



Policy and Resources Committee

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| Date: | Wednesday, 20 March 2024 |
| Time: | 6.00 p.m. |
| Venue: | Committee Room 1 - Birkenhead Town Hall |

Contact Officer: Anna Perrett
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This meeting will be [webcast](#)

AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- 2. APOLOGIES**
- 3. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

- 4. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 February 2024.

- 5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

5.1 Public Questions

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by Friday 15 March to the Council's Monitoring Officer (via the online form here: [Public Question Form](#)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question by the deadline for submission.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol](#)

5.2 Statements and Petitions

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Friday 15 March to the Council's Monitoring Officer (committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Committee if provided to Democratic and Member Services no later than 10 working days before the meeting, at the discretion of the Chair. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding three minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. If a petition contains more than 5,000 signatures, it will be debated at a subsequent meeting of Council for up to 15 minutes, at the discretion of the Mayor.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your statement/petition by the deadline for submission.

5.3 Questions by Members

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

SECTION A - KEY AND OTHER DECISIONS

- 6. ALLOCATION OF IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FUND (Pages 9 - 16)**
- 7. REGENERATION DELIVERY RESOURCING (Pages 17 - 26)**
- 8. LEVELLING UP FUND 3 LISCARD - INCLUSION IN SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER PILOT (Pages 27 - 36)**

Appendix 1 to follow. Information awaited from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

9. **COUNCIL CHANGE PROGRAMME (Pages 37 - 66)**
10. **COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (Pages 67 - 96)**
11. **BIRKENHEAD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT UPDATE (Pages 97 - 104)**

SECTION B - WORK PROGRAMME / OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

12. **WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 105 - 112)**
13. **MINUTES OF THE SENIOR OFFICER AND STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE (Pages 113 - 116)**

To note the minutes of the meeting of the Senior Officer and Staffing Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 6 February and Wednesday 7 February 2024.

14. **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
15. **BIRKENHEAD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT UPDATE - EXEMPT APPENDIX (Pages 117 - 120)**

Policy & Resources Committee Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this committee can be found at the end of this agenda.

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 February 2024

Present:

Councillor P Stuart (Chair)

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|------------|
| Councillors | J Robinson | JE Green |
| | J Williamson | H Cameron |
| | P Gilchrist | S Mountney |
| | EA Grey | L Rennie |
| | A Davies | P Cleary |
| | S Powell-Wilde | H Gorman |
| | T Jones | J Bird |

106 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting as well as those watching the webcast.

107 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

108 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and any other relevant interest and to state the nature of the interest. No such interests were declared.

109 **MINUTES**

The Chair advised Members that a minor correction was required in respect to minute 103 "Capital Monitoring Quarter 3" The resolution did not state that a referral to Council was requested. The minutes should be amended to read,

Recommend to Council – that,

1. the additional funding for the schemes referred to in section 3.7 in this report be approved.
2. the changes to the programme detailed in section 3.8 be approved.
3. the revised Capital Programme of £97 million for 2023/24, including the virements of budget referred to in Appendix C of this report be approved.

It was then,

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2024 be approved as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the correction outlined by the Chair.

110 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no Public Questions, Statements or Petitions had been received.

111 2024/25 BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Director of Finance submitted the report setting out the draft budget for the 2024/25 financial year. The draft budget was based on the extensive work and analysis undertaken by officers and the finance working group and was presented for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee. Members were informed that if approved, the budget and medium term financial strategy would be presented to Council on 26 February 2024.

The report contained several appendices, some of which were required to be published as part of the statutory annual budget process and others that provided the Committee with relevant information relating to short and medium-term budget planning, inclusive of consultation aspects and financial assumptions. It was reported that those assumptions would potentially change and that they would be reported through the Council's governance processes for budget monitoring to the Policy and Service Committees.

The 2024/25 draft budget had been compiled using the figures in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25 as the final settlement was expected to be published after the publication date of the report, in early February 2024. Any material changes to the final settlement that impact on the assumptions included within this report were reported verbally to the Committee at the meeting. The budget proposals had been produced following extensive engagement of the Policy & Resources Committee, Finance sub-working group and other Policy and Service Committees during the last year. This process had identified the need to reflect the Council Plan priorities, particularly the delivery of high quality, efficient, universal services to all residents.

The Chair thanked all Members and officers for their full participation in the budget setting process, which had enabled the Director of Finance to submit the report and recommendations for Members consideration this evening. The Chair explained that he had contacted Group Leaders with a proposed additional recommendation to those published as follows.

“6. Authorise the reinstalment of the one-off Saving of £400k from the temporary closure of Wallasey Town Hall, in full, until April 2025 and add the additional £246k saving this produces to the £1m investment fund for activities linked to visible improvement in services across the borough.”

It was then moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Tony Jones, that the officer recommendations as detailed in the report be approved, subject to the inclusion of the above additional recommendation.

The Political Group Leaders and a number of Members echoed the views expressed by the Leader in respect to the collaborative work undertaken by representatives of all political groups in the budget setting process both via policy and service committee and the finance sub working group.

Councillor Pat Cleary then proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Jo Bird, in respect to recommendation 4 (d) which was to delete the words “finance sub-committee” and replace them with “the relevant Policy and Service Committee”.

The amendment was then put to the vote and lost (3:12).

The original motion was then put, and it was:

Resolved - That,

1. Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, following consultation with the Chair and Group Spokespersons of the Policy & Resources Committee, to do anything necessary – including minor financial adjustments – to give effect to the proposals contained in this report and address any funding changes, if any.

2. Note and consider the response to the financial proposals forming a draft budget for the purposes of consultation under section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act, set out as below be noted:

Appendix 1 Budget Proposals

Appendix 2 Budget consultation

Appendix 3 Policy & Service Committee budget proposals feedback

Appendix 4 The Dedicated Schools Grant Schools Budget

Appendix 5 Provisional Council Tax Statutory Calculations

Appendix 6 Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

Appendix 7 Medium-Term Financial Strategy

Appendix 8 Budget proposal changes since November 2023

Appendix 9 Council Tax Base Calculation Process and Associated Background Information.

3. Recommend to Council a Revenue Budget of £399.603m, noting that the Section 151 Officer in liaison with the Monitoring Officer and Head of Paid Service may need to make adjustments to the Budget estimates before the preparation of final reports for Full Council on 26 February 2024.

4. Accordingly recommend that Council:

a) Approve the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) set out as Appendix 7

b) Approve increases to the Council's fees and charges equal to or above the annual Consumer Price Index reported by the Office for National Statistics in September 2023, unless either of the following conditions apply:

- i. There is a statutory constraint that prevents such an increase,**
- ii. The Council is operating in a market whereby such an increase would result in the Council being uncompetitive.**

c) Approve the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy for Business Rates for 2024/25 set out as Appendix 6.

d) Approve the creation of a £1m project fund within the budget for 2024-25 as set out in section 3 and that oversight of the project fund be retained by the Finance Sub-Committee.

e) Approve that Unearmarked Reserves (General Fund Balances) is maintained at a figure not lower than £13.18m for the course of the 2024/25 financial year.

f) Agree the Budget Proposals as set out in Appendix 1 and authorise, in respect of the Budget Proposals, that the Director with portfolio undertake such actions as they consider necessary to implement the agreed Budget and deliver the savings, income and efficiency proposals developed as part of the formulation process and update Committees accordingly.

g) Approve the 2024/25 Schools Budget of £378.552m

5. Recommend (subject to a separate vote at Council) that Council:

a. Sets the Band D Council Tax at £1,888.22 for the Wirral Borough Council element of the Council Tax, representing a general increase of 2.99% and 2.00% ringfenced increase to Adult Social Care, and the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2024/25 of £181.3m as detailed in Appendix 5.

b. Notes that the additional precepts from the Police & Crime Commissioner for Merseyside and the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority remain in estimated form and delegates authority to the Section 151 Officer to implement any variation to the overall council tax arising from the final notification of the precepts.

6. Authorise the reinstalment of the one-off Saving of £400k from the temporary closure of Wallasey Town Hall, in full, until April 2025 and add the additional £246k saving this produces to the £1m investment fund for activities linked to visible improvement in services across the borough.

112 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024-29

The Director of Finance submitted the report requesting Members to consider the proposed Capital Programme 2024-29 and to recommend it to Council for approval. The report included information regarding the revenue implications of the Programme and an update on the latest forecast for capital receipts. The 2024-29 Capital Programme represented a combination of schemes originally approved as part of the 2023-28 Programme, updated through the Capital Monitoring reports in 2023-24 and new bids for inclusion as detailed in the report.

Resolved – that Council be recommended to approve,

1. the new bids as detailed in Appendix B to this report, requiring £3.3 million of funding for inclusion in the Capital Programme.

2. the Capital Programme 2024-29 as detailed in Appendix C to this report.

113 CAPITAL FINANCING STRATEGY 2024/25

The Director of Finance submitted a report which outlines the Council's treasury management activity which was underpinned by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) 2021 Code of Practice on Treasury Management ("the Code"). It was explained that the code required to approve the annual Capital Financing Strategy. The report further explained how the Council met its legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

Resolved – that Council be recommended to approve,

1.the Capital Strategy for 2024/25;

2. that the associated Prudential Indicators to be adopted, as detailed within this report and

3. the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy as set out in Appendix A of this report.

114 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25

The Director of Finance presented the Treasury Management report. The report outlined the process for the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and risks associated with those activities. The Council had substantial sums of money both borrowed and invested and was therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. It was explained that the successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk was therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.

Resolved – that Council be recommended to approve,

(1) the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/2025.

(2) the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2024/2025.

(3) the Treasury Management Policy Statement

115 INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2024/25

The Director of Finance presented the report and advised Members that In February 2018, the former Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), (now Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) published updated 'Guidance on Local Government Investments'.

The previous edition covered only Treasury Management investments. In recent years local authorities have had an increasing focus on commercial activities including but not exclusive to property. Such activity has the potential to bring both increased returns and increased positive and negative risk. The revised Guidance on Local Authority Investments required that a separate Investment Strategy focusing on non-treasury investments is produced and approved annually by Council. This report fulfilled the requirement of the DLUHC to produce an investment strategy that covers non-treasury activities.

Resolved – that Council be recommended to approve the Investment Strategy for 2024/2025 which includes potential investment in the following activity areas:

1. Commercial Property
2. Service Investments: Loans;
3. Service Investment: Shares (non-currently held); and
4. Loan Commitments and Financial Guarantees

116 **2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER THREE (THE PERIOD TO 31 DEC 2023)**

The Director of Finance presented the report, which set out the financial monitoring information for the Council as at Quarter 3 (31 December) of 2023/24. The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance, including progress on the delivery of the 2023/24 saving programme and a summary of reserves and balances, to enable the Committee to take ownership of the budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

At the end of Quarter 3, there was a forecast adverse position of £7.97m on Directorate spend which can be largely offset by utilising the contingency budget and expected savings from reduced energy costs. This position is based on activity to date, projected trends in income and expenditure and changes to Council funding.

Resolved – that,

1. the Directorate forecast adverse position of £7.97m presented at Quarter 3, largely offset by utilising £5.0m of contingency budgets and £2.2m of expected savings from reduced energy costs be noted.
2. the progress on delivery of the 2023/24 savings programme at Quarter 3 be noted.
3. the forecast level of reserves and balances at Quarter 3.
4. Note budget virements detailed within paragraph 3.33 relating to distribution of centrally held pay and business rate budgets be noted.

117 **PROCEDURE FOR BUDGET DECISION MEETING OF COUNCIL**

The Director of Law and Corporate Services presented the report on the assurance process in formulating the draft Council Budget and to recommend to Council a process for adoption at the Budget decision making meeting.

Resolved – that it be recommended to Council be recommended that, or the duration of the extraordinary meeting of 26th February 2024 (Budget Council):

- (a) the procedure attached as Appendix A be followed in respect of the meeting; and

(b) Council Standing Order 15.4 (timing of speeches) be suspended together with such other standing orders as may conflict with the Budget Council procedure or the Mayor's administration of the meeting, in such a manner as the Mayor in his or her absolute discretion dictates, to ensure the objective of Council setting a lawful budget and council tax requirement prevails.

118 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Leader of the Council reported that whilst there was no specific report in respect to the Work Programme this evening, there were a number of items which the Committee discussed during the course of the meeting which he felt warranted further discussion by Members either via a future Committee report or a workshop. He suggested that the following being included in the Work Programme:

- The Freeport and Wirral Waters Investment Fund
- The Criteria and process for making additions to the Capital Programme

Resolved – that the following be included in the Committee Work Programme:

- **The Freeport and Wirral Waters Investment Fund**
- **The Criteria and process for making additions to the Capital Programme**



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | NEIGHBOURHOODS PROJECT INVESTMENT FUND 2024/25 |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES |

REPORT SUMMARY

As part of the 2024-25 budget setting, Council on 26 February 24 approved the creation of a £1.246m revenue project investment fund and a £1m environmental improvement capital fund for investment into specific improvement activities that will have a visible impact across the Borough.

This report considers the specific improvement activities that these funds will be used for in 2024-25.

This is a key decision which affects all Wards within the Borough.

The report contributes to the Wirral Plan 2023-2027 in supporting the organisation in meeting all Council priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Agree the Neighbourhoods Project Investment Funds can be used for the improvement activities, detailed in appendix 1.
2. Delegate monitoring of delivery of these projects, and the determination of arrangements for doing so to the Policy and Resources Finance Sub Committee.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Following approval of the investment funds at Council on 26 February 2024, Policy & Resources Committee was asked to consider and agree the specific improvement activities that these funds will be used for.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Policy & Resources Committee has previously considered a series of budget proposals as part of the 2024-25 budget setting process.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 As part of the 2024-25 Revenue Budget setting, Council on 26 February 2024 agreed to the creation of a £1.246m revenue project investment fund. This fund is to be targeted at specific improvement activities that are universal in nature and have a visible impact across the Borough.
- 3.2 At the same Council meeting, the Capital Programme 2024-29 approved a £1m capital scheme for environmental improvements. This capital funding is aimed at expanding the financial allocation to support all members' priorities around environmental improvements, including modest enhancements to the public realm, standards of cleanliness and green spaces, investment in gully-cleaning machinery, and any other suitable investment in accordance with the Council's priorities and policies.
- 3.3 Council agreed that the specific improvement activities be considered at this Policy and Resources Committee to determine how best these funds could be used.
- 3.4 Following discussions with Group Leaders and Finance Sub-group, it was proposed that all investments must provide additionality and either be of direct benefit to all residents across the Borough, or be scalable across the Borough, and demonstrate one or more of the following: -
- Improve service standards;
 - Improve infrastructure;
 - Improve visual amenity;
 - Improve environmental standards.

The investments should result in no material ongoing financial liabilities or obligations.

- 3.5 Using the above criteria, the proposed list of improvement activities, with associated indicative costs, to utilise the Neighbourhoods Investment Project funds can be found in appendix 1.

- 3.6 Further activities will be determined once the actual costs of the initially proposed activities have been determined and reviewed by the Finance Sub-group. These may include improvements to footpaths and accessibility depending on the level of funding remaining.
- 3.7 These investment funds are for one year only initially due to the lack of certainty around future funding settlements and demand. Once the specific improvement activities have been agreed by Policy and Resources committee, oversight of the progress will be delegated to Finance sub-committee due to the currently temporary nature of the funding.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The £1.246m of revenue monies and £1m of capital monies to fund the improvement activities have been identified and approved in the respective revenue and capital budgets.
- 4.2 Estimated costs of the improvement activities has been based on the best available information and has used reasonable assumptions. The Finance sub-committee will consider the allocation of any remaining funds once the costs of the initially agreed measures has been confirmed.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Any contract award for works would be made on most economically advantageous tender basis or through an approved Framework route. The Council's Contract Procedure rules set out how contracts are to be awarded by the Council in accordance with its Procurement Strategy requirements.
- 5.12 There is a particular requirement to take into consideration the Council's fiduciary duty and the public sector equality duty in coming to its decision.
- 5.13 The public sector equality duty is that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.14 Any decision made in the exercise of any function is potentially open to challenge if the duty has been disregarded. The duty applies both to Full Council when setting the budget and to the Policy and Services Committees when considering decisions.
- 5.15 Once a budget is in place, Council has delegated responsibility to the Policy and Services Committees to implement it. The Committees may not act contrary to the Budget without consent of Council other than in accordance with the Procedure Rules set out at Part 4(3) of the Constitution.

5.16 It is essential, as a matter of prudence that the financial position continues to be closely monitored. In particular, Members must satisfy themselves that sufficient mechanisms are in place to ensure that new expenditure is contained within the available resources. Accordingly, any proposals put forward must identify the realistic measures and mechanisms to achieve the desired outcomes.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no direct staffing, ICT and asset implications arising from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 A delay in agreeing these improvement activities may put the timetable for delivering the required works at risk. If works are not completed in 2024/25 this may result in the available funds not being utilised in 2024/25.

7.2 There is also a risk that agreed activities will not be delivered or will be delayed. Progress on delivery of agreed activities will be monitored by the Policy and Resources Finance Sub Committee.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Initial consultation has taken place in respect of the priorities and views of the public in formulating the draft budget, as set out in this report.

8.2 Statutory budget consultation took place in January 2024.

8.3 Policy and Services Committees reviewed and debated the draft 2024/25 budget publicly during January 2024. The minutes from the Committees is provided in Appendix 3 for the consideration of the Policy and Resources Committee in respect of the recommendations set out in this report.

8.4 The Policy and Resources Finance Sub-Group have met on a regular basis during recent months to review budget proposals and assumptions.

8.5 The budget was determined by Council on 26 February 2024

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 The equality implications have been considered within the proposal via the completion of equality impact assessments.

9.3 Any implications will be considered and any negative impacts will be mitigated where possible.

9.4 Equality implications will be assessed during planning, decision and implementation stages and will be recognised as an ongoing responsibility. Equality issues will be a conscious consideration and an integral part of the process.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The environment and climate implications have been considered within the individual improvement activities.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The community wealth implications have been considered for the improvement activities taking account of matters across headings such as the following:

- Progressive Procurement and Social Value - How we commission and procure goods and services. Encouraging contractors to deliver more benefits for the local area, such as good jobs, apprenticeship, training & skills opportunities, real living wage, minimising their environmental impact, and greater wellbeing.
- More local & community ownership of the economy - Supporting more cooperatives and community businesses. Enabling greater opportunities for local businesses. Building on the experience of partnership working with voluntary, community and faith groups during the pandemic to further develop this sector.
- Decent and Fair Employment - Paying all employees a fair and reasonable wage.
- Making wealth work for local places.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Mark Goulding**
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Neighbourhood Project Investment Improvement Activities

BACKGROUND PAPERS

2024/25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy
Capital Programme 2024-29
Wirral's Local Plan

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Policy & resources Committee in accordance with Section (B)(i) of its Terms of Reference.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Full Council | 26 February 2024 |
| Policy and Resources Committee | 13 February 2024 |

Appendix 1 – Neighbourhood Project Investment Improvement Activities

| Description | Revenue | Capital |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Additional weed control measures to improve visual amenity | £80k | - |
| Alleyway remediation. Resources to remediate alleyways that are in a condition which does not allow for the normal ongoing maintenance and cleansing. | £160k | £220k |
| Two 'Clean Teams' to tackle 'grot spot' areas. | £300k | |
| Conversion of rewilding areas to pollinator areas. Target of 10% of current rewilding areas. | £300k | |
| Increase seasonal Grounds Maintenance capacity across the Borough to increase maintenance standards. | £150k | |
| Gully cleansing, investigation, remediation and repair. | £100k | £260k |
| Street furniture | - | £100k |
| Contingency / funds to be allocated following confirmation of costs | £156k | £420k |
| Total | £1,246k | £1,000k |

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2024

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Report Title: | REGENERATION DELIVERY RESOURCING |
| Report of: | DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks approval to fund additional resourcing requirements that have been identified following a comprehensive review of regeneration projects and processes. The requirements are for a mix of internal fixed-term roles and externally procured disciplines over a period of 2 years. Funding has been identified from Wirral Growth Company profits and where possible, capitalisation of costs.

The Regeneration Programme is a core part of the Council Plan supporting Brownfield First and the Local Plan. The Council has been successful in securing over £150 million of funding for the regeneration of the borough. As a result, there is a need to prioritise delivery of numerous projects by March 2026 which requires additional skills and capacity.

The Birkenhead 2040 Framework details a comprehensive regeneration vision that will deliver 21,000 new homes and 6,000 new jobs in Birkenhead over the next 20 years and will transform Birkenhead and parts of Wallasey and New Ferry, building on Government funding support secured over the past 3 years to support infrastructure improvements and town centre intervention, creating new neighbourhoods, and driving economic growth.

A Framework of this scale and the emerging Masterplans requires a joined-up approach to a number of regeneration-based activities. As the Council moves into delivery it is imperative to have the appropriate resources in place to deliver this programme of work to March 2026, and beyond. By shifting to an Intelligent Client model (which refers to the capability and capacity to translate policy to outcomes), existing teams need to be strengthened and technical design teams, need to be procured where appropriate, to support the Council's vision and delivery programme.

The Council Plan 2023-2027 has been developed and the recommendations within this report support the delivery of the following themes: People focused regeneration.

The recommendations in this report focus on the Birkenhead 2040 Framework. This means that this matter more immediately affects Birkenhead and Birkenhead & Tranmere, Bidston & St James, Seacombe and Liscard Wards, but in the longer term may potentially impact on other wards in the Borough.

This is a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Authorise the Director of Finance to allocate Council reserves arising from Wirral Growth Company profits and/or Capitalisation totalling £2.7m for the use of additional Regeneration Delivery resources to March 2026.
2. Note that, if agreed, use and impact of the newly allocated additional resources (up to £2.7m) will be overseen by the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Council has received profits from Wirral Growth Company of £8.455m in 2022/2023 and expected profits of c£3m in 2023/2024. It is proposed that a proportion of these profits, up to £2.7m, will be used to fund a multi-disciplinary team to drive delivery of priority regeneration projects up to March 2026.
- 1.2 In recent years, the Council has been successful in securing over £150 million of funding for the regeneration of the borough. This includes £70 million of DLUHC Simplification Pathfinder Pilot funding which is time limited to March 2026. This will support the Council by enabling access to significant funding to support the regeneration of Birkenhead including that of private sector investment.
- 1.3 To deliver on this programme of work, and in accordance with the Council's strategies, it is prudent to look at different ways of resourcing to ensure relevant skills are wrapped around projects and existing staff.
- 1.4 This proposed resourcing model aligns to the Council's regeneration project prioritisation in shifting the way that the Council works as an Intelligent Client by setting a vision to the use of its supply chain and investing in a skilled and agile in-house workforce.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other options have been considered and have been discounted. Specifically, if the Council adopts a "do nothing" approach, then the risks are that the Council may not;
 - a) be able to deploy grant funding within the spend profile timetable, risking potential clawback;
 - b) be able to deliver proposals across the priority project areas;
 - c) deliver on future projects past March 2026 that are currently in pipeline; and
 - d) have the right skills to deliver confidence to key stakeholders.
- 2.2 The mitigation for the above risks will likely result in key strategic and pipeline projects being paused or indefinitely postponed whilst staff are re-allocated to priority projects. This could risk delivery on projects post March 2026.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council's ambitious plans for regenerating Birkenhead and the wider borough have progressed over the past 12 months from visioning the programme through to moving into delivery phase. Alongside this shift to

delivery, officers within Regeneration and Place directorate have undertaken a detailed review of the Regeneration Programme to accelerate delivery. This piece of work includes forming a revised structure, prioritisation of work, resource planning, and review on governance and standardisation. Below is a summary of the work to date.

Governance

- 3.2 A series of programme boards are in place to steer projects that feed into the Regeneration Portfolio Board. The Regeneration Portfolio Board meets monthly to provide direction and accountability for the delivery of the Regeneration Programme, including development of strategy and pipeline. The Board is chaired by the Director of Regeneration and Place and the Board and its members shall use the pre-existing Governance structures of Wirral Borough Council.
- 3.3 On 21st November 2023, Policy and Resources Committee agreed to establish a successor to the Town Deal Board to reflect the wider role of the Simplification Pathfinder Pilot and to build upon the positive role of the Town Deal Board to date. The Board brings together private, public, and voluntary sectors to provide the strategic leadership required to deliver the Investment Fund objectives ensuring progress is being made on delivery of the projects.
- 3.4 Additionally, on 13th December 2023, Policy and Resources Committee gave approval to establish a Wirral Regeneration Partnership to steer, support and coordinate the Council's priority projects. The Partnership will specifically assist in accelerating the delivery of significant housing and commercial development and is used to raise the profile of the Regeneration Programme for stakeholders and external audience. This Board will meet quarterly from March 2024.

Grant Funding

- 3.5 The Regeneration Programme has grown due to success in attracting government funding and external investment. On 13 September 2023, Policy and Resources Committee resolved to accept an invitation to participate in the DLUHC Simplification Pilot. This pilot has streamlined the delivery of 3 growth funds, namely Town Deal, Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and the Council's Levelling Up Round 1 (LUF1) allocation which currently deliver various regeneration programmes in Wirral up to a value of £72,443,405. The pilot allows the council to amalgamate these funds into one large regeneration fund within a single claim process. It also revises the spend deadlines for all funds to 31 March 2026.
- 3.6 In November 2023, it was announced that Liscard would receive £10.7 million in Levelling Up Fund Round 3 (LUF3). These ambitious plans are a key part of the council's wider regeneration ambitions across the Left Bank of the borough, stretching from Bromborough and New Ferry through Birkenhead and Wirral Waters to Liscard and New Brighton.

- 3.7 Work has begun on the demolition of the North and South Annexes next to Wallasey Town Hall. The demolition of the unused annexe buildings is an early step in the ambitious regeneration proposals for the Seacombe area. The project has been funded via the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF2).

Prioritisation

- 3.8 A prioritisation matrix has been applied against projects based on investment confidence, legal commitment, strategic value, and delivery confidence. This exercise will enable the Council to maximise impact with its funding and resources and has given clear direction on project delivery. To support the Council's delivery aspirations, the Council's resource requirements have been reviewed to drive delivery of projects up to and beyond March 2026.
- 3.9 The Intelligent Client model focuses on value for money, whole-life asset management and sustainable procurement. This model puts the Council firmly at the centre of efficient, productive, value-for-money relationships with the sponsor and supply chain. Intelligent Client responsibilities can involve a chain of command through contracts, commissioning, or procurement responsibilities. The Intelligent Client role includes ensuring optimum value is obtained. Resourcing of the Intelligent Client role therefore requires adequate capacity to be provided.
- 3.10 This approach would support and grow the Council's multi-disciplinary teams whilst using its procurement frameworks to acquire technical skills when required across the whole programme.

Procurement

- 3.11 The Council has access to a number of appropriate procurement frameworks consisting of a list of pre-approved suppliers which have been evaluated and selected to provide a pre-defined set of products and services with agreed terms and conditions and legal protections. These include the NHS SBS framework and Homes England technical and professional frameworks.

Roles

- 3.12 Roles have been identified based on current gaps within the delivery teams that could risk slippage to the prioritised Regeneration Programme. This largely includes technical skills and design team staff to deliver the programme to the timescales required. As part of the Intelligent Client model, these skills would plug in alongside the Council's existing project managers within the delivery team, bridging any technical skills gaps and assessing current projects as well as those coming forward in pipeline.

Funding Allocation

- 3.13 Wirral Growth Company profits will be used to fund the resourcing with costs that can be charged to capital being capitalised. Spend will be required to March 2026 with estimated gross costs amounting to £2.7 million across the two years.

3.14 The figures provided are indicative based on current equivalent internal roles and market figures. Officers will continue to work closely with colleagues in HR who can provide final approval on roles.

| Programme Areas supported: | Disciplines identified to enable delivery of priority projects to March 2026: |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Birkenhead Town Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-disciplinary team with mixed technical skills and background to support the project management, comms, and grants management of the Regeneration Programme. • Procured disciplines to bolt on to in-house team to provide technical skills in development appraisals, cost estimates for early-stage development projects, contract managing a wide range of asset contracts, ensuring they are managed against agreed performance targets and undertaking site surveys & inspections to monitor the performance of contracts & quality of works completed. • As part of the Intelligent Client model, these skills would plug in alongside existing project managers within the delivery team, bridging any technical skills gaps and assessing current projects as well as those coming forward in pipeline. |
| Birkenhead Waterfront | |
| Hind Street | |
| Central Birkenhead | |
| Strategic Transport | |
| Wirral Waters | |
| Dock Branch Neighbourhood | |
| Northside | |
| Liscard | |
| New Ferry | |
| New Brighton | |
| Gross costs for 24/25 | |
| Gross costs for 25/26 | £1,265,375.36 |

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The proposals within this report are designed to deliver operational efficiencies and mitigate the risk of clawback or withheld funds with regards to the challenging delivery timetables of the Council's regeneration ambitions.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council is under a duty to secure best value from any procurement and has a fiduciary duty to Council Taxpayers to use its resources prudently and efficiently.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 A key justification for this report is the potential strain on current resources within the Regeneration service areas should additional resources not be recruited to deliver our prioritised projects to March 2026.
- 6.2 Detailed governance structures are in place across the Regeneration Delivery programmes and regular reporting as appropriate for all projects is in place.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The proposals within this report will help to mitigate a number of risks to the Council's regeneration ambitions not being achieved by March 2026 by enabling better oversight of procurement and project management to reduce risk of programme slippage.
- 7.2 Specifically, the release of funds from Wirral Growth Company profits to support the Regeneration Programme would mitigate the following risks:
- a) Not deploying grant funding from multiple sources within the spend profile timetable;
 - b) Not delivering proposals across the priority project areas;
 - c) Not delivering on future projects past March 2026 that are currently in pipeline by freeing up existing staff; and
 - d) Not having the right skills for confidence to deliver with key stakeholders;
 - e) Failing to support the delivery of housing and wider social and economic benefits identified within the Local Plan.
- 7.3 Recruitment and retention of staff is very challenging and there is a risk that internal roles may not be filled. Given this, the Council needs flexibility on how we recruit supply chain and resource.
- 7.4 These risks will be managed and mitigated through the Regeneration Project Management Office.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Engagement with colleagues across Regeneration and Place regarding requirements has resulted in a robust prioritisation and resource plan to drive delivery of priority regeneration projects up to March 2026.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Whilst there are no direct equality implications arising from this report, the associated actions arising from the delivery will need to assess any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge. Should any equality implications emerge, they will be assessed at the earliest possible stage.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Any proposals resulting from this report would be progressed in line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy and would contribute to the aim of Wirral becoming net zero and climate resilient.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Community Wealth Building reorganises local economies to be fairer and stops wealth flowing out of communities. Striving for a prosperous and inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations, the Council aims to create an economy that benefits all our residents and one which keeps money within Wirral. The Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy is a key part of how this is achieved and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.

11.2 This report details potential future employment opportunities which will support Community Wealth through the creation of local employment. If approved, upwards of 6 FTE fixed term roles could be created up to March 2026.

REPORT AUTHOR: Marcus Shaw

Assistant Director Property and Regeneration Investment
Regeneration and Place

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council Plan 2023-2027

Birkenhead 2040 Framework [Birkenhead 2040 Framework | www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Policy & Resources Committee in accordance with section (b) of its Terms of Reference.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Policy and Resources Committee – DLUHC Simplification Pilot | 13th September 2023 |
| Policy and Resources Committee – Birkenhead, Wallasey & New Ferry Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board | 21st November 2023 |

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | LEVELLING UP FUND 3 LISCARD - INCLUSION IN SIMPLIFICATION PATHFINDER PILOT |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE |

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the amendment of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Simplification Pathfinder Investment Plan, to include the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation, and to seek authority for the Director of Regeneration & Place to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding which includes the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation within its scope.

This report was intended to be taken to the Council's Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee, with recommendations given to a subsequent Policy & Resources Committee. Due to the timetabling of the Council Committees, the next Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee is on 27 March 2024 and the following Policy & Resources Committee is on 12 June 2024. To prevent delays to programme delivery, the Director of Regeneration & Place has consulted with the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee Chair and Party Spokes prior to this Committee.

This proposal directly supports the 'People Focused Regeneration' theme in the Council Plan 2023-2027 and will help to deliver the following outcomes:

- More investment secured and created to deliver regeneration in Wirral;
- More jobs created and more people in good quality, sustainable work; and
More quality, environmentally sustainable and affordable homes.

This is a key decision due to the value of the funding allocation exceeding £500,000.

The report primarily impacts on the Liscard Ward.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the addendum to the Simplification Pathfinder Investment Plan included in Appendix 1 to this report;

2. Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding which includes the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation within its scope, in consultation with the Director of Law and Corporate Services;
3. Approve the renaming of the Birkenhead Wallasey and New Ferry Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board to the Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board; and
4. Approve the inclusion of the Liscard Levelling Up Fund programme within the Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board's remit.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To secure approval to incorporate the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation into the DLUHC Simplification Pilot programme. The benefits of the pilot to the Council over the current, separate funding arrangements are important and multiple, including greater levels of flexibility in terms of spend and outputs across the programme. It will simplify the change control process and increase the level of local decision making, to support programme delivery.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Council could decide to not incorporate the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation in the Simplification Pilot. In December 2023, DLUHC approved the Council's Simplification Pathfinder Investment Plan, which streamlines the current Town Deal, Future High Streets and Levelling Up Fund 1 programmes. DLUHC has since invited the Council to incorporate the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation into the Investment Plan. Excluding the Liscard Levelling Up Fund allocation from the Simplification Pathfinder could undermine programme delivery and would add an administrative burden as officers would be required to monitor the LUF3 funding separately to the rest of the Pathfinder, in addition to reducing flexibility within the Liscard programme.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Simplification Pathfinder

- 3.1 On 13 September 2023, this Committee resolved to accept an invitation to participate in the DLUHC Simplification Pilot. This pilot streamlines the delivery of 3 growth funds overseen by it, namely Town Deal, Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and the Council's Levelling Up Round 1 (LUF1) allocation.
- 3.2 This Committee on 4 October 2023 delegated the decision to the Director of Regeneration and Place to submit the Pathfinder Investment Plan in consultation with Group Leaders. The Director of Regeneration and Place subsequently approved via an officer decision notice to:
- submit the Simplification Pathfinder Investment Plan to the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities on 27 October 2023; and
 - agree the principles of the governance of the Simplification Pilot.
- 3.3 Under the Pathfinder scheme, the Council will have more flexibility from DLUHC to manage future change control of projects within its Investment Plan and will only need to seek future approval from DLUHC if making a material change which is defined as moving at least £5 million to a different intervention theme or moving at least £5 million between projects in the same intervention theme.
- 3.4 On 8 December 2023, DLUHC approved the Council's submitted Investment Plan and at the time of writing, the Council was expecting to receive a Memorandum of Understanding from DLUHC regarding the Simplification Pathfinder.

- 3.5 The Council will remain the accountable body for funds within the Simplification Pilot. At its meeting of 21 November 2023, this Committee approved the indicative Birkenhead, Wallasey and New Ferry Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board Membership, subject to this including ex-officio Members from the Conservative and Liberal Democratic groups, and that membership of the board should also be extended to Liscard Ward Members should that become appropriate.
- 3.6 On 13 December 2023 this Committee subsequently approved the establishment of the Wirral Regeneration Partnership and associated hierarchy comprising membership and terms of reference, and authorised the Director of Law and Governance be authorised to proceed with the necessary memorandum of understanding to establish appropriate legal and governance structures for the Wirral Regeneration Partnership. The Wirral Regeneration Partnership will form part of the overall governance structure, including the Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board.

Levelling Up Fund 3 – Renewal of Liscard Town Centre

- 3.7 On 20 November 2023, the UK Government announced that the Council has been successful in its application to the Levelling Up Fund for £10,788,000 for the renewal of Liscard Town Centre, against a total programme cost of £12,043,000. The Council had originally submitted a bid under Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund and was informed in January 2023 that its bid had been unsuccessful. As part of the third round of Levelling Up Fund, the Government moved away from the competitive approach of Rounds 1 and 2, and awarded funding to high-quality bids that were submitted in Round 2.
- 3.8 The original bid comprised two interlinked projects to catalyse change.

Project 1- Town centre regeneration and public realm interventions involved the following:

- a. Shop frontage upgrades and public realm improvements on Liscard Way;
- b. Public realm improvements at the Greenfield Way/Liscard Way entrance to the high street, known as 'Mother Redcap Place';
- c. Reconfiguration of Wallasey and Seaview Road junction to improve traffic flows and enable cycling and pedestrian travel; and
- d. Unlocking high quality residential development in Liscard Village by addressing its viability gap and creating new public realm to encourage alternative pedestrian footfall and accessibility from/to the core town centre

Project 2 - Community Hub involved the demolition and replacement of the derelict community centre with a new hub, as part of a wider Liscard Village residential development.

- 3.9 The Council submitted a validation checklist to DLUHC on 2 February 2024 to confirm that that the Liscard Levelling Up Fund programme can be delivered by March 2026, signed by the Council's s.151 officer. As part of the validation checklist, the impact of cost inflation on the programme since its submission in August 2022

has been considered and it remains the case that a high-quality public realm scheme could be delivered, including key gateway enhancements and junction remodelling to the north of Liscard Way, within a reduced funding envelope for Project 1c (Reconfiguration of Wallasey and Seaview Road junction to improve traffic flows and enable cycling and pedestrian travel). The funding shortfall across the programme has therefore been removed from Project 1c, and has been used to supplement the remainder of the programme to ensure delivery. In addition, options are being reviewed for a community hub including enhancing existing community facilities, subject to further stakeholder engagement.

Policy Fit and Identified Need

- 3.10 The Council's draft Local Plan designates Liscard as a Regeneration Area, in recognition of its important role as mixed-use retail centre. In support of the Local Plan, the Council has an approved Neighbourhood Framework in place for Liscard on which the Levelling Up Fund bid has been based¹.
- 3.11 The bid set out the challenges Liscard currently faces. According to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation, 70% of Liscard Ward's residents live in the most deprived 20% of England's neighbourhoods, and anti-social behaviour is a key issue. According to police data the rate of reported anti-social behaviour incidents in the town centre (04/2021 to 03/2022) was 31 per 1000 residents (the national average was 20.3 and median was 14).
- 3.12 In addition to the above, the one-way gyratory which encircles the town centre creates a barrier to pedestrian movements and is dominated by cars. Physical barriers at both ends of Liscard Way obscure its importance and are detrimental to the centre's appearance. The high street is pedestrianised but in need of enhancement and renewal while pedestrian routes serving this area are poorly defined and uninviting. Poor quality shopfronts and incoherent signage detract from the appearance.
- 3.13 The bid also highlighted that Liscard needs new good quality housing provision. 35% of dwellings were built before 1900 (the national level is 15.4%) and just 5% were built post-2000. From the IMD Living Environment domain (quality of housing and local environment), all of Liscard Ward's residents are in the most deprived 30% of neighbourhoods and 78.5% are in the most deprived 10%. Data from Energy Performance Certificates (covering homes bought, built or retrofitted since 2008) shows homes in Liscard Ward are less energy efficient than nationally.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Liscard has been awarded £10,789,000 from the Levelling Up Fund (subject to approval of Memorandum of Understanding) against a total programme cost of £12,043,000. The Liscard Levelling Up Fund 3 programme includes a requirement for a 10 per cent local contribution, to meet the costs of the overall programme. This Committee approved a bid to the Council's capital programme for £1,385,000 at its

1

<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50083206/Liscard%20Neighbourhood%20Framework%20An%20Integrated%20Masterplan.pdf>

meeting of 17 January 2024 and Full Council on 26 February 2024 approved the Council's capital programme. The capital budget has an allowance for £130k of legal costs, to support the delivery of the programme.

- 4.2 All Levelling Up Funding needs to be spent by 31 March 2026.
- 4.3 The Investment Plan requires approval from the Council's Section 151 officer prior to submission. As such they have reviewed the content of this report and the Investment Plan.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is proposed that a single Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Government, will replace the agreements in place for the three funding streams. It is understood that the Liscard Levelling Up Fund will be subject to an addendum to the MOU, to avoid time delays for the rest of the Pathfinder programme nationally.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 DLUHC expect there will be operational efficiencies arising from the combined governance of the pilot, as it seeks to test an approach that reduces local administrative burdens whilst still providing DLUHC with required level of delivery data and assurance. A 3 monthly summary update (in the form of RAG reporting) focusing on spend and progress will be required, followed by 6-monthly detailed reports on spend and progress, including (but not limited to) forecast underspends, a plan for delivering uncommitted funding, projected delivery of portfolio-level outputs and outcomes, and changes to projects below the change request threshold.
- 6.2 In addition to monitoring, DLUHC will also conduct separate assurance activity, including local authority assurance reviews. These reviews will focus on the assurance processes that local authorities have in place and will follow a similar model as is currently used across the 3 separate funds.
- 6.3 The Council will remain the accountable body for funds within the Simplification Pilot.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Council recognises that risk management is essential in good decision making and is a critical element of good governance. The Council continually develops its risk management processes to proactively and effectively manage risk.
- 7.2 The Council has an established a Project Management Office (PMO) dedicated to the Regeneration and Place directorate. The PMO has oversight of the Simplification Pathfinder and will ensure that they align with the Council's corporate policy to managing risk.
- 7.3 A programme Risk Register has been developed, informed by individual Risk Registers for each project. These will be updated throughout the programme lifecycle through the Council's Regeneration Programme Management Office, in order to assist the Council in identifying, controlling and managing risk.

- 7.4 There is a requirement for all funding provided by the Levelling Up Fund to be spent by 31 March 2026 and the Council has put mitigation measures in place to provide greater certainty with regard to delivery timescales and budget management. Table 1 highlights key programme risks.

Table 1– Key Programme Risks

| Risk | Proposed Mitigation |
|--|--|
| Programme is not delivered by March 2026 | Procurement options are being reviewed with the Corporate Procurement Service to identify the most effective routes to delivery. Any Tender specification(s) will be drafted with clear milestones and completion dates. |
| Outputs of scheme are poor quality | Any tender for materials and workmanship to conform to British Standards or Codes of Practice. Programme will be subject to project management throughout to ensure quality outputs. |
| Cost increases to the scheme | Contingency has been built into the programme, and the programme has been reviewed in January 2024 to project cost increases to the programme |
| Insufficient internal resources to deliver programme | Match funding from the Council was approved by Full Council on 26 February 2024. The costs included an allowance for project management support and the Council will review whether utilising in-house resource or external project management support is the most effective. Further information can be viewed in the Resource Request paper under Agenda Item 7 to this Committee. |

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The original bid was based on the approved Liscard Neighbourhood Framework, which has been subject to extensive engagement and public consultation. The Member of Parliament for Wallasey Constituency is Dame Angela Eagle MP, who has provided a letter of support to the Liscard Levelling Up Fund programme. The Council has been working with local stakeholders, including Elected Members, community representatives and local businesses, to establish a Liscard Partnership, to support the long-term vitality and viability of Liscard Town Centre. The Council will work with the Partnership to help define the scope of the programme.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2 The potential impact of the Levelling Up Fund has been reviewed with regard to equality and links to the existing EIA conducted for Wirral's Economic Strategy and no material amendments have been made.

9.3 Whilst there are no equality implications arising from this report, the associated actions arising from the delivery may need to assess any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge. Any associated EIA's will be done at the earliest possible stage. The Council has an obligation under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality duty (Sect 149 2011) to show due regard to the duty and show due regard to mitigate any negative impacts that may affect people with protected characteristics under the Act. The Director of Regeneration and Place recognises that this decision may have an impact on those who would wish to access certain locations by motor vehicle and other modes of transport. Where applicable details of any restrictions and alternative routes would be published and an equality impact assessment would be undertaken.

9.4 A copy of the EIA for Wirral's Economic Strategy can be viewed at:
<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/equality-impact-assessment-wirral-economic-strategy-2021-2026.pdf/download?inline>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None directly arising from this report however the regeneration schemes impacted do have climate change resilience measures and Biodiversity Net Gain proposals at the core of their designs and objectives to mitigate impacts.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Community Wealth Building reorganises local economies to be fairer and stops wealth flowing out of communities. Striving for a prosperous and inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations, the Council's aims to create an economy that benefits all of our residents and one which keeps money within Wirral. The Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy is a key part of how this is achieved and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.

11.2 The projects within the Investment Plan ensure that more wealth is invested and stays within the Borough. Future procurement exercises will build the wealth of our local communities where we will strive to maximise social value activity through creation of local employment/ training opportunities and local labour/spend to maximise the Wirral pound.

REPORT AUTHOR: **Hannah Austin**
Principal Economic Development Lead

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Simplification Pathfinder Investment Plan – Liscard Levelling Up Fund Programme

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Levelling Up Fund 2 Application – Renewal of Liscard Town Centre

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with sections (a) and (b) of its Terms of Reference.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|---|-------------------|
| Policy & Resources Committee – 2023-24 CAPITAL MONITORING QUARTER 3 | 17 January 2024 |
| Policy & Resources Committee (Item 88 refers) - Future Regeneration Partnerships for Wirral | 13 December 2023 |
| Policy & Resources Committee – Birkenhead, Wallasey and New Ferry Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Board | 21 November 2023 |
| Policy & Resources Committee – Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities Simplification Pathfinder Investment Plan | 8 November 2023 |
| Officer Decision Notice of the Director of Regeneration & Place - Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities Simplification Pathfinder Pilot Investment Plan | 27 October 2023 |
| Policy & Resources Committee (Item 54 refers) | |
| Policy & Resources Committee (Item 44 refers) - Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities Simplification Pathfinder Pilot | 4 October 2023 |
| | 13 September 2023 |
| Economy, Regeneration & Housing Committee - Liscard Neighbourhood Framework: An Integrated Masterplan | 22 November 2021 |

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

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| REPORT TITLE: | COUNCIL CHANGE PROGRAMME |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF FINANCE |

REPORT SUMMARY

The Change Programme is the Council's vehicle for developing and implementing the required projects that support the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Change Programme has been reviewed and refreshed to ensure it directly supports the refreshed Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Plan (approved by Council in February) and the implementation of the new Council Plan (approved by Council in December 2023).

The re-set of the Council's Change Programme ensures there is a single, organisational approach to transforming the business that is effectively resourced, controlled and monitored to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and outcomes, as defined in the Council Plan and the required efficiencies as set out in the MTFP.

The report provides an update on progress since the Change Programme was last reported to Policy and Resources Committee in December 2021. The report goes on to provide an overview of the refreshed Change Programme and the rationale for the various elements within it.

The Change Programme supports all themes within the Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023 – 27.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources Committee is requested to:

1. Confirm support for the Council's Change Programme as presented in this report.
2. Confirm support for the Elected Member oversight arrangements for the programme as set out in paragraph 8.1.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Change Programme has been reviewed and reset to ensure the Council has the right portfolio of programmes and projects that optimise the Council's operating model to support the implementation of the Council Plan and achievement of required efficiencies as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The report also proposes how Members of the Policy and Resource Committee will continue to maintain oversight of the Change Programme to maintain accountability for delivery.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Change Programme provides a framework to deliver organisational change that supports the delivery of the Council Plan and MTFP. The scope of Council activity and scale of financial challenges over the life of the MTFP requires a structured and controlled programme management approach. All change projects will be supported by clear business cases setting out the costs and benefits of the changes being proposed.
- 2.2 Doing nothing is not considered a valid option as it would result in an unacceptable level of risk in achieving the outcomes of the Council Plan and/or the required efficiencies in the MTFP. This would likely have a negative impact on the Council achieving its strategic priorities and balancing the budget.
- 2.3 The Change Programme provides a single, coordinated and Council-wide approach to delivering business change. An un-coordinated approach to delivering cross cutting business change would create risks in relation to available capacity and resources leading to a higher likelihood on non-delivery.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background

- 3.1 The Council's Change Programme was last reviewed and reported to this committee in Autumn 2021. This was at the same time as the publication of the External Assurance Review commissioned by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in response to the Council's request for exceptional financial support in 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Change Programme reported at that time reflected the recommendations of the External Assurance Review and was a key part of the Council's evidence of having a plan to deliver a programme of change to support the Council's financial stability.
- 3.2 Since Autumn 2021, the Council's primary focus has been on delivering the Improvement Plan (agreed by Council on 11 July 2022) with particular focus on improvements to governance and financial stability. The progress the Council has made in this regard has been overseen by the Independent Assurance Panel Chaired by Carolyn Downs. The Panel has acted as a critical friend, providing scrutiny and oversight as well as specialist advice and guidance. The Panel has

noted the Council's progress in that time period and has signified its intention to step down at the end of the financial year subject to the agreement of the 2024/25 budget and refreshed Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

- 3.3 A summary of the progress against the Improvement Plan was reported to this committee in November 2023 as part of the transition to and adoption of the new Council Plan. For reference, this is included again as Appendix 1. In addition to that report, a number of business change projects have been completed in the intervening period since the last Change Programme was last reported. A summary of projects completed is set out in Appendix 2 attached to this report.

Refreshed Change Programme

- 3.4 The current reset of the Change Programme commenced in Autumn 2023 alongside the development of the Council Plan and the emerging refresh of the MTFP as part of the 2024/25 budget process. As a large organisation responsible for the delivery of a wide range of services, there is a need for a single, coherent and organisation-wide approach to business change. This approach seeks to ensure:

- Clear focus on achieving the Council's strategic priorities,
- Effective programme governance and control,
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities,
- Appropriate resourcing and investment,
- Comprehensive business cases that evidence a clear case for change,
- Delivery of capabilities to transform services and the organisation,
- Effective monitoring and achievement of programme and project benefits.

- 3.5 The Change programme has been designed to directly respond to the Council's key strategic priorities specifically:

- To support achievement of the outcomes of the Council Plan,
- To secure the Council's financial stability in response to external financial pressures,
- To transform the Council's digital, data and information technology capability to modernise and streamline business processes to ensure investment in frontline services can be maximised,
- To streamline back office and enabling functions to ensure they are as efficient and effective as possible,
- To rationalise the Council's estate of property and assets to ensure it represents value for money,
- To manage increasing demand for statutory services (particularly Children's and Adult social care),
- To transform the leisure and cultural services offer,
- To ensure value for money for universal services including waste and street cleaning services.

- 3.6 As at February 2024, the Council's Strategic Change Programme is made up of:

- 9 defined programmes (one of which is a health and care partnership-led programme)

- 40 projects (with additional projects currently in scoping phase).

3.7 A summary of the nine separate programmes that make up the Strategic Change Programme is set out below. A more detail description of these programmes and their related projects is included as Appendix 2.

Figure 1: Strategic Change Programme



3.8 The refreshed Change Programme seeks to consolidate the Council’s organisation-wide transformation agenda to achieve the most efficient and effective operating model. The Council Plan includes a set of guiding principles that shape how we will develop the Council as an organisation to best implement the plan. These principles are set out below:

- **Joined up design** – ensuring our services are accessible, person-centric and joined-up.
- **No one left behind** – Inclusive services which recognise the different needs of residents, families and communities.
- **Prevention** – Working to address the causes of inequalities and demand on Council services and ensuring we provide the right support at the right time.
- **Regeneration** – Investing in infrastructure and supporting businesses to provide a thriving local economy and opportunities for all.

- **Independence** – Enabling individuals, families and communities to help themselves and each other.
- **Relationships** – Working with residents, partners, businesses and communities for a better Wirral.

3.9 The Change Programme aims to deliver a Council that is in the strongest possible position to meet the ambitions of the Council Plan, by focussing effort on resident outcomes, delivering identified savings and contributing to long term financial sustainability.

Programme Governance

3.10 The Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer is the Senior Responsible Officer for the Change Programme. The Director of Finance chairs a monthly Investment & Change Board (ICB) that reviews programme delivery, all new business case proposals, project initiations, change requests and project closure reports prior to transfer into business as usual. The ICB includes all Council Directors and other key officers. The ICB oversees all transformational activity across the Council and acts as a 'design authority' to ensure that there is a single and joined up approach to business change and transformation.

3.11 The Corporate Programme Management Office (PMO) ensures the Council follows good practice in programme and project management methodology, lifecycle and tools. The function promotes good practice across the organisation and consistency of reporting and programme and project assurance. This includes:

- An identified Senior Responsible Owner for each programme and project (for programmes this is usually a member of SLT),
- Identified programme / project manager,
- Approved business case/mandate,
- Programme/Project board,
- Defined programme/project lifecycle,
- Clear project plan and Risk, Assumptions, Issues and Dependencies (RAID) logs,
- Highlight reporting,
- Defined benefits and plans to realise them.

3.12 As part of the Change Programme reset, a health check has been conducted across all programmes and projects in delivery to review any gaps in the above and ensure these have been addressed and there is consistency in delivery arrangements.

Benefit Realisation

3.13 Benefit realisation seeks to ensure there is effective return on investment for all programme and project business cases. Benefits are defined in both financial and non-financial terms and will be delivered to a clear plan and timetable. The Change Programme is key to supporting the achievement of the outcomes in the Council Plan and specific programmes have been aligned to the respective themes of that

plan. However, the Change Programme is also fundamental to the Council effectively achieving the savings targets set out in the MTFP.

- 3.14 The Change Programme re-set includes a detailed review of all programme and project benefits to ensure these are well-defined, with clear owners and plans for their achievement. These will be aligned to an updated Benefit Management Framework which will ensure all business cases define benefits clearly and realistically with clear plans in place for their realisation. Benefits will be tracked and monitored as part of the programme/project lifecycle to ensure alignment to the MTFP.
- 3.20 The timeline for finalising the Benefit Management Framework is set out below:
- Draft Benefit Management Framework – April 2024
 - Training, Testing and Feedback of Benefits Approach – May 2024
 - Implementation of Benefit Realisation Plans across all Change Programmes – July/August 2024
 - Implementation of dashboards to provide ongoing monitoring for benefit realisation – Sept 2024

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council Change Programme has been designed to include a portfolio of programmes and projects that will contribute to the realisation of the required efficiencies as set out in Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 4.2 The Change Programme will be reviewed annually alongside the refresh of the MTFS and MTFP to ensure continued alignment and any changes to savings targets and programme scope can be made.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report. Any legal implications related to service changes, new operating models or implications affecting statutory service delivery will be managed through the respective programmes set out above.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Council has an internal change capability and capacity which includes: Corporate PMO, Business Change and Programme Management, Organisational Design and Development teams. Professional programme management will be critical to ensuring the interdependencies between programmes and business as usual operations are effectively managed. External capability and capacity may also be required from time to time where there is a need for specialist technical input or a requirement to accelerate the programme. An example of this is the work to appoint a specialist digital partner to accelerate the Council's digital capability and transformation.

6.2 The Change Programme is resourced through a mix of core revenue resources combined with the use of capital resources where these can be deployed. The funding mix across programmes and projects is determined by the business case in advance of programmes and projects being approved and initiated. Capital is used for projects where they are capital-led and project costs can be capitalised such as projects within the Digital Programme. The guidance around the flexible use of capital receipts to support transformational activity is also used to fund programme/project activity where this can be supported. In some instances, external grant funding is used to fund project activity when this is successfully bid for and secured.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Change Programme has been refreshed and reset to mitigate the corporate risk of the Council not delivering on its Medium-Term Financial Plan.

7.2 In line with good practice, all programmes and projects will have risk management arrangements that will be overseen by Programme and Project Managers as part of their day-to-day duties.

7.3 The main programme risks are summarised in the table below:

| Risk | Mitigation |
|--|---|
| A lack of clear strategic direction to inform the Change Programme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • Medium Term Financial Plan • Investment & Change Board (ICB) • Identified SRO |
| Lack of clarity around priorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Plan • Prioritisation process • Programme definition & planning |
| Capacity & capability to deliver at pace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICB and programme governance • External support procured as required |
| Organisation change readiness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People strategy • Organisational development & engagement |

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 It is proposed that the on-going Elected Member oversight of the Change Programme is conducted through the Policy and Resources Committee Finance Sub-Committee. The Director of Finance will bring forward regular reports on progress throughout the year as part of the forward plan for that Committee with relevant Senior Responsible Owners for Programmes presenting programme updates.

8.2 For any business change projects that have a direct impact on staff, the Council is required to consult with the Trade Unions and affected staff on proposed changes to

roles, responsibilities, structures, and services. This engagement will be timetabled as appropriate as part of project implementation.

- 8.3 Where there are proposed changes to services as a result of programme or project implementation, any required service-user consultation will also be timetabled as part of project implementation.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct Equality Implications arising as a result of this report. Individual programmes or projects will be subject to an equality impact assessment as part of their business case development or initiation.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct Environment and Climate Implications arising as a result of this report. Individual programmes or projects will determine any environmental benefits as part of their business case development or initiation.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct Community Wealth Implications arising as a result of this report. Individual programmes or projects will determine any community wealth benefits as part of their business case development or initiation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Improvement Plan Progress Report.
Appendix 2 – Summary of Project Closures in 2022 and 2023.
Appendix 3 – Change Programme Overview March 2024.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023 – 27
Medium Term Financial Strategy
Independent Assurance Panel Reports
Council Improvement Plan

Terms of Reference

This report is being considered by the Policy & Resources Committee in accordance with section (a) of its Terms of Reference, “formulate, co-ordinate and implement corporate policies and strategies”

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|------------------------|-------------|
|------------------------|-------------|

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APPENDIX 3 – WIRRAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wirral's Improvement Plan was drafted in Spring 2022 in response to the External Assurance Review Reports (November 2021) and the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge (March 2022). The Plan sets out a narrative for improving Wirral Council as a means to Improve Wirral - the Place. The Improvement Plan was signed by all political group leaders and was approved by Council on 11 July 2022. The Plan is broken down into 4 areas:
- Financial Stability
 - Effective Organisation
 - Effective Services
 - Resilient Communities
- 1.2 This paper sets out progress against the Council's Improvement Plan up to 30 September 2023. The report includes a general narrative in support of progress against the four Improvement Plan themes. It also includes a more detailed review of activities in the Improvement Action Plan. An earlier version of this paper was reported to the Independent Assurance Panel in June 2023. The Panel was appointed by the Chief Executive in December 2021 to act in an advisory role in support of the Council's improvement progress. The Panel provides a report to the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) every six months. The Panel has noted the Council's progress in delivering the Improvement Plan and has requested the Council now focuses on Developing a new Council Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan with clarity on how future saving will be delivered to balance the budget.

2.0 IMPROVEMENT THEME 1 - FINANCIAL STABILITY

- 2.1 Financial stability continues to be the Council's number one priority. The refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy highlights the importance for the Council to replenish its general reserve to 5% over the medium term in line with good practice guidance.
- 2.2 The Council has improved its savings performance with 85% of the £18.2m target being realised in 2022/23. In terms of 2023/24, £26m of the £28m savings target are either delivered or on track to be delivered, representing 93% of the total savings target with a further 7% or £2m anticipated to be delivered through alternative means.
- 2.3 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been refreshed to demonstrate there are sufficient savings to meet forecast pressures in the short to medium term. Like all Council's, the one-year budget settlement arrangements with the government limit the scope of longer-term financial forecasting and planning.

- 2.4 From 1 April this year, a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, Oracle Fusion, was launched. This system will enable improved financial planning, management and control.
- 2.5 A new Asset Management Strategy was approved in November 2022 which establishes a Corporate Landlord model to better control and manage the Council's property and land assets. In July Policy & Resources Committee approved a programme of asset disposals that will reduce the estate and realise capital receipts to support service transformation and the payback of the capitalisation loan. In 2024 all office-based staff will move into new accommodation that will enable the Council to divest itself of its old office buildings.

3.0 THEME 2 - EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

- 3.1 Over the last 18 months, significant steps have been taken to support improvements in governance, strategic planning and leadership. Whole Council elections were held in May 2023 which will provide continuity for four years in support of longer-term planning and strategic decision-making.
- 3.2 The constitution was refreshed in Spring 2022 to streamline the committee system, assert the primacy of Policy and Resources Committee in the budget process and speed up and improve decision-making. Improvements to forward planning, drafting and quality assuring committee reports have delivered more consistency and better information to support key decisions.
- 3.3 A restructure of Member and democratic services has been implemented this year which improves support for the Leader of the Council and all Members. A Member Development Strategy, Induction and Training Programmes, Well-Being Policy and Enquiries Portal have all be introduced over the last 12 months.
- 3.4 A refreshed Council Plan has been developed that provides a new vision and set of priorities for the next four years. The Plan has been developed to align with the refreshed MTFP and performance will be monitored alongside quarterly financial monitoring.

4.0 THEME 3 - EFFECTIVE SERVICES

- 4.1 In the last year, the Chief Executive has implemented a new, senior structure with Directors being appointed to the Law & Governance, Finance and Regeneration & Place and Neighbourhood Services Directorates. This has brought additional experience and capacity into the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT).
- 4.2 Overall service performance is reviewed through an established Operational Performance Group which reports through to the Strategic Leadership Team monthly by exception. Bespoke service performance reports have been developed with and provided for Policy and Service Committees.

- 4.3 The Council's Change Programme has been reviewed to ensure alignment with the Council Plan and MTFP. The Change Programme incorporates all programmes and projects that support improved service efficiency and effectiveness. The Enabling Services Programme will ensure all back-office services provide value for money and are proportionate to front line delivery services.
- 4.4 The Enabling Services programme aims to secure a clearly defined and effectively resourced corporate core in direct response to a recommendation of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge. It will also drive the Council's IT and digital transformation through the appointment of a digital partner to support the Council deliver increased IT solutions and automation of processes to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
- 4.5 In December 2022, a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of Wirral's multi-agency response to children and families was carried out by inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The inspection feedback highlighted a sophisticated and well-developed early help offer in Wirral to support families early and avoid increased demand on statutory services. There was recognition of the strength of leadership and the positive collaboration and relationships from different agencies across the partnership.

5.0 THEME 4 - RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

- 5.1 The Council provides strong place leadership through statutory forums the Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Partnership. A range of partnership strategies are in place that support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and other strategic priorities such as regeneration. A partnership summit was convened in Autumn 2022 to review Wirral's collective response to cost of living challenges. A new Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) Sector Infrastructure Contract has been commissioned with Wirral CVS to support continued improvement and engagement with our third sector partners.
- 5.2 A new model of Neighbourhood working is being brought forward through the Integrated Health Partnership. Neighbourhoods are based upon a population of 30-50,000 people and there are 9 identified across Wirral. Two locations defined as Birkenhead A and Wallasey C have been identified as trailblazer neighbourhoods where local VCF partners have been encouraged to lead on community engagement to define local priorities with the aim of improving population health outcomes through reducing inequalities. The Health and Care system also continues to work in tandem to respond to demand pressures in hospital care and to redesign the system to improve flow through the hospital into the community.
- 5.3 The Council is recognised for its innovation in respect of the Cradle to Career project that has been supported by DLUHC who wish to use this as an example of good practice in their Supporting Families Review. This pilot targets one of Wirral's most deprived neighbourhoods Bidston and St James and puts residents at the heart of planning local services with community and faith groups. Its effectiveness

has been evidenced through inspection and the impact it is having on children in need performance data locally. This work is now gaining wider recognition and the intention is to roll this out more widely across the borough and the City Region.

6.0 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

- 6.1 The Improvement Plan, approved in July 2022 has now largely been implemented. However, it is recognised that improvement is a continuous process and should now be embedded as part of the new Council Plan. To achieve this, a dedicated theme – Efficient, Effective and Accessible Council – is included in the Council Plan. Any outstanding elements of the Improvement Plan will be incorporated in the Council Plan alongside the implementation of continuous improvement and transformation through the Change Programme.

IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

| ACTIVITY | MILESTONE | COMMENT |
|---|--|--|
| Theme A – Financial Stability (Financial Recovery Plan) | | |
| Priority 1 – Strengthen Medium Term Financial Planning | | |
| 1.1 Robust financial planning & forecasting | MTFS in place to inform financial planning | MTFS refreshed in 2022. Further refresh drafted for 2023/24. |
| | Funding projections and analysis | All elements now incorporated as standard as part of the MTFP review and annual budget build process. |
| | Financial scenario planning | |
| | Review of pressures | |
| | Enterprise Resource Planning Financials roll out | ERP roll out commenced from 01/04/23. |
| 1.2 Improved Member financial oversight | Primacy of P&R in budget planning process | Adopted as part of the Spring 2022 governance review. |
| | Dedicated finance sub-committee | Finance sub-committee in place annually. |
| | Regular Group Leader briefings | Monthly Group Leader briefings and Finance Sub-Committee meetings. |
| 1.2 Improved Member financial oversight | All Member briefings | Provided as required. 2024/25 budget briefings are being provided to all groups and Policy Committees. |
| | Star Chamber oversight of savings | This role is adopted by the Finance Sub-Committee. |
| 1.3 Better knowledge / understanding of Local Gov Finance | Programme of Training for Members | Training delivered 2022 and 1 June 2023 |
| | Programme of officer training | Officer training aligned with ERP roll out from April 2023. |
| 1.4 Improved financial assurance | Recruit Financial Assurance Manager | Financial Assurance Manager recruited in Spring 2022. |
| | Re-fresh Corporate Governance Group | Officer Group refreshed in Spring 2023. |
| | Compliance with CIPFA financial management code | Review of compliance completed summer 2022, further review by January 2024. |
| | Report Audit findings report to Policy & Resources Committee | Grant Thorntons 21/22 Audit report went to A&RM Committee on 24 October 2023. The Value for Money Statement is to follow. Both will be reported to P&R committee 13 December 2023. |
| | Implement programme of internal review & assurance | Directorate challenge sessions to inform budget process and quarterly |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | budget monitoring. |
| Theme A – Financial Stability (Financial Recovery Plan) | | |
| Priority 2 – Implement Robust Planning & Monitoring of Savings | | |
| 2.1 Better planning / QA of savings | Strengthen formulation of business cases | Improved governance arrangements of new business cases by Chief Officers through Investment and Change Board. |
| | Financial assurance and QA | Savings proposals reviewed and validated by Assurance Manager. |
| 2.2 Improved financial accountability | P&R oversight of service committee financial performance | Regular reporting of financial performance through all committees. |
| 2.3 Timely budget planning | Budget process as part of Committee work programmes | Regular reporting of budget performance through committees. |
| | Budget workshops | Budget workshops incorporate as standard element of the annual budget process. |
| | 23/24 timetable and plan in place | Plan implemented and legal budget agreed to timeframe. |
| | Budget consultation | 23/24 budget consultation implemented in line with statutory requirements. |
| Theme A – Financial Stability (Financial Recovery Plan) | | |
| Priority 3 – Reserves | | |
| 3.1 Appropriate earmarked reserves in place | Review of earmarked reserves | Reviewed as part of annual MTFP build and assumptions. |
| | Reserves Strategy | Incorporated as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. |
| 3.2 General fund balance replenished to 6% by 2025 | Policy defined in MTFS | Incorporated as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. |
| | 4% of net budget in 2022/23 | Allocated in 2022/23 budget by £2.5m |
| | 5% of net budget in 2023/24 | Paused in 23/24 due to scale of the budget gap. |
| Theme A – Financial Stability (Financial Recovery Plan) | | |
| Priority 4 – Improve Financial Governance & Oversight | | |
| 4.1 Improve reporting of financial implications | Committee Coordination & Oversight Group (CCOG) | CCOG introduced to support report consistency and quality. |
| | Section 151 oversight of key decisions | Reviewed through Committee Coordination & Oversight Group and through SLT. |
| 4.2 Commercial risk exposure independently verified and reported | Review of Council companies and associated risks | Review completed in July 2023, further governance work to commence. |
| | Review of risks relating to financial investments | External commission completed and reported to Audit & Risk Management Committee October 2023. |

| Theme A – Financial Stability (Financial Recovery Plan) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Priority 5 – Capital & Assets | | |
| 5.1 Assets optimised to support Council business | Asset Strategy renewed and implementation Plan agreed | New Asset Strategy approved by P&R committee in November 2022. |
| 5.2 Disposal opportunities fully realised | CBRE Commissioned | CBRE commissioned following disposals programme update reported to P&R 12 July 2023. |
| 5.2 Disposal opportunities fully realised | Disposals Strategy and Programme | Disposals programme approved by P&R committee in July 2023. |
| 5.3 Capital financing optimised | Regeneration financing and resourcing model in place | Model developed in 2022 and currently being reviewed and refreshed and will be reported to committee. |
| | Regeneration delivery model business case development | Partnership Delivery Model to be reported to P&R committee Autumn 2023. |
| | Capitalisation of salaries process and method agreed by External Auditor | Process agreed Spring 2022. |
| | Updated Flexible Use of Capital Receipts policy | Policy reviewed and applied. |
| | Review of treasury management and funding sources | Treasury management update to be reported to P&R committee in Autumn 2023, new strategy will be updated in Spring 2024. |
| | Review of capital programme | Capital Programme reviewed annually as part of budget process. 24/25 challenge to be completed by 31 December 2023. |
| Theme B – Effective Organisation | | |
| Priority 1 – Strong Political and Officer Leadership and Accountability | | |
| 1.1 Improved support for Council Leader and political groups | Review / refresh arrangements for Member support | New structure and arrangements implemented Spring 2022. |
| | New Leader briefing group arrangements | New arrangements implemented Spring 2022. |
| 1.2 Improved Member / Chief Officer collaboration & relationships | Group Leaders' Strategy & Planning Sessions | Programme of sessions implemented post-election 2023 |
| | Joint Member / Officer development programme (including Group Leaders, Committee Chairs and SLT). | LGA committee chair's training Summer 2023 LGA Top Team sessions Autumn 2023. |
| 1.3 Improved Member effectiveness | Develop Member Support Steering Group | Steering Group refreshed Spring 2023 |
| | Member Induction Programme | Induction programme designed and implemented 2022 and 2023. |

| | | |
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| | Member Development Strategy 2023 - 27 | Member Development Strategy developed approved at Constitution and Standards Committee February 2023. |
| 1.4 Strong Corporate Leadership & Accountability | LGA Review of Resources, Legal & Assets | LGA review completed Spring 2022. Restructures implemented Autumn 2023. |
| | Leadership Development Programme (People Strategy) | Officer Leadership Programme implemented Autumn 2023. |
| | SRO training for Chief Officers | Delivered by Elite Training Spring 2021. Refresh to be scheduled Autumn 2023. |
| 1.5 Improved Risk Management | Audit & Risk Management committee training programme | Annual training delivered by CIPFA, last session was 7 June 2023. |
| | ARM committee improvements - Forward Plan | Annual forward plan agreed from start of new municipal year. |
| | Independent ARM Members appointed | Independent Members appointed January 2022. Currently a vacancy exists and recruitment is in train. |
| | All Member Risk Management Training | Delivered by CIPFA in January 2022. The session was recorded and is available on the Member portal. |
| | Risk Register Reporting to P&R from 2022/23 | A risk workshop was conducted with P&R on 1 November 2023 and quarterly reporting will be provided to align with budget/performance reporting. |
| | Reporting on Regeneration and Investment risks in line with external audit guidance | Completed and reported to Audit & Risk Management October 2023. |
| Theme B – Effective Organisation | | |
| Priority 2 – Improved Governance & Decision-Making | | |
| 2.1 Streamlined Committee System | Committee system review reported to Standards and Constitution Committee | Review completed and implemented Spring 2022. |
| | Constitution refreshed and reported to Council Annual Meeting | Review completed and implemented Spring 2022. |
| 2.2 Move to Whole Council Elections | Council decision to move to Whole Council Election Scheme | Council decision March 2022. Whole Council elections May 2023. |
| 2.3 Improved Committee Reporting | Committee Coordination & Oversight Group | CCOG introduced to support report consistency and quality. |
| | Officer Training | Report writing and presenting training delivered and available as on line resources. |
| Theme B – Effective Organisation | | |
| Priority 3 – Defined Strategic Plans and Priorities in Place | | |

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|---|--|---|
| 3.1 Business plans reflect priorities | 2022/23 Directorate Plans in place | Directorate Plans in place and reported on through Operational Performance Group. |
| | Wirral Plan refreshed with 22/23 priorities | Wirral Plan refreshed July 2022. |
| | Supporting staff engagement & communications plan | Roll out of refreshed plan through management and staff forums Autumn 2022. |
| | 2023/24 Wirral Plan 4 year refresh timetable developed | New Council Plan being developed to timeline for approval December 2023. |
| | Corporate Performance Framework in place | To be in place quarter 4 for reporting from 1 April 2024. |
| 3.2 Wirral Plan Delivery strategies | Review Wirral Plan delivery strategies | Strategies to be reviewed in Spring 2024 along with Wirral Place Plan/Strategy. |
| | Defined schedule for strategy refresh | Will be completed along with Place Strategy in Spring 2024. |
| Theme B – Effective Organisation | | |
| Priority 4 – Optimise Council Operating Model | | |
| 4.1 Member support for Strategic Change and new operating model | Regular reporting on progress | Change Programme being refreshed to align with Council Plan and MTFP. To be reviewed through Finance Sub-Committee. |
| | P&R committee approval of change programme | To be approved alongside MTFP November 2023. |
| | Defined committee reporting arrangements | Regular reporting through Finance Sub-Committee. |
| 4.2 Strategic capability defined and in place | Operating model principles agreed | Operating model principles approved with Change Programme update to P&R committee, December 2021. |
| | Operating model strategies developed: MTFS | MTFS refreshed 2022 and currently as part of revised MTFP. |
| | Operating model strategies developed: Customer Experience Strategy finalised | Strategy approved through Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee March 2023 |
| | Operating model strategies developed: Asset Strategy | Strategy approved by P&R committee, November 2022. |
| | Operating model strategies developed: People Strategy | People Strategy completed Spring 2023. |
| Theme C – Effective Services | | |
| Priority 1 – Chief Officer Structure | | |

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|---|---|--|
| 1.1 Chief Officer structure optimised to support corporate priorities | LGA DMA review completed | Review completed Spring 2022. |
| | New Chief Officer Structure | New structure and appointments 2023. |
| Theme C – Effective Services | | |
| Priority 2 – Prioritised Service Review Programme | | |
| 2.1 Services re-designed to deliver better outcomes and efficiencies | Service review methodology developed | Methodology developed and piloted with Revenue and Benefits service. |
| | Revenues and Benefits prototype delivered & evaluated | Re-design and restructure completed Spring 2023. |
| | Programme prioritisation finalised | Change Programme reported to P&R committee December 2021. Change programme refresh Autumn 2023 to align with new Council Plan and MTFP. |
| | Programme Initiated | Subject to approval of MTFP November 2023. |
| Theme C – Effective Services | | |
| Priority 3 – Digital Strategy and Transformation Programme | | |
| 3.1 Digital strategy and priorities defined | Digital Strategy in place | Digital strategy and roadmap to be developed in partnership with a strategic partner to be confirmed. Paper to P&R in November 2023. |
| | Digital Transformation Programme scoped and planned | To be implemented through the Enabling Services Programme and the appointment of an external digital partner. |
| | Strategic Partner procurement | To be appointed Spring 2024. |
| | 2023/24 quick wins identified and delivered | These will now be delivered in 2024/25. |
| Theme D – Resilient Communities | | |
| Priority 1 – Strategic Partnership Framework | | |
| 1.1 Effective strategic partnerships | Review of existing arrangements | Review completed Autumn 2022. |
| | New model / arrangements agreed by SLT | To be determined alongside new Place Plan/Strategy Spring 2024. |
| | Wirral Partnership Summit | Completed November 2022. |
| 1.1 Effective strategic partnerships | Strategic partnership - new arrangements launched | To be rolled out alongside new Wirral Place Strategy Spring 2024. |

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| Theme D – Resilient Communities | | |
| Priority 2 – Voluntary Community & Faith Sector | | |
| 2.1 Compact with VCF sector | VCF collaboration framework developed | New infrastructure contract let with Wirral CVS who are now developing this framework and arrangements. |
| 2.1 Compact with VCF sector | Implement new arrangements | Implementation through new contract. |
| Theme D – Resilient Communities | | |
| Priority 3 – Working with Communities | | |
| 3.1 Developing resilient communities' model | Implement Neighbourhood Model | Neighbourhood Model being brought forward as a strategic programme under the Integrated Care Partnership. |

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Appendix 2 – Change Programme: Project Closures 2022/2023

The table below summarises the Change Programme projects completed and closed during 2022 and 2023.

| Ref | Project | Project Overview | High Level Benefits | Start | End |
|-----|---|--|---|--------|--------|
| 1 | Revs & Bens Service Review | Full service review applying zero based principles with the objective of improvement by applying lean principles, streamlining processes, prioritising resources and applying a digital first approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £750k cost efficiencies - More effective, lean, automated processes resulting in improved customer experience. | Dec-21 | Jun-22 |
| 2 | FLO (WeLearn) | Implementation of the 'FLO' learning experience platform powered by Thrive software to replace existing WeLearn system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliant and supported system solution - Meets legal requirement for staff training & development | Jul-20 | Jul-22 |
| 3 | Capita SaaS Cloud Migration | Migration of the Capita Academy system to Capita's hosted solution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliant and supported system solution | May-22 | Aug-22 |
| | Pay 360 | Migration of the Council's payments platform to Capita's cloud system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliant and supported system solution - Statutory Compliance with PCI DSS regulations - Public confidence in the Council when making Card Payments. | Jan-22 | Aug-22 |
| 5 | Cemetery Management Software, Webcasting & Website | System replacement project to introduce 'Plotbox' software Provision of music and webcasting software for funerals. Development of a new commercially focused website for the Cemetery & Crematoria Service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliant and supported system solution - Improved services for Wirral residents and funeral businesses - Supports creation of income stream | Sep-19 | Sep-22 |
| 6 | Wirral Evolutions day services Transfer | Transfer of Wirral Evolutions day services staff back to the Council Delivery of day services commissioned contract inhouse, previously eternally delivered by whole owned company, branded Wirral Evolutions LTD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff and non-staff cost efficiencies - Increase Council Control and Decision Making - Increased ability to respond flexibly to the health and care transformation agenda | Apr-22 | Nov-22 |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--------|--------|
| 7 | Enterprise Service Management (ESM) | Enterprise Service Management (ESM) solution to replace IT helpdesk - 4me | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in calls to Service Desk - Reduction in Cyber Security risk - Reduction in calls with the ability for staff to 'self serve' - Staff efficiencies | Feb-22 | Mar-23 |
| 8 | Microsoft Foundations (Phase one) | Critical digital foundations activity - modern service management, modern work & adoption and change management - to enable future digital transformation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction in a Cyber Security risk to the Council by ensuring secure access to systems, devices and information sharing - Increase in user digital skills supporting self-service capabilities and personalised content to increase productivity - Ability to collaborate with colleagues and partners securely and effectively. - Promote adoption of digital culture within Wirral Council and empower IT to support modern services. - Improved monitoring leading to a reduction in IT staff time working on reactive incidents - Reduction in staff experiencing non-productive time due to IT issues with a reduction in time to resolution | Nov-22 | Apr-23 |
| 9 | 2008 Server Migration | Server upgrade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Servers supported - Accreditation requirements met in terms of supported platforms. - Avoidance of Premium Assurance costs for Server support. - Creation of a single source of information provided by or supported by Wirral ICT | Nov-17 | Jul-23 |
| 10 | Shared Lives transfer | Development of an in-house, Wirral Council delivered, model of the previously externally commissioned contract Shared Lives service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase Council Control and Decision Making - Increased job opportunities in Wirral for staff - Increased employment opportunities for paid carers - Increased independence for people supported through shared lives - Improved profile and benefits of Shared Lives service - More joined up opportunities and pathways from with Council run services - Efficiency gained. | Nov-22 | May-23 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|---|--------|--------|
| 11 | Data Centre Migration | Migration of data centre from Treasury Building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliant and supported systems - Decanting of Treasury Building in support of Birkenhead Regeneration plans | Oct-22 | Jul-23 |
| 12 | WCHCFT Social Care Transfer | Transfer of Adults Social Care staff from WCHCFT back to the Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase Council Control and Decision Making - Staff and non-staff cost efficiencies - Increased uptake in Direct Payment - Greater ability to prioritise and influence pathways - Increase in case review rates | Dec-22 | Aug-23 |
| 13 | Community Asset Transfer (CAT) | Community Asset Transfer of a number of Council owned assets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community benefits as identified in individual business plans - Clear and robust CAT policies and processes developed supporting future asset transfers and associated community benefits | Mar-22 | Oct-23 |
| 14 | CQC Readiness | Enabling project to provide additional support and put structure, governance and controls in place to prepare for upcoming CQC assurance inspection. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ASC fully prepared and ready for inspection - Identified improvement topics & developed into a comprehensive plan to support required service changes. - Enabling activity to help improve practices/support Wirral's improvement journey that will ultimately benefit service users | May-23 | Oct-23 |
| 15 | Hybrid Mail | Rolling out and embedding a new digital hybrid mail solution across the Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent corporate approach to outgoing mail - Staffing efficiencies - Reduction in vehicle costs - (Based on 500K dispatch) cost avoidance of £45k on postage alone - Reduced risk of data breach and costly fines - Capital outlay of £100k for new mailing machine avoided - Improved range of print formats | Apr-22 | Dec-23 |

Appendix 3 – Change Programme Overview

Notes: All programmes/projects have initiated since Jan 2022 onwards (with the exception of those highlighted in grey, which initiated prior to Jan 2022).

| Ref | Programme | Prog Status | Programme Overview | Key Projects & Workstreams |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 1 | Birkenhead Commercial District (BCD) | DELIVERY | As part of Wirral's bold and ambitious regeneration programme, development of Mallory and Irvine buildings. Relocation of staff into Mallory building, enabling the rationalisation of our estate and supporting new and improved ways of working. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mallory Building Fit-out CAT B 2. Operational Delivery (Decant/Install/Readiness) 3. Organisational Delivery (People/Policy/Comms) 4. Commercial Letting 5. Archives, Records Management, Data Centre |
| 2 | Enabling Service Review (ESR) | DELIVERY | Review of enabling services to support an ambitious and efficient council where our systems, processes and people are working as one to deliver effective and accessible services for the residents, businesses and communities of Wirral. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong Corporate Core 2. Digital, Data & Technology 3. Customer Journey |
| 3 | Digital: Infrastructure & Foundations | DELIVERY | Upgrading and transforming Council's IT infrastructure, ensuring system compliance and security whilst also building the foundations for Digital transformation. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Server 2012 Migration 2. 4 Me (MPF) 3. Windows 11 4. (Horti) Machine Maintenance System 5. Sharepoint 6. Regulatory & Environmental Services Replacement System (RESRS) 7. Customer Access Solution (CAS) 8. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) 9. ModGov |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| 4 | Waste & Street Cleansing Review | DELIVERY | Thorough evaluation of the service delivery options available for waste collection and street cleansing in Wirral, which will provide a reliable, efficient and cost-effective service to all residents, businesses and visitors. | 1. Business Case Development <i>(future phases/projects/workstreams to follow)</i> |
| 5 | Childrens Transformation Programme | SOME PROJECTS IN DELIVERY, PROGRAMME SCOPING | To maximise the universal offer and promote the welfare of all children and young people in the borough, by effectively developing relationships with education settings, health providers, and community organisations, across the existing four localities footprint. | 1. Theme 1: SEND Improvement 2. Theme 2: Family Help/Families First for Children 3. Theme 3: Care 4. Theme 4: Education Provision/Business 5. EYES (Liquid Logic) system implementation <i>(some projects in scoping across 4 key themes)</i> |
| 6 | Adults Social Care Transformation | SOME PROJECTS IN DELIVERY, PROGRAMME SCOPING | To develop new, innovative, and integrated target operating models of social care which will support adults and older adults, families and carers health, wellbeing, and to live well independently in their communities. | 1. CQC Assessment & Assurance 2. 3 Conversations 3. Community Care Market Transformation 4. Technology Enabled Care 5. All Age Disability (AAD) Strategic Framework 6. Reablement 7. Extra Care Housing (5 Housing Schemes) |
| 7 | Active Wirral | SOME PROJECTS IN DELIVERY, PROGRAMME SCOPING | Transforming a number of Neighbourhood services to promote independence and healthier lives, delivering better outcomes for residents through more efficient and effective services. | 1. Floral Pavilion - Future Model 2. Sports & Physical Activity Transformation 3. Facilities & Site Development 4. Libraries - Future Model <i>(some projects in scoping)</i> |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|--|--|
| 8 | Corporate Property | SOME PROJECTS IN DELIVERY, PROGRAMME SCOPING | Implementation of a new, corporate landlord model and delivery of our asset strategy. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Landlord Model 2. Birkenhead Town Hall 3. Wallasey Town Hall 4. Hamilton Building Decant <i>(some projects in scoping)</i> |
| 9 | Neighbourhood Model | DELIVERY (P'SHIP) | The Wirral Neighbourhood Model is a community led initiative to reduce increasing health inequalities across Wirral, moving from focusing on ill health to promoting wellbeing. The model is a collaboration between our community leaders, residents, the NHS and Local Authority to promote a bottom-up approach driving change within individual neighbourhoods that focuses on the needs of each area. The aim of the model is to improve Wirral residents' health through a community led approach. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Neighbourhood Trailblazers 2. (Phased) Place Neighbourhood Groups |

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | COUNCIL PLAN: DRAFT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES |

REPORT SUMMARY

The new Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023-27 was approved by Council in December 2023. This report sets out a draft Performance Management Framework (PMF) that will ensure the implementation of the Plan is effectively monitored and reported over the next 4 years.

The PMF has been developed to ensure there is rigour in measuring the Council's progress towards delivering the priorities in the plan and specifically outcomes identified under each of the plan themes. The PMF has been co-produced following engagement with all Policy Committees which provided an opportunity to share an early draft and for Members to input into the final design.

The report supports the implementation of the Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023-27. Adoption of the PMF or similar, if agreed by members, ensures effective monitoring and performance management arrangements are in place to evidence progress against each of the Council Plan themes.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources Committee is requested to:

1. Note the content of this report and associated appendices and
2. Highlight any further feedback or comments in advance of the Performance Management Framework being implemented in the new financial year.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The development of a comprehensive and rigorous PMF in support of the Council Plan ensures the Council is following good practice. The PMF will provide an effective process to enable regular reporting to all Policy Committees. Plan progress can be effectively monitored and where performance is falling short, corrective action can be put in place.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Performance Management Framework follows good practice methodology. Officers have reviewed approaches in other local authorities to ensure that Wirral's PMF is comprehensive and thorough. The framework will be reviewed annually in line with the annual review of the Council Plan.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023-27 was approved by Council on 4 December 2023. The Plan builds on the Wirral Plan and Council Improvement Plan and sets out the Council's priorities and desired outcomes for the next four years.
- 3.2 To ensure effective implementation of the Council Plan, there is a need to define the performance management arrangements that will be put in place for the next four years. A Performance Management Framework document setting out the approach to be adopted is included as Appendix 1 to this report. The PMF documents the key definitions and principles as well as the proposed approach and processes to support regular reporting in relation to the six themes of the Council Plan.
- 3.3 In summary:
- i. The Council Plan PMF will focus on evidencing progress against the outcomes under each theme of the Plan. It will also include reporting against the deliverables identified as part of the "what we will do" section under each theme. A summary document including the indicators, measures and deliverables that will make up the PMF under each theme, is included as Appendix 2.
 - ii. Council Plan performance reporting will align with budget monitoring, reported to Policy and Service Committees quarterly alongside the budget reports.
 - iii. Council Plan themes will be reported to the relevant committees. Policy & Resources Committee will receive reporting on all Council Plan themes.
 - iv. As well as being reported quarterly to committees, performance reports will be made available on the Council website as part of a dedicated Council Plan web page.
 - v. Performance reporting will be based on a principle of sound data quality. A separate Data Quality Guidance document is included as Appendix 3 to this report.

3.4 Over the last 18 months, the Policy and Service Committees have commissioned their own operational performance reports to maintain oversight and hold Directors to account for service performance. It is proposed that these operational performance reports will continue. However, given the risk of duplicate performance reporting, it will be for both committees and officers to work together to determine the format and frequency for reviewing operational reports. For example, operational performance could be reviewed as part of a dedicated service performance deep dive workshop twice a year (in Autumn and Spring) rather than the quarterly frequency of Council Plan performance reporting.

3.5 Following the Council Plan PMF workshop with this committee on 29 February, further detailed corporate health performance reporting will be reviewed and considered in addition to the Council Plan PMF. A further workshop will be convened with this committee in the coming weeks to bring this forward.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no direct resource implications arising as a result of this report. Performance reporting will be coordinated by Wirral Intelligence Service within existing staffing resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Council Plan PMF seeks to mitigate the Corporate Risk of the Council not delivering on its strategic priorities by providing an effective system of performance reporting and accountability for delivering all aspects of the Council Plan.

7.2 The absence of an effective PMF would lead to an increase in the likelihood of the Council not achieving the priorities and outcomes set out in the Council Plan.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 In developing this PMF, dedicated workshop sessions have been held with each of the Policy Committees to ensure that Members have had the opportunities to contribute to the final PMF design. This follows extensive Member engagement in Autumn 2023 to develop the Council Plan itself.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the final approval of the Council Plan. This can be viewed at the following link:

<http://s03vs-intrcm/documents/s50110698/EIA%20Council%20Plan.pdf>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Council Plan seeks to ensure Wirral Council plays its part in addressing the Climate Emergency. The PMF takes account of this by including appropriate measures and indicators that support the Council's efforts to reduce CO2 emissions and protect the environment.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct Community wealth implications arising as a result of this report.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Council Plan Performance Management Framework
Appendix 2 – Council Plan Summary of Indicators, Measures & Deliverables
Appendix 3 – Data Quality Guidance

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023-27
Wirral Plan
Council Improvement Plan

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with Section (b) of its Terms of Reference, to “provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a ‘whole-council’ view of performance.”

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|---|-------------------------|
| Policy & Resources Committee | 21 November 2023 |
| Council | 4 December 2023 |

**Wirral Working
Together
2023-2027**

**Council Plan
Performance
Management
Framework**

Version 1: January 2024

Contents

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1.0 Introduction

The Council Plan 2023-27 translates our vision “*Working together to promote fairness and opportunity for people and communities*” into deliverable organisational actions, providing clarity on what will be delivered and when.

The plan makes a commitment to work together to deliver significant measurable progress in improving the lives of the people of Wirral. To achieve this, we must ensure we have the right approach in place to check our progress regularly and act when we are not doing well.

This performance management framework is designed to provide a robust, consistent, and integrated approach to supporting and monitoring the successful delivery of the plan and its underpinning deliverables. The framework has been developed based on the following principles:

Outcome Driven

Outcomes are clear, tangible improvements in conditions of well-being for residents that can be measured so that by monitoring progress over time we can show the real difference delivering our plans is making.

Strong Leadership

Collectively, Wirral Council Members and officers champion the importance of performance management and actively encourage all staff in working to improve performance and deliver improved outcomes.

Accountability

We are accountable to Wirral residents, and we will regularly report on our progress towards the delivery of the Council Plan to allow our performance to be effectively scrutinised and decision-makers held to account.

Personal Responsibility

The responsibility for performance is embedded into the day job of all Council staff. Everyone understands the identified priorities and related outcomes and is empowered to take personal responsibility in helping the Council meet them. Good performance is the result of high performing organisations, teams, and individuals.

Transparency

Published performance reporting accurately reflects the true picture. Reports highlight under performance, identify areas for improvement as well as success. They are designed to be user friendly to improve understanding of performance by all stakeholders.

Timeliness

Performance information is available at the right time to support decision making and ensure that council services are responsive to the changing needs of the community.

The aim of this document is to communicate how performance management will operate in Wirral and to ensure there is comprehensive understanding of how everyone can contribute to enhancing the delivery of the Council Plan 2023-27.

2.0 Understanding Performance Management

Effective organisations strategically plan what they will do based on the outcomes they want to achieve and the budget available. The plans set out clearly what will be done, and we performance manage them by checking our progress regularly and act where we are not doing as well. Throughout the process we ensure that we communicate with all stakeholders to develop a shared understanding. Simply put performance management is:

“A process and set of behaviours to support the Council in delivering outcomes that improve the lives of Wirral residents”.

This framework is based on the classic ‘Plan-Do-Review-Revise’ cycle. This continuous cycle of activities takes place at all levels (partnership, programmes, teams, and individuals) and mirrors and supports the commissioning cycle. The cycle is constructed around four key concepts with effective communication embedded within all steps ensuring a clear line of sight between the role of the individual and the purpose and strategy.

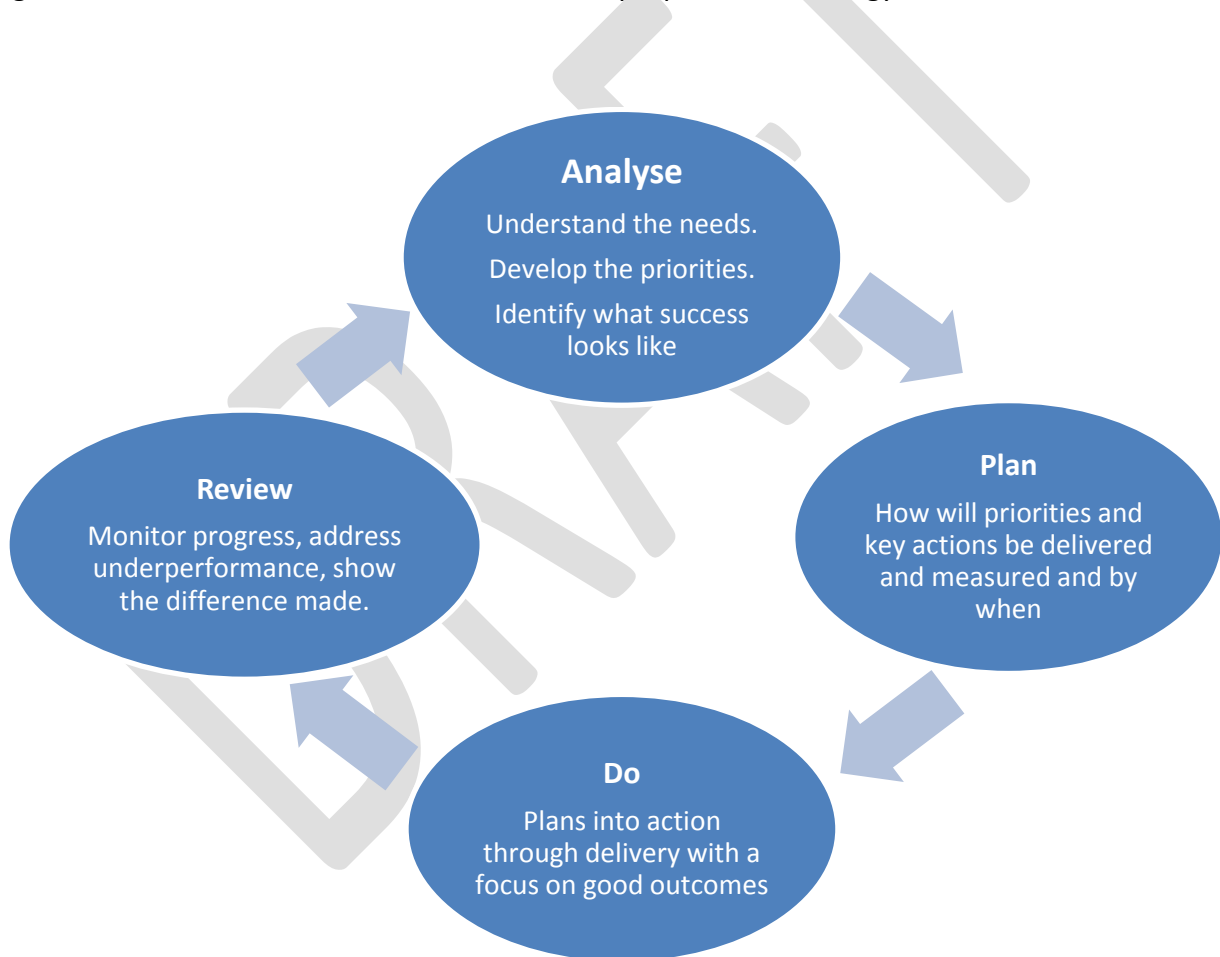


Figure 1: The Plan-Do-Review Cycle

Stage 1 – Analyse

Effective planning utilises available insight and understands the needs of local people and communities to enable evidence-based decision-making concerning priorities and best value resource allocation. Other key information to be considered includes reviews of good practice in other areas, audit and inspections and peer reviews.

Stage 2 – Planning

The starting point of the planning process is to clearly articulate the outcomes for residents that the plan will enable. Underpinning the Council Plan are strategies with action plans, programme and project plans and team and individual plans. The plans have clarity of actions needed and plans at all levels will feed upwards back to the Council Plan; a 'Golden Thread'.

Stage 2 – Doing

We put the plans into action with a clear focus on the priorities. The delivery of defined activities, managing risk, and supporting and coaching staff to achieve better performance.

Stage 3 – Reviewing

Performance reporting and review will drive a systematic assessment of delivery and opportunity to challenge performance at all levels. If improvement is not being made the review stage provides the opportunity to put in place new activities in areas of underperformance. The review stage drives the continuous development of an organisational culture of performance and improvement.

3.0 The Performance Framework

The Council performance framework will provide a clear approach to monitoring oversight of the delivery of the Council Plan and underpinning deliverables. These are summarised in this section.

3.1 The Council Plan

The Council Plan is built around 6 themes which align with the Council's governance and committee system. Each theme will be reported to the appropriate committee:

1. Early help for children and families – aligns with Children's, Family & Education Committee.
2. Promoting independence and healthier lives – aligns with Adult Care and Public Health Committee.
3. People-focussed regeneration – aligns with Economy, Regeneration & Housing Committee
4. Protecting our environment – aligns with Environment, Climate Emergency & Transport Committee.
5. Safe and resilient communities – aligns with Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee.
6. An efficient and effective Council – aligns with Policy & Resources Committee.

3.2 Key Council Strategies

The key set of strategies underpin the delivery of the Council Plan will also be reported to appropriate Policy Committees. Directors with oversight of the strategies take ownership of their reporting to committee, with reporting timing dependent on committee requirements.

3.3 Existing Committee Performance Reporting

Policy committee members have worked with officers to outline key performance measures for oversight by their committee to ensure performance in key areas is effectively scrutinised. Performance reporting for committees is in place for these requested sets of measures. There is opportunity to align this reporting with the Council plan reporting to ensure streamlined, concise, and proportionate reporting.

Each Policy Committee also has a dedicated work programme which enables committees to identify areas that would benefit from a deep-dive review of performance for inclusion.

3.4 Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a key document in the Council's financial planning cycle. It sets the strategic financial approach that the Council will adopt in supporting delivery of the Council Plan and the matrix of other strategies and plans that support its delivery. To deliver the Council Plan, the Council will need to operate within the Council's budget framework and the forecast financial affordability envelope.

Policy and Resources Committee will be responsible for ensuring that the entire budget will be in balance, including providing mitigating actions to bring the budget back in line from any adverse variance position that may be forecast. This may take the form of providing direction to other Service Committees. Policy and Resources Committee are responsible for advising Full Council on organisation-wide financial activity. To enable the Committees to manage and monitor budgets effectively in-year, a suite of detailed information will be provided on a quarterly basis.

3.5 Directorate Plans

Each Directorate has a Directorate Plan which outlines in detail key areas of work which underpin the delivery of the Council Plan. These are updated annually and regularly monitored by Directorate Management Teams with quarterly reporting on delivery performance.

3.6 Governance and Assurance

To ensure effective governance and assurance, there are a number of levels to Council Plan delivery with oversight being carried out as part of the performance management process.

| Plan | Oversight |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Council Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report to Policy and Resources Committee • Theme reports to Policy Committees (quarterly) • Oversight by Strategic Leadership Team |
| Medium Term Financial Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to Policy and Resources Committee (quarterly) • Reports to Policy and Service Committees (quarterly) |
| Supporting Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to Policy Committees (as determined by committees as part of work programme) |
| Directorate Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring at Directorate Management Teams and Strategic Leadership Team |
| Operational Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular monitoring at Directorate Management Teams and Strategic Leadership Team |

Table 1. The Council Plan and its underpinning deliverables oversight summary

4.0 Performance Reporting

To ensure effective oversight of the Council Plan, performance reporting has been designed based on a set of key principles:

- Reporting aligned to council priorities and services.
- Clear accountability.
- Action on underperformance and driving improvement.
- Visible, accessible, and streamlined reporting.

The reporting provides a visual interactive web-based performance dashboard designed to provide a more accessible approach, and more effective analysis of performance including trends and where available benchmarks over time. The dashboard visuals can be copied into a static appendix used in committee reporting as required.

For the Council Plan the performance management framework provides the ability to measure progress against the plan over the next four years, for each theme, reporting will focus on:

- A set of outcomes which articulate the benefits the Council is seeking to achieve.
- A series of deliverables i.e., what the Council is planning to do to meet those outcomes.
- A set of outcome indicators and performance measures that will be used to monitor progress.

Outcome Indicators

Outcome indicators are measurable statistics that quantify the achievement of results and indicate if a change has happened. For example, Life Expectancy at Birth provides a measure over time of the average age at population level in years and months. Outcome indicators are usually measures at whole population level for measuring long term changes to quantify the achievement towards a stated outcome i.e. people live longer.

Performance Measures

Performance measures evaluate how well a programme, service or provider is performing (as opposed to the impact on whole populations). They concentrate on:

- How much did we do? (e.g. amount provided).
- How well did we do it? (e.g. % timely service).
- Is anyone better off? (e.g. % showing improvement).

Delivery of the plan at a population level focuses on the use of outcomes and indicators. Performance measures relate to outputs rather than impact on populations. They are often easily understood measures and are mainly used for evaluating service or provider level activity including some types of commissioned activity. There will also be occasions when they usefully provide context to illustrate outcome achievement particularly in complex areas where a 'basket' of measures will provide a more complete picture of performance.

5.0 Continuous Development of a Performance Culture

The Council Plan articulates a four year aim to bring about real change and deliver improved outcomes for residents. Through the application of this framework, we will be able to evidence that this is being achieved.

The Council Plan is a live document with underpinning annually reviewed action planning to ensure that stakeholders, residents, and new insight can continue to influence future activity. The performance arrangements will be regularly reviewed and any required changes made on an annual basis.

Successfully embedding the approach outlined in this framework will lead to development of a high-performance culture and continuous improvement with these characteristics:

- Strong corporate governance by Members supported by officers determining effective use of resources through strategic planning.
- Decision making underpinned by a strong evidence base.
- Robust business planning – a ‘Golden Thread’ of strategic planning flowing from the Council Plan to all lower programme, team, and individual objectives.
- Clarity of ownership of identified actions and personal responsibility attached to delivery.
- A performance improvement culture inspired by strong leadership, led by Members.
- Early warning and rectification of risks to delivery and poor performance.
- The evaluation of under-performance to enable improvement and shared learning.
- Actively seeking best practice to review and further develop current arrangements.
- Good management practice including effective communication and regular organisational staff check-ins and communication.
- Targeted training and development to build appropriate organisational and individual skills and abilities.
- The celebration and communication of success.
- Effective community engagement to drive positive developments.

To ensure the Performance Management Framework remains relevant, proportionate and delivers the insight required for effective oversight an annual review process will be completed.

6.0 Managing Performance, Roles, and Responsibilities

6.1 Across the Organisation

Elected Members

- Committees Receive Council Plan monitoring reports.
- Elected Members proactively and constructively monitor and challenge performance.
- Elected Members monitor the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Strategic Leadership Team

- Deliver the Council Plan and the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Model the behaviours required for effective performance management.
- Adopt one shared approach to performance challenge, delivery, and improvement.
- Ensure all plans are set at the right level of ambition, are fit for purpose and consistent with the priorities and vision of the Council Plan.
- Accountable for the delivery and monitoring of their Strategies and Directorate Business Plans.
- Brief Councillors on key performance issues and plans.
- Verify and sign off performance reports relating to their projects.

Service Managers

- Model the behaviours required for effective performance management.
- Responsible for the production and delivery of plans and strategies.
- Ensure that any underpinning plans at team and service level are fit for purpose and contribute towards the delivery of the Council Plan and associated strategies.
- Contribute to the development of outcome measures and indicators.
- Manage individual and team performance through effective leadership and coaching and take appropriate action in the event of poor performance.
- Provide progress reports back to senior managers to ensure the management of service performance through this strategy.

Individual Employees

- Have a good understanding of the Council Plan and take responsibility for how they can optimise their contribution to its delivery.
- Through direct contact with service users, they have first-hand experience of what is working and what isn't and routinely feed this back for incorporation.
- Ensure knowledge of local communities within Wirral is effectively utilised.
- Deliver individual objectives.

6.2 Corporate Accountability

Corporate Office

- Oversee the development of the Council Plan.
- Ensure effective communication.
- Ensure the right structures and activity are in place to enable plan delivery.

Wirral Intelligence Service

- Coordinate and manage performance related reporting.
- Develop, maintain, and communicate performance related guidance.
- Provide leadership in the development and utilisation of intelligence resources and expertise to support evidence-based decision making.
- Facilitate the development of an integrated approach to performance management in-conjunction with colleagues including finance, risk management and HR.

Finance

- Develop and oversee delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Council Internal Audit

- Audit the Council's performance management arrangements to drive continuous improvement.

Council Risk Management

- Ensures that the risk management strategy links and contributes to the development and on-going delivery of the Council Plan and performance management framework.
- Ensures full oversight of the Council's risk approach at all levels with appropriate training.
- Links with partner organisations to collate Wirral risks linked to the Council Plan.

Human Resources

- Develop and oversee the roll out of Council staff check-ins with a focus on performance.
- Oversee the delivery of the People Strategy and Member Learning and Development Strategy to develop appropriate skills to enable effective plan delivery.

| Document Status | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Version/Date | Approving Body | Responsible Officer | Review Date |
| 1: January 2024 | Head of Intelligence | Nancy Clarkson | January 2025 |
| | Senior Leadership Team | Chief Executive | |

| Version History | | | |
|-----------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| Date | Version | Author/Editor | Comment |
| 2 January 2024 | 1.0 | N Clarkson | |
| | | | |

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Appendix 2 - Draft Council Plan Performance Management Framework - Indicators and Measures

| Theme 1 - Efficient, Effective & Accessible Council | Reporting | Benchmarking |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| Council finances stabilised | | |
| % Variance between council budget and forecast | Quarterly | No |
| Actual Savings Delivered | Quarterly | No |
| Forecasted Savings & Mitigation Variance (£m) | Quarterly | No |
| Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of net revenue expenditure | Annual | Yes |
| Services are cost-effective and deliver value for money | | |
| External auditors judgement on the Council accounts and value for money arrangements. | Annual | No |
| Social care spend as a percentage of core spending power | Annual | Yes |
| Council services are efficient, accessible and inclusive | | |
| One stop shop customer exit survey. % of good or excellent ratings received during surveys | 6 Months | No |
| Number of phone calls into the Council call centre | Quarterly | No |
| Placeholder: Call centre additional measures to be reviewed | TBC | TBC |
| Number of face to face appointments | Quarterly | No |
| Total number of live My Wirral accounts | Quarterly | No |
| % Complaints responded to within 15 working day target | Quarterly | No |
| % Councillor enquiries responded to within 10 day target | Quarterly | No |
| % MP enquiries responded to within 10 day target | Quarterly | No |
| Call centre waiting times | Quarterly | No |
| Placeholder: Ombudsman enquiries and investigation measure | TBC | TBC |
| Placeholder: Equalities measure | TBC | TBC |
| Placeholder: Response to council consultations per x% of the population | Annually | No |
| Assets and property support our vision and priorities | | |
| % of Capital budget spent | Quarterly | No |
| Asset compliance planned preventative maintenance completed on time. | Quarterly | No |

Theme 1 - Deliverables

- Council delivers within budget
- Reserves replenished
- Council secures and enhances its revenue where possible
- All back-office services reviewed and centralised
- Council transformation programme delivered
- Identify and appoint a digital transformation partner
- Universal services will be delivered to the best possible standard
- Implement People Strategy
- Implement Customer Experience Strategy
- Review of customer access channels
- Corporate landlord model implemented
- Review and enhance Corporate Equality & Inclusion including the Armed Forces Covenant
- Implement Assets Strategy including programme of disposals for surplus buildings

| Theme 2 - Early Help for Children and Families | Reporting | Benchmarking |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Children and young people have their needs met early | | |
| Child In Need rate per 10,000 children | Annual | Yes |
| Child Protection Plans per 10,000 children | Annual | Yes |
| Child protection cases reviewed on time | Annual | Yes |
| Children Looked After rate, per 10,000 children | Annual | Yes |
| % of looked after children in same placement for at least 2 years/placed for adoption | Annual | Yes |
| Rate of referrals to children's social care per 10,000 | Annual | Yes |
| % Repeat referrals to children's social care | Annual | Yes |
| % Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20 week timescale | Quarterly | No |
| Children and young people stay safe and are protected from harm | | |
| Placeholder: Average social worker caseloads | Quarterly | TBC |
| Domestic abuse rate per 1,000 population aged over 16 | Annual | Yes |
| Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 aged 10-17 | Quarterly | Yes |
| % of juvenile offenders that reoffended | Quarterly | Yes |
| Children and young people achieve their potential and are prepared for adulthood | | |
| % of children having a good level of development at foundation stage | Annual | Yes |
| % of pupils meeting the expected standard KS2 in reading, writing and maths - disadvantaged backgrounds | Annual | Yes |
| % of pupils meeting the expected standard KS2 in reading, writing and maths - non-disadvantaged backgrounds | Annual | Yes |
| Average Attainment 8 score - disadvantaged backgrounds | Annual | Yes |
| Average Attainment 8 score - non disadvantaged backgrounds | Annual | Yes |
| % 16-17 year olds with SEND (EHC plan or statement) in education and training | Annual | Yes |
| % NEET (inc not known) | Annual | Yes |
| % Care leavers in education, employment or training (17-18 years old) | Annual | Yes |
| % Care leavers in education, employment or training (19-21 years old) | Annual | Yes |
| Number of children known to be electively home educated | Quarterly | No |

Theme 2 – Deliverables

- Continue to deliver Family Toolbox & Family Hubs, building community and neighbourhood capacity
- Deliver the Breaking the Cycle programme
- Deliver Transforming Care Programme
- Continue to develop Multi-agency child protection teams
- Delivering the Youth Justice Annual Plan
- Delivering the Safer Adolescence Strategy
- Develop and deliver the children, young people and family strand of Wirral Drugs Strategy & Remodel the Domestic Abuse Service
- Remodel Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Services and launch a new SEND Strategy
- Deliver the #EveryDayCounts campaign & review Wirral Attendance Service
- Embed the Graduated Response. This helps to support children and young people to meet their learning needs

| Theme 3 - Promote Independence & Healthier Lives | Reporting | Benchmarking |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| People live independently for longer | | |
| Number of people supported with assistive technology | Quarterly | No |
| Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation service | Annual | Yes |
| Learning disabilities: percentage of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family | Annual | Yes |
| People get the right care at the right time | | |
| Number of people in extra care housing accommodation (benchmark based on 10,000 pop) | Quarterly | Yes |
| Average weekly cost of supporting people through residential and nursing care | Quarterly | Yes |
| Number of people supported in a Care Home | Quarterly | No |
| Number of people supported with a Domiciliary Care package (benchmark based on 10,000 pop) | Quarterly | Yes |
| Number of people supported with a Supported living package (benchmark based on 10,000 pop) | Quarterly | Yes |
| Percentage supported by residential care with dementia | Quarterly | Yes |
| Percentage supported by community services with dementia | Quarterly | Yes |
| Quality improvements are made within the care sector | | |
| Latest CQC (Care Quality Commission) rating - Good, Requires Improvement, Inadequate | Quarterly | Yes |
| Quality of life: how do adults in receipt of social care score their quality of life? | Annual | Yes |
| Inequalities in health are reduced | | |
| Healthy life expectancy at birth - female | Annual | Yes |
| Healthy life expectancy at birth - male | Annual | Yes |
| Inequality in life expectancy at birth - female | Annual | Yes |
| Inequality in life expectancy at birth - male | Annual | Yes |

Theme 3 – Deliverables

- Increase housing options for older people
- Provide services as close to home as possible
- All Age Disability Review – new models/ ways of working to be explored
- Provide health and social care services where people need them
- Implementation of the on-line assessment tool to support quality improvement of providers and services that require CQC inspection
- Deliver our Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Deliver Wirral’s Combatting Drugs Strategy, Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Programme
- Develop a Local Tobacco Control Plan and Local Gambling Harm Strategy

| Theme 4 - Deliver People-Focused Regeneration | Reporting | Benchmarking |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| More investment secured and created to deliver regeneration in Wirral | | |
| % of major planning applications granted | Quarterly | Yes |
| % of minor planning applications granted | Quarterly | Yes |
| More jobs created and more people in good quality, sustainable work | | |
| Employment rate (aged 16-64) | Quarterly | Yes |
| Job Density Rate | Annual | Yes |
| Employee Jobs earning below living wage | Annual | Yes |
| Median gross annual pay of FT employees (workplace) | Annual | Yes |
| More quality, environmentally sustainable and affordable homes | | |
| Total number of cases where homelessness was prevented and relieved | Quarterly | No |
| New affordable homes completed (affordable rent and shared ownership) | Annual | Yes |
| New affordable homes completed (affordable rent) | Annual | Yes |
| New affordable homes completed (shared ownership) | Annual | Yes |
| Median energy efficiency score - Housing | Annual | Yes |
| More businesses (including community/ social enterprise) established and survive | | |
| No. of active enterprises | Annual | Yes |
| No. of births of new enterprises | Annual | Yes |
| Business survival rates | Annual | Yes |

Theme 4 – Deliverables

- Attract new investment (grants and private sector) to support regeneration
- Drive Brownfield Local Plan including neighbourhood masterplans
- Progress neighbourhood master plans
- Deliver local employment and skills activity
- Coordinate worklessness initiatives in our most deprived areas
- Deliver new, attractive environmentally sustainable housing (including affordable)
- Tackle Homelessness
- Support local businesses
- Enable local community wealth building and asset transfers

| Theme 5 - Protect Our Environment | Reporting | Benchmarking |
|--|-----------|--------------|
| An environmentally friendly and sustainable borough | | |
| Number of national quality awards for Wirral's parks, coastal and open spaces: Green Flags | Annual | No |
| Number of trees planted | Annual | No |
| Total household waste per 1,000 households | Annual | Yes |
| Overall collected general waste (non-recycling) KG per household TBC | Annual | Yes |
| % household waste recycled TBC | Annual | Yes |
| % Mortality attributable to particle air pollution | Annual | Yes |
| The number of exceedances of the air quality objectives in England (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs measures) | Annual | No |
| Net zero targets achieved | | |
| CO2e emissions in scope of LA influence | Annual | Yes |
| Carbon Literacy Training % staff Carbon Literate (target 15%) | Quarterly | No |
| Wirral Council Carbon Budget Performance - Emissions (net tCO2e) | Annual | No |
| Improved transport infrastructure | | |
| Percentage of local authority A roads in poor condition | Annual | Yes |
| Percentage of local authority B and C roads in poor condition | Annual | Yes |
| Active travel - number of people walking (based on sensor data) | Quarterly | No |
| Active travel - number of people cycling (based on sensor data) | Quarterly | No |
| Electric vehicle infrastructure: Number of publicly available electric vehicle charging devices available to the public per 100,000 population | Quarterly | Yes |
| % of road safety casualties that resulted in serious or fatal injuries (KSI) | Annual | Yes |

Theme 5 – Deliverables

- Review the Council's Tree, Hedgerow & Woodland Strategy
- Implement Pollinators Policy
- Sustainable maintenance of parks, open spaces, beaches and coastline
- Improve waste and recycling performance and street cleanliness
- Support activities on waste prevention, re-use, recycling and composting
- Implement the Biodiversity & Net Gain Strategy
- Deliver the Cool2 Climate Change Strategy
- Manage the Council's carbon budget to measure carbon emission reduction
- Improve Wirral's air quality and implement Air Quality Strategy
- Reduce emissions from our homes and buildings e.g. by retrofitting and reducing energy usage
- Introduce clear highways and infrastructure and network management strategy and policy including parking and Active Travel
- Review current street light Electric Vehicle Charging Provision (EVCP) strategy
- Implement Road Safety Plan

| Create Safe, Resilient And Engaged Communities | Reporting | Benchmarking |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| People and communities feel safer where they live, work, and socialise | | |
| Hospital admissions for violence (including sexual violence) per 100,000 population | Annual | Yes |
| Anti-Social Behaviour reported to police per 1,000 population | Quarterly | No |
| Total recorded offences (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population | Quarterly | Yes |
| Violent Crime per 1,000 population | Quarterly | Yes |
| More residents lead active and healthy lives | | |
| Footfall through sites (leisure facilities) | Quarterly | No |
| Wirral Library active borrowers | Quarterly | No |
| % population who have walked for travel at least twice in 28 days. | Annual | No |
| % population who have engaged in active travel at least twice in 28 days. | Annual | No |
| % population that is active | Bi Annual | Yes |
| Total social value of Leisure centres | Quarterly | TBC |

Theme 6 – Deliverables

- Deliver our Community Safety Strategy
- Install new CCTV cameras in consultation with Merseyside Police
- Install new alleygates
- Secure agreed Streetscene improvements
- Installation of more emergency Help Points
- Work with partners including Merseyside Police to improve community safety
- Review Sport & Physical Activity Services and transformation programme
- Develop opportunities for Community / Commercial Transfer of any assets
- Review playing pitch offer and implement Playing Pitch Strategy
- Develop and launch Sport England funded Performance monitor for Wirral
- Expand Community Partner Library offer
- Development of Moreton Library and combined Youth Hub alongside Moreton regeneration work
- Increase digitisation and accessibility to the written word eg Wirral Archives, libraries

**The Council Plan
2023-2027**

Data Quality Guidance

Version 1: January 2024

DRAFT

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1.0 Introduction

This guide forms part of a set of guidance documents developed to support the delivery of the Council Plan 2023-27. The purpose of this guide is to support the Council and its partners to improve and maintain data quality. Good quality data leads to accurate performance information which in turn informs better decision-making, prioritisation, and planning. The guide presents a set of standards based on best practice research, the adoption of which will lead to improved data quality and consistency across the Council and its partners.

2.0 Definitions

The terms 'data', 'information' and 'insight' are often used interchangeably. This guide focuses on data; the basic facts from which information can be produced by processing or analysis. A set of key definitions is set out below:

- Data – the numbers, words or images that have yet to be organised or analysed to answer a specific question.
- Information – produced through processing, manipulating, and organising data to answer questions, adding to the knowledge of the receiver.
- Knowledge – what is known by people interpreting the information received adding relevance to clarify the insights the information contains.

3.0 The Importance of Data Quality

Maintaining good data quality supports the Performance Management Framework and the 'analyse, plan, do, review' business planning model. It provides the foundation for on-going business improvement and helps us to:

- Present a fair picture of performance to enable informed decision-making and effective service planning.
- Measure the effectiveness and efficiency of our services to the public.
- Benchmark cost and performance with our peers.

Performance data is also used by external assessors to inform Audits, Peer Reviews and Ofsted inspections to judge our performance as an organisation. This places a bigger emphasis on the need to demonstrate that the underlying data is reliable and of good quality.

Producing data that is fit for purpose should not be the end in itself but an integral part of our operational, performance management and governance arrangements. Organisations that put data quality at the heart of their performance management systems are most likely to be actively managing data in all aspects of day-to-day business and turning this data into reliable insight for decision-making.

4.0 Responsibility for Data Quality

Good quality data is the essential ingredient for reliable performance and financial information. The data must be fit for purpose representing, in an accurate and timely manner, an organisation's activity. A balance must also be achieved between the importance of the information achieved and the cost of collecting the supporting data. To achieve this balance there is a need to determine the information priorities and appropriate systems to secure the quality of data to support these needs.

The risk in not identifying and addressing weaknesses in data quality or the arrangements that underpin data collection and reporting is that information may be misleading, decision-making may be flawed, and resources may be wasted. There is also a danger that good performance may not be recognised and acknowledged.

5.0 Standards for Good Quality Data

Data quality can be described using six key characteristics or standards. These provide the basis to assess that quality of data and take action to address potential weaknesses:

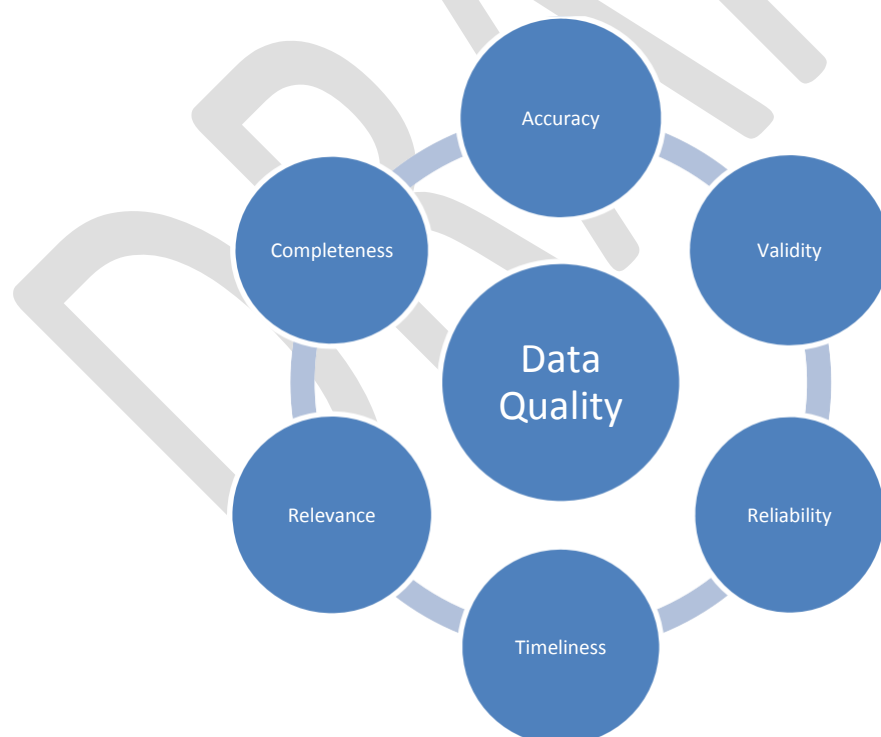


Figure 1: Data quality key characteristics

Accuracy

Data should be sufficiently accurate for their intended purposes. Data should be captured once only and as close to the point of activity as possible, as this is most likely to ensure their accuracy. The need for accuracy must be balanced with the importance of the uses for the data as well as the cost and effort of calculation. In some cases, it may be appropriate to accept some degree of inaccuracy where timeliness is important. Where compromises are made on accuracy, those resulting limitations of the data should be clear to users. However, this is unlikely to be appropriate in the case of published performance indicators.

Validity

Data should be recorded and comply with relevant requirements including the correct application of any rules or definitions. This will ensure consistency between periods, measuring what is intended to be measured. Where proxy data are used to compensate in the absence of actual data, organisations must consider how well these data are able to satisfy the intended purpose.

Reliability

Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes across collection points and over time. Managers and stakeholders should be confident that performance progress reflects real changes rather than variations in data collection approaches or methods.

Timeliness

Data should be captured as quickly as possible after the event or activity and must be available for the intended use within a reasonable time-period. Data must be available quickly and frequently enough to support information needs and to influence service or management decisions.

Relevance

Data captured should be relevant to the purposes for which they are used. This entails periodic review of requirements to reflect changing needs. Quality assurance and feedback processes should regularly be carried out to ensure the quality of such data.

Completeness

Data requirements should be clearly specified based on the information needs and data collection processes matched to these requirements. Monitoring missing, incomplete, or invalid records can provide an indication of data quality and can also point to problems in the recording of certain data items.

These standards must be balanced with the importance and intended use of the data concerned. In some cases, data may be considered fit for purpose despite some known limitations: for example, some degree of accuracy may be sacrificed to produce data more quickly where this is a priority. Where data quality limitations exist, these must be clear to the users of the data. The existence of a clear and checkable audit trail is also essential.

6.0 Managing Data Quality

6.1 Governance and Accountability

In terms of hierarchy, the Council Plan is the primary strategic driver for the Council. The Plan outlines the key priorities for the borough and the approaches that will be pursued towards delivering against these priorities.

An outcome framework has been developed in support of the Wirral Plan which sets out the key outcomes we are seeking to achieve and the key performance measures we will use to demonstrate that we are delivering these outcomes. The framework highlights the sources of data that will be used to evidence progress and appropriate benchmarking where this is available.

A Performance Management Framework (PMF) guide has been developed this sets out the governance and accountability arrangements for delivering the Council Plan and the underpinning deliverables.

The PMF will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis to ensure the performance measures being used continue to be relevant and new measures are developed where appropriate. The annual review will also be used to quality assure the data being used as part of those performance measures.

6.2 Policies and Procedures

There is a need to ensure data are recorded accurately and in accordance with prescribed definitions. These definitions will be set out in the design of an indicator. For each measure, a specification that sets out data sources and how the data will be used to measure performance will be developed. The specification set out how each measure fits into the national and local policy context, any available benchmarking and where appropriate a set of tolerances for performance reporting to determine whether performance is on or off track throughout the year.

6.3 Systems and Processes

Arrangements for collecting, recording, and reporting data are integrated with the business planning and management processes of the Council. Where possible, data should be collected and reported once only, on the principle of 'getting it right first time', with limited, if any, manual intervention. The aim should be to avoid waste in the form of time and money spent on duplicated recording, cleansing data, interfacing between different information systems, matching, and consolidating data from multiple databases and developing or maintaining multiple, often outdated, systems. This will help to reduce the burden of administration as well as helping to ensure more accurate and timely data.

The Council utilises information technology to optimise the collection, integration and

reporting of data to increase efficiency. This includes the utilisation of Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to access datasets and reporting tools to automate reporting.

Across the Council and its partners, numerous information systems and databases are used. Periodically these will need to be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and that data is being collected in line with relevant policies and definitions.

6.4 People and Skills

All staff involved in managing data and performance management must be accountable for data quality and understand the need to follow prescribed definitions and agreed procedures. The performance management framework sets out clear lines of reporting and accountability within the performance management process.

There is a need to ensure that staff at all levels, have the appropriate knowledge, competencies, and capacity for their role in relation to data quality. This should be reviewed through staff performance appraisal processes, with any training or development needs being identified and provided.

6.5 Data Use and Reporting

To ensure the Council can evidence progress in delivering the pledges set out in the Council Plan, data collected will be used to support published performance reports. These in turn will be actively used to support the decision-making process. Where performance measures are reliant on data being provided by other organisations, data sharing protocols will be developed to ensure there is clarity regarding data use and that appropriate controls and security are in place.

6.6 Single Source of Truth

The Council operates to a 'single source of truth' concept which works to ensure that wherever possible everyone in an organisation bases business decisions on the same data. The Council utilises digital reporting tools directly linked to key systems and data sets that delivers intelligence and data in an accessible way that can be used by across the entire organisation. This provides a range of benefits to the organisation including all stakeholders using the same data and insight to make decisions and reduced organisational costs and increased efficiency.

7.0 Key Contacts

For further data quality and performance management guidance contact Wirral Intelligence Service:

Nancy Clarkson

Head of Intelligence

nancyclarkson@wirral.gov.uk

| Document Status | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| REPORT TITLE: | BCD UPDATE |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION & PLACE |

REPORT SUMMARY

The Birkenhead Commercial District (“BCD”) programme is reaching a major milestone in that the phase 2 – CAT B (fit out) capital programme will be completing for official handover between our appointed contractor and Wirral Borough Council on Friday 22nd March 2024. The Council will be taking full occupation across 3.5 floors with phased occupation dates from Monday 8th April 2024 at Building A (2 Alice Ker Square - Mallory). The Council will partially exit Cheshire Lines Building and retain a lease of the basement to support archive storage, Police and Criminal Evidence (“PACE”) room and data centre.

The Council is working with our agency partner to market the remaining vacant spaces in both new buildings. The outcome of the pandemic has resulted in changes for a lot of organisations looking for new office accommodation, resulting in smaller and more flexible space requirements.

This paper provides an update on the BCD programme, including appendix 1 providing updates on revenue and capital costs, along with tenant demand and concept for fit out on Building B (Irvine building).

The accompanying appendix contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is in the public interest to exclude the press and public under Paragraph 3 ‘Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy and Resources Committee is requested to:

- (1) Note the update as set out in this report; and
- (2) Endorse the intended approach to fit out of Building B as referred to in Appendix 1.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Policy & Resources Committee in October 2023 requested that a further information update was brought to a future committee meeting.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 In relation to fit out of Building B, the Council considered an alternative approach by giving the tenant a rent-free period as a contribution to the cost of the fit out in Building B. However, the level of demand within the office market is suggesting that landlord undertaking subdivision of the floor plates will attract additional interest.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Programme update

- 3.1 Practical completion and formal handover of Building A is expected on Friday 22nd March 2024.
- 3.2 Deadline for Wirral Council to partially vacate Cheshire Lines Building is Friday 5th April 2024; except for the lower ground floor, for which an extension of lease has been agreed to 2027, in line with end of lease agreement on the Sunday 7th April 2024. Phased occupation into Building A commences from Monday 8th April 2024, and thereafter in sequence for our various directorates, onto the floors they will occupy. Staff will start to occupy the building from 22nd March, and it is anticipated all staff will be relocated and operational by the end of April 2024.
- 3.3 The appointed furniture and move contractor were appointed through the YPO Framework. The contractor is providing:
- New office furniture;
 - The decant and recant of the reused legacy furniture;
 - Relocating IT hardware from Cheshire Lines Building;
 - Securely moving of all confidential documents to Mallory Building.
- 3.4 The contractor has supported the Council in identifying Pennine Health NHS Trust to reuse obsolete furniture left at Cheshire Lines Building before the lease end date. This will avoid disposal costs of circa £15k and ensure the Council is more sustainable in its approach and aligned to the furniture disposal policy. Dates have been agreed with relevant contractors for early access into Mallory Building to support this programme of works.
- 3.4 Snagging of the CAT B fit out work is progressive with each floor being released in turn for inspection by the monitoring team and Wirral Council.
- 3.5 A schedule of all handover information including certificates, building control, life safety, and health and safety documentation is being prepared for review with CAT B fit out contractor and this will be the focus of future meetings and reports until occupation.

- 3.6 An update on Mallory and Irvine occupier interest and Irvine sub-division is detailed in Appendix 1. Appendix 1 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is in the public interest to exclude the press and public under Paragraph 3 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the authority holding the information).

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Financial implications are detailed in Appendix 1. Appendix 1 contains exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is in the public interest to exclude the press and public under Paragraph 3 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person (including the authority holding the information).

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The programme does anticipate a hiatus between practical completion on 22nd March for Building A. However, if there were no hiatus between the practical completion of the works on the Building A and the start of works on the Building B, then it may be possible to add the fitting out works for the new building to the existing contract as a variation subject to agreement with the contractor, subject to them being able to carry out the works within the timescales required and at a price within the Council's budget. This could be an inducement to a potential tenant to take up occupation of the building under a lease from the Council at a market rent. The potential tenant would have to inform the Council of its requirements. If there is a significant interval between current contractual completion of the works on Building A and the start of works on Building B, then the default position would be to go out to tender on a 1 or 2 stage process the latter being a preconstruction services agreement which leads to a main construction contract. Furthermore, if there is likely to be a hiatus we can refer to the decision made in the previous P&R paper in October 2023 whereby the Director of Regeneration was given the delegated authority to procure the fit out works, either by means of a direct award, under a framework agreement or by some other competitive process after consultation with the head of Procurement and Directors of Law and Finance.

- 5.2 An alternative approach would be to offer a potential tenant a rent-free period during which it could procure for itself its fitting out works. The tenant would then bear the risk of any overspend and be responsible for the design and construction of the works without the Council being the intermediary. For the Council this approach would pose much less risk in terms of potential liability to the tenant for alleged negligent design and/or construction. It would also eliminate the administrative costs of procuring and managing the fitting out contract.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The programme is led and managed by existing staff from within the Council's Regeneration and Place Directorate and Neighbourhoods Services Directorate, supported by the Programme Management Office.
- 6.2 The Council has established working groups to support the Birkenhead Commercial District Programme delivery including a range of external stakeholders to ensure that

any project dependencies or resourcing issues are addressed at the earliest opportunity. Various project teams are also set up to support the delivery of the projects in the Programme lifecycle and there is commonality across the teams in terms of key Council staff coordinating this combined package of works.

- 6.3 The Council has a resource plan in place to support delivery of the programme. The Council will also update the Assets Register with any new furniture.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 A BCD programme risk register is maintained to support this programme and is the responsibility of the Programme Manager to regularly review and update new and existing risks. Exceptions reports are to be produced for the Senior Responsible Officer if there are any immediate risks to the programme. Summary of the key risks are highlighted below.

- 7.2 Delay to the programme – The Council have accounted for some flexibility in the programme for minor delays and are creating a plan to support with mitigation of potential larger delays to ensure we can exit Cheshire Lines Building by 7th April 2024. Meetings will be held regularly with our contractors to ensure minimal programme slippage.

- 7.3 Service continuity – the Council’s HR team are supporting services with continuity planning to minimise the risk to organisational continuity with the support of the Audit and Risk Team.

- 7.4 Rent will be payable whether premises can be occupied or not. The only mitigation for rent will be for the Council to sublet parts of the building to generate a rental income. However, if the sub-tenant fails to pay its rent for any reason the Council will still be liable for the full rent to the landlord of the building.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A full engagement plan has been developed to support this programme.
- 8.2 Early engagement within the Councils services, our workforce, our staff groups and our trade union colleagues regarding the design has resulted in workspaces being inclusive and flexible so it meets the needs for effective service delivery and our workforce.
- 8.3 Engagement with potential tenants coordinated through our letting agent as outlined in Appendix 1.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

- 9.2 In line with the Councils Equality and Diversity Policies, Wirral Council will be including facilities within Mallory Building to support staff who are disabled, such as accessible toilets and shower facilities, accessibility push pads for access doors, accessible space within tea points, increase in rise and fall desks, specialist chairs and footrests, keyboards and mice as a standard set up for each desk for colleagues that have issues carrying equipment in and out of the building.
- 9.3 An accessibility audit took place that produced a list of recommendations, which budget permitting the Council will look to include.
- 9.4 Wirral Council has also incorporated male and female prayer rooms within Mallory Building as well as a nursing room which can be utilised for staff.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Wirral Council has declared a climate emergency and therefore has a responsibility to deliver against its Climate Strategy and the objectives that lie within. Environmental sustainability has been core to the programme of work through the CAT A build of the shell and core of Building A and Building B and through the CAT B office fit out phase.
- 10.2 The buildings are designed and built to Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'excellent' standard. Launched in 1990, by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) sets standards for the environmental performance of buildings through the design, specification, construction, and operation phases and can be applied to new developments or refurbishment schemes.
- 10.3 Wirral Council has also pledged to re-use existing furniture located across its asset portfolio. All workstations, chairs, lockers, and meeting room chairs in Building A will be re-located from existing Council buildings. This greatly reduced the carbon footprint associated with the fit out of the new build. In addition, Wirral Council, through connections made with the move contractor, have agreed to provide the NHS with a large volume of furniture for use across their assets, rather than send to landfill. This is an example of Wirral Council's commitment to partnership working and the climate emergency.
- 10.4 Building A is located within central Birkenhead and is easily accessible by both bus and train, which helps to promote the staff use of public transport, this helps to reduce the volume of vehicle emissions, as Wirral Council strives to improve localised air quality in and around its towns. There is also ample bicycle storage and shower facilities on site, to promote staff undertaking active travel initiatives promoted by Wirral Council.
- 10.5 As the Council looks to build on strong foundations, the staff parking provision at the Grange and the Pyramids will look to develop an electric vehicle charging offer, by sourcing appropriate funding and building strong network and infrastructure delivery partnerships.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Council wants to attract employers to lease space within vacant areas and job creation is anticipated as an output and attracting investment to the area.
- 11.2 Relocating staff to an area close to the Grange and the Pyramids shopping centre will result in staff making better use of the retail offer within the shopping centre therefore increasing footfall and spend.
- 11.3 The Council has worked with its supply chain contractors to ensure they provide social value back to local people as well as working with Wirral Met College apprentices to work onsite as part of their portfolio developments.
- 11.4 The new office space will provide a better-quality work environment for staff to enable development and improve welfare within the workplace.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Mallory and Irvine occupier interest update, Irvine sub-division and Financial Implications (EXEMPT)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- People Strategy;
- Assets strategy;
- Birkenhead strategy 2040;
- Full business case;
- Engagement plan;
- Resource plan;
- Programme risk register;
- Marking analysis;
- Records management retention Policy;

TERMS OF REFERENCE

To provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|--|------------|
| Capital Programme Including monies approved for BCD Office Fit Out 2021/22 https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/g8445/Public%20reports%20pack%2017th-Feb-2021%2018.00%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10 | 17/02/2021 |

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| <p>CAPITAL MONITORING QUARTER 1 2023/24 P&R COMMITTEE Increase to BCD Office Fit Out budget https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/g10191/Public%20reports%20pack%2012th-Jul-2023%2018.00%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10</p> | <p>12/07/20 23</p> |
| <p>P&R COMMITTEE BIRKENHEAD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AND CHESHIRE LINES https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/g10193/Public%20reports%20pack%2004th-Oct-2023%2018.00%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10</p> | <p>04/10/20 23</p> |

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| REPORT TITLE: | WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE |
| REPORT OF: | CHAIR OF POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE |

REPORT SUMMARY

The Policy and Resources Committee, in co-operation with the other Policy and Service Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual committee work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the key decisions which are within the remit of the Committee.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of key decisions, standing items and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Policy and Resources Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Policy & Resources Committee is recommended to comment on and note the proposed Policy and Resources Committee work programme.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Policy and Resources committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Various formats for the workplan were explored. The current format is open to amendment to match the requirements of the committee.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- (i) The Council Plan
- (ii) The Council's transformation programme
- (iii) The Council's Forward Plan
- (iv) Service performance information
- (v) Risk management information
- (vi) Public or service user feedback
- (vii) Referrals from Council

Terms of Reference

The Policy and Resources Committee has two main areas of responsibility, which is to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, including making decisions on policies and co-ordinating spend not reserved to full Council, and to maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets.

The Committee is charged by full Council to:

- (a) formulate, co-ordinate and implement corporate policies and strategies and the medium-term financial plan (budget), which includes responsibility for any decision:
 - (i) that relates to such matters to the extent that they are not reserved to full Council;
 - (ii) on any cross-cutting policies that impact on other committee areas;
 - (iii) on policy matters not otherwise allocated to any other committee; and
 - (iv) to determine any dispute or difference between committees;
- (b) provide a co-ordinating role across all other service committees and retain a 'whole-council' view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management, which includes responsibility for a decision:
 - (i) that has a major impact on a number of Council services or on the Council as a whole;

- (ii) on any virement between Budget funds (revenue) requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£500,000**;
 - (iii) on any virement between Budget funds (capital) or any amendment to the Capital Programme requested by a Committee or officer in excess of **£500,000**;
 - (iv) regarding land and property including major acquisition and disposals, which includes reserved decision making concerning any purchase, sale or transfer of a value in excess of, or likely to exceed, **£500,000**; unless the Committee has delegated this function in relation to a specified area or business plan as the Committee may determine.
 - (v) regarding companies or limited liability partnerships including acquisition and disposals; and
 - (vi) which is deemed significant in terms of impact on the Council's revenue or capital (to be determined by the Head of Paid Service and/or Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader);
- (c) without limiting the generality of responsibility for cross-cutting policies (at (a) above), lead on behalf of the Council:
- (i) in matters concerning relationships with HM Government, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and other major public and non-public bodies;
- (d) appoint Council representatives as required;
- (e) nominate councillors and other persons to outside bodies; and
- (f) undertake responsibility for developing and monitoring the enabling corporate services, including, finance and investment, project support and risk management, strategic procurement and commercial strategies, ICT, property and asset management, human resources and organisational development, law and governance, communications and public affairs, emergency planning and business continuity.

3.2 The Constitution sets out that the agenda of any Committee or Sub-Committee shall only include those items of business that require a decision, relate to budget or performance monitoring or which are necessary to discharge their overview and scrutiny function. Matters not relating to these functions may be dealt with via task and finish groups, workshops and briefing notes at the request of the Committee.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report is for information and planning purposes only, therefore there are no direct financial implication arising. However, there may be financial implications arising as a result of work programme items.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. However, there may be legal implications arising as a result of work programme items.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no direct implications to staffing, ICT or Assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The Committee's ability to undertake its responsibility to provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council, make decisions on policies, co-ordinate spend, and maintain a strategic overview of outcomes, performance, risk management and budgets may be compromised if it does not have the opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Not applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity.

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is for information to Members and there are no direct environment and climate implications.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

11.1 This report is for information to Members and has no direct community wealth implications.

REPORT AUTHOR: Steve Fox, Head of Democratic and Member Services
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Policy and Resources Committee Work Plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council Plan
The Council's Transformation Programme
The Council's Forward Plan

Subject History (last three years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|---|-------------|
| Each Policy & Resources Committee meeting | |

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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN BETWEEN MARCH 2023 AND JUNE 2024

| Item | Brief Description | Committee Meeting | Lead Departmental Officer |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| 12th June | | | |
| Maximising Income | Report following motion at Full Council in December 23 | June 2024 | Director of Finance |
| Feasibility of Town Halls Study | | June 2024 | Director of Regeneration and Place/Marcus Shaw |

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

| Item | Brief Description | Date Requested | Approx. timescale | Lead Officer |
|--|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| BOROUGH OF SANCTUARY | | 17 JANUARY | TBC | Lisa Newman |
| The Freeport and Wirral Waters Investment Fund | | 13 FEBRUARY | TBC | TBC |
| The Criteria and process for making additions to the Capital Programme | | 13 FEBRUARY | TBC | TBC |

STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

| Item | Reporting Frequency | Lead Officer |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Performance Monitoring | From July | Director of Finance |
| Financial Monitoring | Quarterly | Director of Finance |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|
| Work Programme Update | Every Meeting | Director of Law and Corporate Services |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

| Item | Format | Requested | Timescale | Lead Officer |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Working Groups/ Sub Committees | | | | |
| Task and Finish work | | | | |
| Spotlight sessions / workshops | | | | |
| Risk Workshop | Workshop | 1st November 2023 | March 2024 | Director of Finance |
| Briefing Notes | | | | |
| Fair Tax Update and Accreditation | Following motion from Council March 2023 | March 2023 | March 2024 | Director of Finance |

SENIOR OFFICER AND APPOINTMENTS STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 February 2024
9:45am

Present: Councillor J Robinson (Chair)
Councillors L Rennie S Powell-Wilde
C Carubia C Cooke

16 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

17 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Pat Cleary who was substituted by Councillor Chris Cooke; and Councillor Phil Gilchrist who was substituted by Chris Carubia.

18 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Sub Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No declarations were made.

19 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 be approved as an accurate record.

20 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved – That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

21 **APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION**

The Panel interviewed the short-listed candidates for the post of Director of Children, Families and Education. On a motion by Councillor Sue Powell-Wilde, seconded by Councillor Chris Carubia,

It was:

Resolved – That Elizabeth Hartley be appointed to the post of Director of Children, Families and Education.

SENIOR OFFICER AND APPOINTMENTS STAFFING SUB-COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7 February 2024

Present: Councillor J Robinson (Chair)
Councillors L Rennie P Gilchrist
J Williamson A Onwuemene

22 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.

23 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Pat Cleary who was substituted by Councillor Amanda Onwuemene.

24 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Sub Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No declarations were made.

25 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved – That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

26 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF ADULTS, HEALTH AND STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING

The Panel interviewed the short-listed candidates for the post of Director of Adults, Health and Strategic Commissioning. On a motion by Councillor Jean Robinson, seconded by Councillor Janette Williamson, it was:

Resolved – That Sayyed Osman be appointed to the post of Director of Adults, Health and Strategic Commissioning.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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