

**CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT**

<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Councillor George Davies</b>
<b>CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods, Housing and Engagement</b>
<b>CO-ORINDATING CHIEF OFFICER</b>	<b>Emma Degg</b>

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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

**1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME**

The last financial year, 2013/14 saw the completion of 352 affordable homes which included:-

- 38 Help To Buy / FirstBuy equity loans used to assist the purchase of new build homes across various private development sites in Eastham, Birkenhead, Rock Ferry, Bromborough, Beechwood and New Ferry
- Magenta Living completed 139 units of accommodation through both new build and bringing private sector properties back into use in.
- 40 units of accommodation for both shared ownership and affordable rent by Riverside at Bromborough Pool.
- 14 two bed bungalows for Shared Ownership at the Poulton House seeing the final phase of the Extra Care site completed.
- Wirral Methodist Housing Association completed 8 two bed apartments for Affordable Rent at Hamilton Road in New Brighton.

The above schemes developed with our Registered Provider partners have seen a total of £22m investment in the Borough of which £2.37m was secured through the Homes and Communities Agency Affordable Homes Programmes and £126,000 supported via the Council's New Homes Bonus award.

A target to deliver 300 affordable homes has been set for 2014/15, however over 400 units could be completed if Registered Providers are successful in securing additional Homes and Communities Agency funding for an additional 111 units across 6 separate sites to be announced in July 2014.

Anticipated completions in 2014/15 will include; 184 affordable rented homes by Magenta Living at New Hey Road (formerly St Benedicts School) and schemes at Victoria View, New Brighton and Tollemache Road in Birkenhead. Your Housing Group are developing a mix of 33 homes for affordable rent on the former Poulton Primary School in Poulton. Wirral Methodist Housing Association are developing 24 two bed apartments at Hamilton Road in New Brighton. Across these five sites a total of £29.51m inward investment will be achieved and 13 apprenticeships will be created.

To date in 2014/15, 8 Help To Buy equity loans have been completed, assisting buyers to purchase homes at the Sevenoaks site in Rock Ferry and St James's Gate site in Birkenhead. St James Gate is the recently launched the next phase of development on Laird Street which will see the completion of a further 125 new homes in addition to the scheme at St Josephs place which has seen the recent completion of 67 new homes. Already 18 homes for Affordable Rent for Magenta Living have been completed on the St James's Gate site (bringing inward investment of £2.31m of which £300,000 was secured through the Homes and Communities Agency Affordable Homes Programme) The Birkenhead sites are some of the most successful schemes for Keepmoat in the North West and building is therefore already slightly ahead of schedule to cope with the demand. Keepmoat will be looking at developing plans for Phase 3 of the programme on the Station and Tyrer Street site in front of Birkenhead North station later this year.

## **2. HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY / AFFORDABLE WARMTH**

In May 2014, Wirral Council was named runner-up at the National Green Deal and ECO Awards 2014, recognising its support and proactive approach to partnership working with British Gas on the Wallasey solid wall insulation programme. Due to the programme's success locally, and Wirral Council's continued strong backing, British Gas maintained their commitment and will have invested over £7m in energy efficiency improvements before the scheme ends in July. Sub-contractor BR Contracting have also ensured local people have benefited from employment and training opportunities with the company. Working with Wirral Met College, they have employed 45 plastering students since the programme began.

Energy Projects Plus has completed its contract with the Council to engage 350 households in Tranmere North, the worst area for fuel poverty in the Borough and offer a range of support including energy efficiency advice, energy switching advice and fuel debt assistance as well as distributing water saving packs in conjunction with United Utilities. Energy Projects Plus also promoted the assistance available through training sessions to community organisations and Woodlands Primary School.

## **3. HEALTHY HOMES PROGRESS**

The Housing Standards Team were successful in securing Public Health Outcomes funding to extend the Healthy Homes project into the Community NHS Trust until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to help reduce health inequalities. This will see the closer alignment of the work of housing standards officers with the health trainers and other community health services. The Healthy Homes scheme seeks to secure better outcomes for vulnerable residents in poor housing by ensuring that hazards in the home that are contributing to poor health are reduced or removed altogether. It will also promote closer links with the community and voluntary sector and bring in additional support to vulnerable residents across a wide range of public services from a single visit to the home. Funding will also allow vulnerable residents on low incomes to access emergency heating grants and other assistance to help provide affordable warmth as a result of excess cold.

## **4. NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAMME**

2014/2015 will see the Constituency Teams continuing to support the Constituency Committees, developing and implementing new Constituency Plans, administering constituency budgets, developing and implementing constituency engagement

frameworks and communication strategies, delivering constituency behaviour change programmes, co-ordinating service hub activities, and enabling residents' issues to be dealt with quickly and at source.

The Wallasey Constituency Team are now located at Leasowe Millennium Centre, The Wirral South Constituency Team at the Bebington Civic Suite Annexe, and the Wirral West Constituency Team at Hoylake Job Centre Plus (in preparation for the Golf Open).

The Wirral Public Service Board will continue to provide the strategic steer for the constituency footprint way of working, and the four Local Public Service Boards will provide the operational co-ordination of activities.

Constituency Budgets for 2014/2015 (including 2013/14 under-spend) are as follows:

<b>Constituency &amp; Fund Name</b>	<b>2014/2015 Budgets</b>
<b>Wirral West</b>	
Wirral Council	67,840.32
Improving Road Safety	38,875.00
Promoting Active Travel & Health	38,875.00
Your Wirral	35,000.00
Public Health Outcomes Fund	3,655.92
Public Health Voluntary Sector Support	5,304.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>189,550.84</b>
<b>Wirral South</b>	
Wirral Council	88,720.50
Improving Road Safety	38,875.00
Promoting Active Travel & Health	38,875.00
Your Wirral	40,000.00
Public Health Outcomes Fund	25,000.00
Public Health Voluntary Sector Support	25,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>256,470.50</b>
<b>Wallasey</b>	
Wirral Council	89,391.00
Improving Road Safety	38,875.00
Promoting Active Travel & Health	38,875.00
Your Wirral	50,000.00
Public Health Outcomes Fund	5,000.00
Public Health Voluntary Sector Support	8,160.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>230,301.00</b>
<b>Birkenhead</b>	
Wirral Council	100,000.00
Improving Road Safety	38,875.00
Promoting Active Travel & Health	38,875.00
Your Wirral	75,000.00
Public Health Outcomes Fund	25,000.00
Public Health Voluntary Sector Support	25,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>302,750.00</b>