

Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Tuesday, 22 January 2019

REPORT TITLE	Update on Liverpool City Region developments
REPORT OF	Rose Boylan, Policy & Strategy Manager

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out a brief overview of latest developments at the Liverpool City Region (LCR), including activity underway to implement the City Region devolution deal.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION

Committee is requested to note and comment on latest developments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

Committee have requested regular updates and consideration of City Region developments.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 N/a

3.0 LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

A wide range of activity continues, of which the following is just a small extract.

3.1 LCR Cycling and Walking network

Work is set to begin on the first phase of a potential 600km key network of cycling and walking routes across the Liverpool City Region.

The Combined Authority recently approved funding of £8.3m for the first 55km phase of the network. The proposed 600km cycling and walking network is based on upgrades to around 31 key routes across the Liverpool City Region over the next 10 years.

The network will be planned on a whole city region basis, both improving links to the public transport network and between residential areas, employment, training and retail sites.

Meanwhile, work is already underway on bidding for funding for the next phase of the network with the launch of a questionnaire on people's cycling and walking habits to help shape what a wider network would look like. Two thirds of all journeys in the city region are less than five kilometres but half of those are made by car. Through the Local Journeys Strategy, the CA wants to improve the infrastructure as a key incentive to encourage people out of their cars, particularly for shorter journeys.

The cycling and walking network is one of the first actions of the Local Journeys Strategy, as part of an approach to reduce congestion, improve air quality and bring significant health benefits

For Wirral, the cycling/walking infrastructure is included as Work Programme 6 Leasowe –Seacombe Ferry Terminal.

The new approach links well with Wirral's increasing focus on the importance of cycling eg:

- Wirral planned cycling investment, consultation on Tower Road South
- Peel's planned cycling Strategy as part of Wirral Waters, supported by Chris Boardman
- Borough of Culture and Year of the Environment 2019 – focus on getting outside, health and wellbeing

3.2 Year of the Environment 2019

More detail is being released on the key themes and activities being co-ordinated across the Liverpool City Region, in support of Year of Environment in 2019. (see Appendix 1).

The Year is being co-ordinated by Nature Connect, chaired by Gideon Ben-Tovim, who is also the Mayoral Advisor on the Natural Environment. The Environment Agency is also a key partner in the promotion of the event, both locally and nationally, together with a strong partnership of many stakeholder organisations across the public, private, community and voluntary sector. The Year will be formally launched at an event on 11th January, following on from the CA meeting, plus a number of events to be held in each of the LCR Local Authorities.

Wirral is working closely with LCR partners to link in with our Borough of Culture as well as with local Wirral Together activity as part of developing the Environmental Deal.

3.3 Inclusive Growth

As part of our commitment to inclusive economic growth, Wirral Council has just commenced a new Local Community Wealth Building project with the Centre for Local Economic Studies (CLES), which will help us and our partners to drive inclusive growth and ensure more public money is spent with local employers.

Over the last 10 years, CLES has worked with a number of local authorities and wider anchor institutions such as universities, housing associations and the NHS, to drive inclusive growth and local wealth building. With a focus on social value and procurement, employment, and use of assets, the approach achieves wider social, economic and environmental value from anchor activity across each of the areas.

We are all committed to building our Liverpool City Regional economy to achieve ambitious growth but also to ensure that growth brings benefits for local people communities and businesses; and helps to tackle wider social and economic disparities across the region. Discussions are underway to assess current public sector spend and suggest how more local social value could be developed through the supply chain.

In addition, we may want to consider:

- (a) Workforces – maximising the benefits of investment in staff by building a skilled and committed workforce and providing an exemplar to local businesses; and
- (b) Land, Property and Investments – how we can use our assets to lever in additional investment, to encourage the development of new businesses and support new methods of financial intermediation.

A series of workshops are being planned with LCR partners to consider how we can implement best practice in relation to inclusive growth and social value across our region.

3.4 Brexit

Wirral has been leading extensive discussions in relation to latest developments and potential implications of Brexit; considering the current draft withdrawal Agreement; analysing the implications of a No Deal; and finally, looking at some of the potential positive opportunities for Wirral and the Liverpool City Region.

3.4.1 Draft withdrawal agreement

A lot of the detail is still to be worked up, but the withdrawal agreement covers a number of key points, including:

- How much money the UK will have to pay the EU in order to break the partnership - about £39bn
- How to avoid the return of a physical border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland if it becomes the frontier between the UK and the EU
- If the deal is agreed, we move into the transition period 29 March 2019-December 2020) to allow the UK and EU to make a trade deal and to give businesses the time to adjust
- What will happen to UK citizens living elsewhere in the EU, and equally, what will happen to EU citizens living in the UK – see below

3.4.2 EU settlement scheme

There is some specific legislation and guidance in relation to the rights of EU citizens who are in the UK and a number of roles for Local Authorities including:

- Raising awareness of the Scheme
- Informing Community Groups
- Applying on behalf of EU looked after children

Full details can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-community-leaders-toolkit>

3.4.3 Trade

During transition, current EU laws will continue to apply, but beyond that it's not clear what tariffs, regulations or checks might be deemed necessary to allow us to trade in goods or services with EU countries.

3.4.4 Ports and Borders

Both port bosses and road haulage firms have been cautiously encouraged by the draft agreement, believing the movement of goods and people will continue to be smooth during the transition period. However there is still much uncertainty beyond that. Some goods coming into NI from the rest of the UK would be subject to new checks and controls if the Brexit backstop is implemented.

3.4.5 Policing and security

The proposed deal allows the UK to remain part of a number of hugely important policing and security arrangements - for now. After that, it will require a special security treaty - including a new form of extradition and database sharing.

3.4.6 Healthcare

It is vital for the NHS, patients and pharmaceutical companies that there are no shortages of drugs and medical devices after 29 March 2019, or during any transitional period. NHS staffing also remains a key issue. Although in theory EU nationals already working in the UK can apply for permanent resident status, it is not clear how many will decide to do so, or indeed how many others may choose to come in the future.

There is currently a great deal of uncertainty about whether the draft Agreement will be supported by Parliament. If it is not accepted, the UK would leave the EU on

29th March 2019 with No Deal. This would have significant implications – for example:

- **Customs and transport infrastructure** - Significant impact would be felt on customs arrangements around goods and also entry by EU nationals into the UK. Wirral and LCR have port access along its coastline which provides access points both for individuals and goods
- **Freedom of movement** - Changes to both UK residents in EU and EU residents currently in UK
- **Skills and workforces shortages** – Skilled EU workers especially in the Construction; Health & Social care; Hospitality sectors
- **General economic impact** – eg Trade and market restrictions; issues for local Procurement
- **Procurement** and supply chains may be adversely affected
- **Emergency Planning** – LCR partners are considering civil emergency contingency management in the event of a Brexit no deal or other scenarios
- **EU funding** – Wirral and the LCR have benefitted considerably from previous EU funds – including ESF and ERDF. Although there have been some commitments made to honour funding to 2020, it is unclear what will happen after that. The Government is currently developing proposals for a Shared Prosperity Fund.

There are clearly a range of potential implications for the Council; partners; businesses and residents. Ongoing discussions are underway with Wirral Chamber and local businesses; with LCR partners; and Wirral is planning a City Region Regional Brexit Sounding Board with the LGA in the New Year, to discuss the issues and next steps.

Detailed local work is currently underway to further understand the issues for Wirral and the City Region, and to prepare our response and plans as far as possible. Further updates will be brought back as the detail emerges.

Conclusion

Further updates on all of the above will be brought back to this Committee as further detail emerges in the coming months. As previously stated, the above is just a short snapshot of LCR activity, and further detail on all of the most recent developments can be found here <http://liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/>

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Devolution arrangements propose the devolution of financial resources to LCR.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

N/a

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

At this time, no additional cost is expected to be incurred by LCR local authorities as a result of arrangements to deliver the devolution deal.

7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Wirral, along with City Region partners, continues to brief members and officers; circulate information and raise awareness of LCR developments through a wide range of approaches and communications.

8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct equality implications associated with this report as it deals with the issue of devolution at a strategic level. Equality analysis will be carried out as part of the detailed implementation as appropriate.

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SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
P&P Regeneration & Environment Committee	18 January 2016
P&P Regeneration & Environment Committee	2 March 2016
Council	13 September 2016
Cabinet	14 November 2016
Council	8 December 2016
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	6 December 2016
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24 January 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	29 March 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4 July 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	19 September 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	29 November 2017
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	23 January 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	27 th March 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4 th July 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	September 2018
Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee	November 2018



Mission Statement

“2019 will be a year of green action across Liverpool City Region where people from all backgrounds will have the opportunity to be involved in projects that improve the natural world. Our aim is to leave a better environment for the next generation to inherit and make our area one of the best places in the country to live, work and flourish.”

“Cleaner, Greener, Well, Together”

Aims

Support the National Year of Action
 Help deliver the Greenest UK city region
 Highlight the economic contribution the environment provides
 Increase children and young people’s connection to nature
 Showcase outstanding blue green assets of the Liverpool City Region
 Celebrate and promote the range of environmental organisations
 Encourage a range of practical actions that inspire
 Use 2019 as a catalyst for ongoing positive environmental behaviour

Themes for activities:

- A) Air Quality
- B) Climate Change and Resilience
- C) Green Spaces, Habitats and Biodiversity
- D) Connecting and Engaging Communities with Nature
- E) Health and Wellbeing
- F) Sustainable Energy
- G) Reduce Waste
- H) Water

