

# WIRRAL COUNCIL

## ECONOMY & REGENERATION

5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	2011/12 First Quarter Performance and Financial Review: Economy and Regeneration
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	All
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Interim Director of Corporate Services
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	Councillor Phil Davies, Councillor George Davies
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	No

### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out performance of the Council's Corporate Plan 2011-14 for April to June 2011 in relation to economy and regeneration, and provides members with an overview of performance, resource and risk monitoring.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the contents of this report be noted.

### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 Council approved the Corporate Plan on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011. This report provides a quarterly progress on delivering the economy and regeneration section of the Council's Corporate Plan, including performance of relevant projects and indicators and associated financial and risk monitoring information.

### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

#### 4.1 **Performance Summary**

The presentation accompanying this report provides an overview of quarter one performance with more detail outlined in this report including corrective action for performance issues.

#### 4.2 Your ECONOMY

##### **What's working well:**

- A single streamlined contact point for all investors is being implemented
- 162 business assists took place during April and June 2011 (116% over the target)
- Wirral Council has announced that it has renewed it's agreement with the England Illegal Money Lending Team, to target loan sharks who may be operating in the Borough and to conduct investigations into illegal money lenders
- The Wirral Apprentice Programme has been commended as a model of good practice nationally and regionally, and is increasingly being recognised as an exemplar of effective partnership working. Most recently, in May 2011, the Programme received a number of awards at the NW Regional finals of the National Apprenticeship Awards. These included one Wirral Apprentice employer winning the Small Business Award; another Wirral Apprentice

Employer achieving a commendation; and the Council itself won a Special Recognition Award for its innovative model and approach

- Following the extremely successful Wirral Apprentice programme, Wirral Council has launched a new initiative to support businesses so that they can employ more staff and expand. The Wirral Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) is a flexible programme that supports companies to employ people on an anticipated 52 week contract with the Council contributing funding for the first 26 weeks of that contract.
- 384 jobs have been created or safeguarded via Invest Wirral during April to June 2011 (66% over the target)

### Performance against the Corporate Plan

There are no performance issues identified at quarter one within this theme of the Corporate Plan.

### Resource implications

Policy options in regards of business support and minimising impacts of empty shops are currently being implemented. The Wirral Waters scheme continues to be developed with positive benefits for Wirral's economy anticipated.

Support continues for the 'Think Big Investment Fund' with a number of grants being awarded in this quarter.

### Future challenges and risks

The development of the Wirral Waters project by Peel Holdings continues and it is anticipated that this will create significant economic opportunities for the Borough. Peel Holdings has also submitted a planning application for an International Trade Centre in Birkenhead. Activity also continues to support Wirral businesses.

## 4.3 Your NEIGHBOURHOOD

### What's working well:

- Wirral's Cabinet has approved a new Housing Strategy which will direct policy until 2026, following an extensive public and stakeholder consultation

### Performance against Corporate Plan project(s)

The following projects have been assessed as **amber**:

Portfolio	Key project	Status	Corrective Action
Housing & Community Safety	Deliver a heating improvement programme to 140 vulnerable private sector residents per year in 2011-12 and 2012-13	<b>Amber</b>	The original target for Number of households assisted will be met over the two year period, but with greater numbers in year 2. This is due to the start of the scheme being delayed until the Financial Assistance Policy has been approved, which is a statutory requirement.

Portfolio	Key project	Status	Corrective Action
Social Care & Inclusion	Develop a housing plan for people with Learning Difficulties by August/September 2011	Amber	Delays have arisen as a result of integrating the work of the Housing Sub Group with the wider Learning Disabilities Partnership Board agenda - timescales will be pushed back by three months.
	Renegotiate /Retender Supported People/Housing services for people with Learning Difficulties	Amber	Currently working in partnership with Adult Social Services (DASS) - timescales may be affected, due to changes in DASS's own contractual arrangements (Existing LD contracts to be extended until September 2011 to allow time for renegotiated services to be implemented)
	To review housing services for at risk young people and young people in care by August 2011	Amber	Timescales have been amended to March 2012.

### Resource implications

There are no resource implications identified at quarter one within this theme of the Corporate Plan.

#### 4.4 Customer Feedback

Between 1st April – 30th June 2011 there was a total of 1,688 customer feedback contacts recorded; 3% less than the previous quarter though slightly above the quarterly average of 1,656 contacts for 2010/11. By channel, internet and email was used for 57% of all contacts.

Compared to the previous quarter, there was a 25% decrease in corporate complaints and a 24% decrease in statutory complaints, offset by a 55% rise in Ombudsman contacts (22 contacts in total) with Children's Services (Schools) and Adult Social Services (Care Services) experiencing increased contact.

Customer suggestions, mainly prompted by the questionnaire sent out with council tax bills in March 2011, displayed an 85% increase from the previous quarter.

There was an improved average response rate for complaints, falling from 14 working days in the last quarter to 11 working days in this quarter (corporate target 15 working days). Councillor and MP enquiries took on average longer to respond to in this quarter, taking 6.5 working days compared to 5 working days in the last quarter/6 working days per quarter for 2010/11 (corporate target 10 working days).

There was a 38.5% increase in Children's Services complaints compared to the previous quarter, all other departments reported decreased numbers of complaints following on from the previous quarter.

The focus for complaints and wider customer feedback is 'putting things right and learning from it' and Corporate Services reported 29% of their complaints resulted in some positive organisational learning for future service delivery. The Department of Law, HR and Asset Management and Adult Social Services reported no changes implemented.

## 5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

5.1 The Corporate Risk Register is currently being revised to take account of the new Corporate Plan.

5.2 Whilst risk issues are identified under the Corporate Theme the major issues identified as posing the greatest risk to the achievement of the objectives are:-

- Future resource constraints including forthcoming Local Government Resource Review may impact upon ability to meet citizen expectations.
- Wirral Waters investment (positive risks)

It is planned to highlight and deal with any other risks through the introduction of Executive Team risk identification sessions with an updated Corporate Risk Strategy and Corporate Risk Register being presented for consideration by Cabinet in September 2011.

## 6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 Not applicable

## 7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation in relation to the draft Corporate Plan engaged individuals and organisations from across Wirral's diverse communities and this is reflected in the Corporate Plan.

## 8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 The Corporate Plan sets out commitments and clear actions in relation to working with voluntary, community and faith sector organisations to improve outcomes for local people.

## 9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 The Council Budget 2011/12, Schools Budget 2011/12 and Capital Programme 2011/13 have been agreed and support the delivery of the Corporate Plan. Resource implications relating to the delivery of actions in the Corporate Plan have been set out in individual departmental plans. Further details are contained in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 which are placed within the Library.

9.2 The projected general fund balance at 31 March 2012 is £11.5 million as shown below

Details	£million	£million
<b>Projected General Fund balance at 31 March 2012 when setting the budget for 2011/12</b>		6.9
<b>Cabinet decisions</b>		
17 March – Fernleigh retained		-0.5
23 June - Financial out-turn 2010/11 showed a net increase in the balance of £1 million after meeting a net revenue overspend of £0.3 million		+1.0
23 June - Integrated Transport Unit additional funding		-0.3
23 June - EVR/VS scheme funded as part of 2010/11 thereby releasing the requirement to fund in 2011/12		+4.4
<b>Projected variances / potential overspends</b>		
None declared although pressures identified at the end of June 2011 within: - Adult Social Services £6.0 million - Children and Young People £5.6 million		-
<b>General Fund balance at 31 March 2012 based upon the latest projections</b>		11.5

9.3 Both Adult Social Services and Children and Young People Departments have highlighted significant pressures on their departmental budgets. Any subsequent overspend would impact upon the general fund balances.

9.4 The capital programme is summarised below:

<b>Spend</b>	<b>Original Approval £000</b>	<b>Forecast June £000</b>
Adult Social Services	1,154	2,943
Children & Young People	25,889	39,195
Corporate Services	5,181	10,788
Finance	1,000	3,671
Law, HR and Asset Mgt	8,163	8,779
Technical Services	7,872	11,564
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>49,259</b>	<b>76,940</b>

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Original Approval £000</b>	<b>Forecast June £000</b>
Borrowing	15,905	28,553
Capital Receipts	3,000	3,000
Revenue, reserves, contributions	300	4,194
Grants - Education	23,441	26,283
Grants - Integrated Transport	1,155	1,155
Grants - Local Transport Plan	3,095	3,095
Grants - Other	2,363	10,660
<b>Total resources</b>	<b>49,259</b>	<b>76,940</b>

9.5 The 2011/12 capital programme has increased by £28 million due to £10 million of additional grant funding mainly associated with educational activity and £18 million slippage from the 2010/11 capital programme. The majority of projects transferred from 2010/11 involve schools, highways, housing and IT projects.

9.6 Progress continues to be made on a number of schemes including those at the Birkenhead Girls Academy, Cathcart Primary School, the former Mendell Lodge scheme, Williamson Art Gallery and Landican Crematorium as detailed under the Corporate Plan themes.

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Legal implications relating to the actions set out in the Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate.

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The Corporate Plan has a clear focus on supporting those who are disadvantaged, including the delivery of specific services and through ensuring that all of Wirral's diverse communities are equally able to access services.

11.2 Equalities implications relating to the actions set out in the Corporate Plan will be addressed by departments as appropriate, and details set out in individual departmental plans. This work is also monitored by the Corporate Equalities and Cohesion Group and the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 Carbon reduction is a specific goal in the Corporate Plan, with associated actions and measures as set out in the agreed Interim Carbon Budget 2011-12.

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 Planning and Community Safety is a specific goal in the Corporate Plan, with associated actions and measures.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **To be placed in the web library:**

**Appendix 1** – Financial Monitoring Summary

**Appendix 2** – Capital Monitoring Summary

**Appendix 3** – Corporate Risk Monitoring Summary

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Previous Council and Cabinet reports as detailed in the subject history below:

### **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>CABINET – Q1 Performance &amp; Financial Review</b>	<b>21 July 2011</b>
<b>CABINET - Delivering the Corporate Plan</b>	<b>17 April 2011</b>
<b>COUNCIL - Adoption of Corporate Plan 2011-14</b>	<b>14 April 2011</b>
<b>CABINET - Draft Corporate Plan for 2011-14</b>	<b>17 March 2011</b>