cases where the client had died with no, or limited, assets meant there was no prospect of recovery. The Provision for Bad Debts reflected the potential need to write-off debt.

Councillor Phil Davies informed that the key messages were that the budget had been balanced. The small underspend would be used to mitigate the savings that had to be made. The amount collected had increased in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates and this was very pleasing. He stressed the importance of the Capital Programme to meet the twenty pledges in the Wirral Plan. The Council would continue to bear down on the Budget and hopefully, it may see a relaxation in terms of austerity.

Councillor Christine Spriggs flagged up the remarkable work that had been done as a result of the Council's investment in the Wirral Youth Zone. The success of this had been staggering as 4000 children and young people had signed up to be

members of the Hive which was hitting all targets and pledges around children and young people.

Councillor George Davies informed that the Hive was a world class facility sitting on the Wirral. He also informed that it was important to maximise the Council's assets in order to refurbish some Council buildings. Assets not being used could be altered or sold. This was an excellent way forward and Councillor Davies referred specifically to the ongoing improvement work to the bridge network which was very important to the Wirral Waters regeneration project.

Councillor Stuart Whittingham referred to the Highway Schemes detailed in Appendix 2 to the report. Investment into highways had been in excess of £4.2 million. The Department for Transport (DfT) highway maintenance allocation had been supplemented with a further £0.5 million for maintenance improvement schemes on unclassified and residential roads. The programme for the year had resulted in the completion of 39 resurfacing schemes, 16 footway reconstruction schemes and 25 other schemes relating to the Principal and Non-Principal Classified road network.

The Cabinet noted that the significant scheme, as part of the Sustainable Transport Enhancement Programme (STEP), had been the East Float access improvement work.

Councillor Whittingham also drew attention to bridge maintenance and in particular the North Key Weigh Bridge informing that with the technical approval procedures completed, work had started on site to replace the Dock Bridges. The large value equipment orders (i.e. hydraulic cylinders for moving the bridges) had been being placed. Over £2 million was being spent and primarily funded was from Government Grants.

Councillor Phil Brightmore drew attention to the fact that the re-roofing work at Bidston Tennis and Sports Centre had been completed along with works at West Kirby Marine Lake. In respect of the Oval Sports Centre the development works, including the fitness suite and the catering facilities continued to progress. With over £2 million invested the various improvements had seen a sustained increase in membership of the Council invigor8 scheme as numbers using the facilities continued to increase.

Councillor Brightmore informed that good financial governance had allowed the Council to mitigate future cuts up to £3 million.

Councillor Bernie Mooney informed that this was a very positive report and showed how successful the Council was being in very difficult times. It was able to invest in schools and young people. It was investing in the future.

The Cabinet noted that this was a key decision which affected all Wards within the Borough.

RESOLVED:

A. Revenue:

- (1) the Revenue Out-turn for 2016/17 which showed an underspend of £2.9 million be noted;**
- (2) the transfer of the underspend to General Fund Balances be confirmed;**
- (3) the General Fund Balances at 31 March 2017 of £25.7 million, with £15.7 million agreed to be used in the Budget 2017/17, be noted; and**
- (4) the Earmarked Reserves totalling £55.1 million as detailed in the Annex be confirmed.**

B. Capital:

- (1) the additional re-profiling of £6.3 million from 2016/17 to 2017/18 be noted;**
- (2) the financing of the Programme for 2016/17 be noted; and**
- (3) the Programme for 2017/18 and beyond be kept under review to ensure it is realistic and deliverable.**

C. Collection Summary:

- (1) the increase in Council Tax in-year collection rate from 95.3% in 2015/16 to 95.4% in 2016/17 be noted;**
- (2) the increase in Business Rates collection rate from 97.2% in 2015/16 to 97.6% in 2016/17 be noted;**
- (3) the increase in Sundry Debts from £23.6 million at 31 March 2016 to £26 million at 31 March 2017 be noted; and**
- (4) the sundry debts for Adult Social Services and other Directorates detailed in the report be written-off against the Provision for Bad Debts.**

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MINUTE EXTRACT

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

12 JUNE 2017

7 ARMC ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

The Chair, supported by the Chief Internal Auditor, introduced the Audit and Risk Management Committee Chair's Annual Report 2016/17.

Prepared in consultation with Internal Audit, the Chair's Annual Report for 2016/17 had been compiled in accordance with the CIPFA best practice publication 'A Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees'.

The report informed how the Audit and Risk Management Committee had fulfilled its terms of reference during a challenging year and noted Member's commitment to helping the development of standards and protocols across a wide range of governance areas, further assisting with improvements across the Council's governance and control environments in a timely manner.

The Chair's Annual Report further informed Members of specific matters regarding the Audit and Risk Management Committee's core activities during the year.

Resolved - That the Annual Report 2016/17 of the Audit and Risk Management Committee be approved and submitted to CABINET and to COUNCIL (for noting).

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Council – 10 July, 2017

Motions

The following motions have been submitted in accordance with the notice required by Standing Order 7(1) and are listed in accordance with Standing Order 7(2).

1. **ENDING AUSTERITY** *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Janette Williamson

Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

The outcome of the general election on the 8th June has left the country in a position of even greater uncertainty than before it was called. The Prime Minister is scrabbling around to create deals and cooperation agreements with a political party on the far fringes of UK politics which has taken regressive stances on issues such as climate change, evolution, abortion and homosexuality. This is being done in a desperate bid to cling on to power, while residents in Wirral and elsewhere are unsure if vital services - NHS, police, fire, education and local authority services such as support for the elderly, the vulnerable and the young - will survive another dose of Tory austerity. And in the chaos created by the Conservatives, it is now unclear what funding will replace the withdrawal of the revenue support grant in 2020.

The outcome of the general election should send a clear message to the Conservatives that the overwhelming majority of residents of Wirral reject the austerity policies which have decimated local services over the past seven years. This Council agrees to write to the Prime Minister to urge her to abandon her government's failed austerity agenda and commit to providing a fair funding formula that supports local authorities such as Wirral to deliver the vital public services local residents expect.

2. **TENANCY FEES** *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Ian Lewis

Seconded by Councillor Tom Anderson

Council notes that people seeking affordable homes to rent are too often faced with unfair tenancy fees which prevent them from obtaining suitable accommodation or leaves them with additional debt and financial stress.

Council therefore welcomes proposals to make the private rental market more affordable by introducing a ban on landlords and agents from requiring tenants to make any payments as a condition of their tenancy with the exception of:

- the rent
- a capped refundable security deposit
- capped refundable holding deposit and tenant default fees

Council supports measures that will cap holding deposits at no more than one week's rent and security deposits at no more than one month's rent.

Council therefore urges existing registered social landlords, private landlords and the Private Landlords Forum to participate in pre-legislative consultation and to ensure changes to information, advice and guidance for tenants post legislation.

3. LOSS OF SOCIAL HOUSING TO BAMBOO LETTINGS LLP *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia

Council notes the establishment of a private lettings company known as Bamboo Lettings LLP between Magenta Living and a housing organisation called Torus.

Council notes that Magenta are planning to transfer under a lease arrangement up to 100 social housing homes to Bamboo Lettings company for them to be let at full market rents.

Council notes that a three bedroom house offered for let by Bamboo in the Woodchurch area will cost a prospective tenant £137 per week against the social rent charged by Magenta of circa £97 per week in the same area (and against an 'affordable' rent level of £110).

In addition, Council is concerned that Bamboo Lettings also charge private sector style 'fees'; an example of these fees for a three bedroom house in the Woodchurch area is:

- Application fee - £50
- Administration fee - £75
- Guarantor fee - £50
- Check out fee - £60
- Additional deposit for a pet - £100

Council believes that these fees are not linked to the service provided, are unacceptable and extortionate and requests a justification for this regime.

Council notes the Cabinet Member for Housing has told Magenta that Wirral Council would not want to see larger 4 bedroom accommodation, those for older people and those adapted properties being transferred; and has highlighted to Magenta concerns about a number of disposals occurring in the same popular locations, thus reducing availability of social housing stock.

Council notes that there are currently 9643 people registered on the Choice Based Lettings System, of which 2348 have a housing priority need.

Council has objections to the use of social housing in this way and requests (through the Council's Managing Director for Delivery to Magenta Living) that the relationship

with Torus/Bamboo be suspended to allow the Council the opportunity to fully investigate the use of social housing stock as de facto private rented houses.

4. SUPPORT FOR NEW FERRY *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Warren Ward

Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

Following the devastating explosion in New Ferry, hundreds of Wirral residents and businesses have been affected. Residents' homes have been destroyed or badly damaged and local businesses have had to close, forcing many local people into unemployment, along with hundreds of residents who were injured, including the tragic case of a 21 year-old man who almost lost his life.

On behalf of the people of New Ferry and Port Sunlight, this Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and also the Prime Minister to urge the government to provide New Ferry with urgent financial support and to meet with community leaders and residents affected on site in New Ferry for them to see first-hand the absolute devastation caused by the explosion.

5. SECURING OUR ECONOMY IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist

Seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

Council notes that the Queen's Speech included commitments to honour the process of Brexit as interpreted by the Government. In particular, it aspired to securing 'the best possible deal', building the 'widest possible consensus' for our future 'outside the European union', providing 'certainty for individuals and businesses' and 'forging new trading relationships across the globe'.

Council also notes that, in his Mansion House speech, the Chancellor of the Exchequer placed his emphasis on 'maintaining our strong trade links with European markets after we leave the EU, as well as seeking out new opportunities for trade and investment with old friends and fast growing emerging economies alike'.

Council is anxious, however, that the route to reaching these new arrangements is unlikely to be smooth and without difficulty and will have an impact on the national and Wirral economy. The Wirral economy benefits greatly from the presence of Vauxhalls. There is a real risk of administrative barriers, paperwork and tariffs affecting the supply chains, ease of assembly and production of vehicles.

Council, therefore, appreciates the concerns put by Mike Hawes, Chief Executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, who has reportedly said:

"We waited patiently to hear how the Government square the circle of leaving the single market and the customs union while maintaining our competitiveness. We have asked for clarity and certainty".

Our region benefits from the contribution of other leading manufacturers. Council also appreciates the concerns set out by the EEF (formerly the Engineering Employers' Federation) regarding access to the single market and inward investment, believing that these issues are highly relevant to the Wirral economy.

Council, therefore, hopes that the Government will do all it can to maintain the ease with which British businesses trade with their European counterparts and sell to European consumers. Council is of the belief that the single market is essential if we are to continue to trade freely and easily as a nation and that relationship remains important to the national, regional and local economy.

Council also seeks an early resolution on EU citizens' rights in this country and is of the view that this is necessary for many sectors of the regional economy, from the exchange of ideas and research in our universities through to those working for our society in the NHS and caring sectors. Council welcomes their continuing contribution to all those sectors.

Council is alarmed at reports that the number of European Union nurses coming to work in the UK has continued to fall since last summer, with many fewer joining the Nursing and Midwifery Council register. Council asks officers to obtain an up-to-date assessment of how this may be reflected in the local NHS.

Council, therefore, believes it is important to work closely with Wirral's MPs to minimise the uncertainty and damage to our economy and services from Brexit, urges that they do their utmost to retain the advantages of the single market and work to secure whatever transitional arrangements are necessary to cope with the needs of the Wirral, regional and national economy.

6. GRENFELL TOWER DISASTER *(to be debated)*

Proposed by Councillor George Davies

Seconded by Councillor Phil Davies

Council sends its condolences and support to all those impacted by the tragic events in west London on 14 June, 2017. We also add our thanks to all those in the emergency services who acted so bravely and responded so quickly to limit the loss of life and injury.

For many in local government, housing associations, resident and community groups, it has raised questions about the safety of similar high rise accommodation and buildings and how we can prevent any repeat of these incidents.

Council welcomes the creation of Wirral's Tower Block Co-ordination Group. This group under the chair of Cllr George Davies, Cabinet Member for Housing & Community Safety, brings together representatives from various organisations including the Fire Authority, Housing Associations and appropriate Council departments, to provide answers to the numerous questions residents and others will raise regarding safety and other issues.

Wirral Council joins the call from local authorities across the country for central government to be clear in declaring it will work in a positive and constructive manner with Councils, local housing associations and building owners to adequately support the immediate safety reviews and inspections required. Furthermore, it will provide emergency support for any local residents who are potentially displaced or inconvenienced as a consequence of these investigations and will ensure Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service are adequately resourced to have the equipment and personnel to respond to incidents involving high rise buildings.

Council believes this matter is above party politics and calls on all members from across the political divides to unanimously support this motion.

7. FAIR VOTES *(the Civic Mayor to refer to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

Proposed by Councillor Pat Cleary

Seconded by Councillor Stuart Kelly

Council believes that a Parliament that more accurately reflects the views of the nation, enabling people to feel that their votes count, is more likely to develop an economic, social and environmental agenda that benefits Wirral's residents.

Following the recent general election, this Council agrees that the 'First Past the Post' voting system:

- has again failed to live up to its reputation to provide strong and stable government;
- has again yielded a wildly disproportionate allocation of seats with, for example, the Democratic Unionist Party gaining 10 seats from 292,316 votes compared with 12 seats from 2.4 million votes for the Liberal Democrats;
- has spectacularly failed to match votes to seats with 27,930 votes required to elect one MP from the Scottish National Party compared with 525,371 votes to elect one Green Party MP.

This Council:

- (a) recognises that a robust democracy must include a fair voting system and that nobody should be disenfranchised because of where they live;
- (b) applauds the many groups and organisations campaigning for fair votes including the Electoral Reform Society, Make Votes Matter and the Labour Campaign for PR;
- (c) notes that the Single Transferable Vote system is already used for local elections in Scotland and in both Northern Irish local elections and the Northern Ireland

Assembly while proportional electoral systems are used to elect the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and London;

- (d) therefore calls for the introduction of a proportional voting system
 - (i) for local elections in England and Wales;
 - (ii) for Westminster elections; and
- (e) directs that a copy of this motion be forwarded to the Leaders of all political parties represented in the UK Parliament.