



Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee

Date:	Thursday, 19 September 2024
Time:	6.00 p.m.
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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Please note public seating is limited therefore members of the public are encouraged to arrive in good time.

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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 - 12)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2024.

5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

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

5.1 Public Questions

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Monday 16 September to the Council's Monitoring Officer via this link: [Public Question Form](#) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol for Public Speakers at Committees | Wirral Council](#)

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

5.2 Statements and Petitions

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon Monday 16 September 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. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding one 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. Please give notice of petitions to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

5.3 Questions by Members

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

SECTION A - KEY AND OTHER DECISIONS

6. **FLORAL PAVILION – FUTURE OPERATIONAL MODEL (Pages 13 - 24)**
7. **BIRKENHEAD PARK: WORLD HERITAGE PROJECT UPDATE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCING (Pages 25 - 58)**

SECTION B - BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

8. **UPDATE REGARDING THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL'S TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE (Pages 59 - 68)**
9. **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER UPDATE (Pages 69 - 78)**
10. **MEMBER CHAMPION FOR HERITAGE - UPDATE REPORT (Pages 79 - 80)**

SECTION C - WORK PROGRAMME / OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

11. **TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 81 - 90)**

Terms of Reference

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

12. **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following items contain exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

13. **FLORAL PAVILION – FUTURE OPERATIONAL MODEL - EXEMPT APPENDIX (Pages 93 - 172)**

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TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 July 2024

Present:

Councillor I Lewis (Chair)

Councillors A Ainsworth
P Jobson
G McManus
G Bennett
J Johnson

C Cooke
KJ Williams
K Stuart
R Molyneux
M Redfern

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed attendees and viewers to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was webcast and retained on the Council's website.

There was a one minute silence for Professor Robert Lee, former Chair of the Friends of Birkenhead Park Group.

The Chair thanked the outgoing Chair and Vice-Chair for their work on the previous committee.

2 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

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.

No interests were declared.

4 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

The Chair advised the committee that he was awaiting legal advice in relation to minute item 69.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

One question from a member of the public was received in advance of the meeting.

Michelle Peters discussed the issue of the Mayer buildings in Bebington. Ms Peters asked the committee, as these buildings were closed, whether anything could be done to evaluate these buildings as a potential tourist facility and how members of the public might ask the council for support in applying for community asset transfers.

The Chair explained that this question had been raised at Policy and Resources Committee on the 17 July. Officers were looking at the buildings, and a deadline had been set for the 9 August to give the Mayer Community Partnership an opportunity to present a business plan. He said that if no business plan was received, or was found to be suitable, then officers would look at other options, which would give Ms Peters an opportunity to come forward. The Chair had spoken with the Assistant Director, who would be contacting Ms Peters to discuss the process.

6 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

There were no statements or petitions received.

7 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

There were no questions by Members received.

8 TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chair advised that this item would be brought forward on the agenda.

The Assistant Director – Leisure, Libraries and Customer Engagement presented the report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services which provided performance information in relation to Neighbourhood Services that report to the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee. The report contained performance information relating to leisure and associated services; libraries; and museums.

The Assistant Director also informed the Committee that the Active Wirral team had been shortlisted as a finalist for the Association for Public Service Excellence Award 2024, for best service team sports, leisure and cultural services.

Members raised questions around the growth in leisure use figures and the priorities identified for particular groups, including women and girls. Members thanked officers for their work, and the Chair suggested that officers arrange for the committee to visit various leisure assets within the next few months.

Resolved:

That the content of the report be noted.

9 **APPOINTMENTS OF MEMBER CHAMPION FOR HERITAGE AND TO BIRKENHEAD PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Head of Legal Services presented the report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services. The report was to enable the committee to appoint a Member Champion for Heritage and to review the continuing need for the Birkenhead Park Advisory Committee, and appoint Members and named deputies to serve on this for the 2024/25 municipal year.

It was raised that the report asked members to give consideration to the proposal to appoint a cross-party group of Members to conduct a policy development review. A guide was attached at appendix 1 of the report.

Members discussed the membership of the cross-party group, and agreed that it be made up of all members of the Committee, with at minimum membership of the party Spokespersons.

The Chair suggested that proposed policy areas of review be emailed to the Committee Officer.

Resolved: That

- 1. Councillor Jerry Williams be appointed Member Champion for Heritage**
- 2. The Monitoring Officer be authorised to carry out the wishes of the Group Leaders in allocating Members to membership of the Birkenhead Park Advisory Committee and to appoint those Members in accordance with the rules on political balance, with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members; and**
- 3. The Committee appoints a cross-party group of Members, made up of the whole Committee with a minimum of the four party Spokespersons, to conduct a policy development review in accordance with the approach outlined at appendix 1 of the report.**

10 **BOROUGH OF CULTURE 2024**

The Assistant Director – Chief Regeneration Officer presented the report of the Director of Regeneration and Place which presented an update on Wirral's year as Liverpool City Region Borough of Culture in 2024. It was noted that this had been the second time Wirral had been the Borough of Culture for the city region. Typically, it would rotate around the region, with a grant awarded to the borough.

Members raised questions around the Wirral2024 website and its site traffic. They also raised queries as to the appendix attached to the report, which gave details of the cultural grant awards across the borough. Through discussion, it was noted that there were some inaccuracies within the appendix, and an updated version is attached to the minutes of this meeting. Members also raised questions over strategies for tourism, including tour guides and paper copies of guides for the public.

Following discussion, it was agreed that through the Member Champion for Heritage, a regular written report would be brought to committee outlining the work of the heritage team.

Resolved: That

- 1. The progress in respect of Borough of Culture 2024 was noted; and**
- 2. The Director of Regeneration and Place be granted delegated authority to make any necessary changes to the programme plan for Borough of Culture agreed by the Committee in October 2023 and manage this budget accordingly.**
- 3. That the Member Champion for Heritage bring a regular written report to the committee outlining the work of the heritage team.**

11 **2023/24 REVENUE OUTTURN**

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhoods, which provided a summary of the year-end revenue and capital position for the 2023/24 financial year as at the end of March 2024 for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee. The report also provided Members with an overview of budget performance to enable the Committee to take ownership of the budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

Members were informed that the year-end revenue outturn for 2023/24 represented an adverse variance of £3.160m.

Members asked for assurances given the overspend of 2023/24, and whether they would be in the same position for 2024/25. Members also asked for clarification on items within the capital programme, specifically Woodchurch Sports Pavilion.

Resolved: That

- 1. The draft, unaudited 2023/24 outturn adverse variance of £3.160m be noted**
- 2. The progress on delivery of the 2023/24 savings programme be noted**
- 3. The transfer to and use of earmarked reserves be noted**
- 4. The draft, unaudited 2023/24 capital outturn position of £5.020m be noted.**

12 2024/25 BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER ONE

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Director of Neighbourhoods, which set out the financial monitoring information for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee as at Quarter 1 (30 June) of 2024/25. The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance, including progress on the delivery of the 2024/25 savings programme and a summary of reserves and balances, to support the Committee in taking ownership of the budgets and providing robust challenge and scrutiny to officers and where appropriate, Committees on the performance of those budgets.

Members were informed that for the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, it was currently being forecast that they would have a balanced budget, however this needed to be seen within the wider Council budget context.

Members asked Officers for their thoughts on the current projections and what plans were in place to mitigate risks. Members also asked to compare the position at the last first quarter, with this information being circulated following the meeting. Members also raised questions over the underspends within the capital programme.

Resolved: That

- 1. The balanced position presented at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- 2. The 2024/25 savings programme at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- 3. The forecast level of reserves at Quarter 1 be noted.**
- 4. The capital position at the end of Quarter 1 be noted.**

13 BUDGET MONITORING AND BUDGET SETTING

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Director of Finance, which set out how the 2024/25 budget would be monitored through the Committee system. This would facilitate the Policy and Services Committees (the Committees) to take ownership of their specific budgets and present appropriate challenge and scrutiny of Officers on the management and performance of those budgets.

Members were informed that Appendix B of the report was tailored to the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee and its budgets. Each Policy and Services Committee would be responsible for monitoring and managing their budget, through quarterly reports and establishing a Budget Oversight Panel. The 2025/26 budget setting process would build upon the existing Medium Term Financial Plan, with an estimated £3.2m gap, and Committees would develop budget proposals through workshops focussed on reducing pressures, increasing income and finding efficiencies.

Members raised questions over the proposed savings set out within the appendix of the report. There was also a discussion around the Committee's proposed Budget Oversight Panel.

Resolved: That

- 1. The process for in-year monitoring of the 2024/25 budget be noted**
- 2. The proposed approach to 2025/26 budget setting and the key assumptions to be used be noted.**

14 WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Legal Services introduced the report of the Director of Law and Corporate Services, which requested that the Committee review the work programme moving into the 2024/25 municipal year.

Members requested that the following items be added to the work programme:

- Floral Pavilion Consultation, looking ahead to future years
- Future savings, libraries and Active Wirral
- Title of Floral Pavilion Consultation to be changed
- Playing Pitch Strategy update, to come to committee early in the New Year
- Public Conveniences and Changing Places updates, reports to committee

Resolved – that the report be noted and the items relating to the Floral Pavilion Consultation, future savings, Playing Pitch Strategy and Public

Conveniences be amended or added to the work programme and an updated work programme be brought to future meetings.

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APPENDIX 1 – UKSPF BOROUGH OF CULTURE GRANT AWARDS (JULY 2024)

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
Friends of Birkenhead Park	Visualising Birkenhead Park: Past and Present	Birkenhead	<i>Project will make a significant contribution to visitor experience</i>	-	£13,710.00	£13,710.00
Grove Street Primary School	Grove Street Community Art Studio & 'Arts for All' Day	New Ferry	<i>Project will make a significant community contribution through creative activities</i>	£1,300.00	£17,781.78	£19,081.78
Wirral Poetry Festival	Wirral Poetry Festival 2024	Wirral-wide	<i>Project will further develop a community-led festival which engages communities across Wirral and will continue in future years</i>	£5,000.00	-	£5,000.00
Port Sunlight Village Trust	A Stitch in Time	Port Sunlight and local communities	<i>Project will deliver high levels of creative community engagement and unlock local heritage</i>	£3,500.00	£10,000.00	£13,500.00
471 Routes CIC	Inspire Tour	Wirral-wide	<i>Project will showcase Wirral creatives and local venues in an innovative way</i>	£3,425.00	-	£3,425.00
Liscard Community Links CIC	Liscard Sound and Vision	Liscard	<i>Project will involve multiple partners to deliver creative</i>	£5,000.00	£12,807.00	£17,807.00

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
			<i>activities for young people and build local networks</i>			
Friends of Wallasey Library	Wirral Story Patchwork Project	Wallasey	<i>Although relatively low cost, the project will have a significant impact on target groups</i>	£1,428.00	-	£1,428.00
The Hive Wirral Youth Zone	Young People's Choirs and Musicians Performance Programme	Borough-wide	<i>Project will deliver improved access to music facilities for young people from across Wirral</i>	-	£11,509.39	£11,509.39
New Brighton Coastal Community Team	Beatles Tower Public Art Project	New Brighton	<i>Project will have high visibility and is likely to increase visitor footfall and showcase local heritage</i>	£3,800.00	£5,000.00	£8,800.00
StartYard	StartYard Venue Access Improvements	Birkenhead	<i>Project will make a significant improvement to venue which is enabling inclusive and free to access exhibitions and events</i>	-	£8,000.00	£8,000.00
The Caravan Gallery CIC	Pride of Place Project Caravan Tour	Borough-wide	<i>Project will enable access to art in a unique way close to where people live</i>	£5,000.00	-	£5,000.00
Voices of Wirral	Mind on Music	Wallasey / Liscard	<i>Although relatively low</i>	£3,670.00	-	£3,670.00

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
			<i>cost, the project will have a significant impact on target groups</i>			
Wirral Archaeology CIC	Sharing Knowledge About Wirral's Past	Borough-wide	<i>Project will facilitate engagement with schools and a range of groups about Wirral's heritage</i>	-	£10,045.87	£10,045.87
Rebecca Ball Bryson	Flotsam Poppets	Birkenhead, New Brighton, Thurstaston	<i>Project will engage young people and communities on the theme of sustainability whilst developing and showcasing the work of a significant local artist</i>	£5,000.00	-	£5,000.00
Friends of Warwick Park	90 Year Anniversary Activities	Upton	<i>Project will deliver a permanent legacy for a local park in its 90th anniversary year and the community which uses it</i>	-	£4,882.87	£4,882.87
Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm	Accessibility Improvements	Bidston	<i>Project will deliver much improved facilities at this heritage and visitor asset and open up for a wider range of visitors</i>	-	£17,280.00	£17,820.00

APPLICANT	PROJECT	LOCATION	LEGACY IMPACT	REVENUE AWARD	CAPITAL AWARD	TOTAL AWARD
TOTALS				£37,123.00	£111,016.91	£148,139.91



TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

19 September 2024

REPORT TITLE:	FLORAL PAVILION – FUTURE OPERATIONAL MODEL DEVELOPMENT
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides members of this Committee with an update position and proposed next steps relating to the Floral Pavilion Theatre & Conference Centre in New Brighton, following Committee’s decision on 7 March 2024 to (in summary)

1. Continue to operate the Floral Pavilion as a Council asset for the 2024/5 financial year within a net operational budget of £500,000, whilst identifying & implementing any efficiency, operational savings or increased income opportunities
2. Implement immediate efficiency measures relating to internal catering model, improved programming and a reduction in agency workers.
3. Appoint an external consultant to carry out an options appraisal including any alternative operating model.

This report meets the following priorities in the Council Plan 2023-2027.

- Safe, resilient and engaged communities.

This is not a Key Decision and affects the New Brighton Ward.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

Appendix 1 to this report 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 Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is recommended to:

- (1) note and endorse the findings and recommendations of the Place Culture Report consultant report; and
- (2) authorise the Director of Neighbourhood Services to:

(a) present a finalised Outline Business Case to this Committee based on the four options outlined in this report in early 2025 for a decision on a preferred option

(b) establish the status of the Floral Pavilion in relation to its value, implications for the regeneration of New Brighton and the wider Wallasey area, and any impacts of the Council's implementation of the Corporate Landlord Model.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations for the following reasons:

Operational Budget

1.2 The operational net subsidy for 2024/5 has been set at £500k and the budget monitoring work to date shows that the Floral is on track to achieve this target. Work on this will continue in order to ensure that the service is delivered within budget.

Efficiency Measures

1.3 Good progress has been made on the implementation of efficiency measures, with staffing savings of c.£130k and reductions in the use of agency worker costs month on month, both of which are reflected in the current forecast outturn. Work is progressing to assess the use of self-service ticket machines to reduce the costs associated with the box office. Other efficiency opportunities, as and when identified are also being progressed within the service. Work on this will continue in order to ensure that the service is delivered in line with the planned efficiency measures.

Commissioned Study by Place Culture

1.4 An outline of the consultant brief is included in Section 3.2. The full consultant report is attached as an appendix to this report. The recommendations within the report provided by them, if endorsed by the Committee, will assist with the development of an Outline Business Case .

Development of Outline Business Case (OBC)

1.5 The OBC will review the findings, benefits and outcomes of the consultant report and propose a way forward. This includes:

- A review of each of the four identified options to determine:
 - Cost modelling to include income, expenditure and maintenance liabilities;
 - Social value impact;
 - Implications for the Corporate Landlord Model; and
 - Implications for Marine Promenade Masterplan.
- The social and community outcomes and benefits of creating and Arts and Cultural Hub and how this would impact the wider regeneration plans within New Brighton. This would include any proposals on public or other consultation exercises.

1.6 The Council aspires to protect insofar as possible all of its frontline services and create a sustainable future for the communities that use them. The move to develop an Arts and Cultural Hub for Wirral can deliver a revitalised future for a number of its asset-based services, contribute to local regeneration plans, strategic priorities, and

make the venue the heart of a hyperlocal urban and coastal community. Financial stability can be achieved in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan with modest investment, a revision of the operating model and without wholesale structural change. Closure of services is not a preferred option as a consultation with residents in 2018 demonstrated the value of the venue with 70% of residents expressing that they felt it important that the Floral Pavilion remained a community asset.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 On 7th March 2024, five options were presented to this Committee on the future model for the Floral Pavilion. These options were to continue to operate the floral as a council asset (recommended option), full closure and ceasing all services, partial closure whilst retaining the Theatre & Bar only, redevelopment via asset & service consolidation, commercial redevelopment - investment of the existing asset.
- 2.2 Following the March 2024 committee and the consultant report the options have now developed into:
- A. Existing model operating with a maximum £500k council subsidy (Council).
 - B. An Arts & Cultural Hub (Council + commercial + community).
 - C. An Alternative Delivery Model (commercially operated service); and
 - D. Service Closure
- 2.3 No other options are being considered at this stage. The four options outlined above will be reviewed, assessed and developed utilising a recognised five case business model to develop the OBC and determine a final recommended option which will be presented back to committee to approve.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 At the March 2024 meeting of this Committee, it was agreed that the Floral Pavilion would continue to operate as a council asset for 2024/5 financial year within a net operational budget of £500k, whilst options were explored for the potential future of the service.
- 3.2 Committee also agreed that a consultant be appointed to undertake a broad feasibility study to evaluate a range of these options including service / asset development, short term savings measures, cessation of the service or transfer of the service to an alternative operating model. A consultant was appointed through the Council's procurement process to undertake this work with the remit of :-
- Engaging with the commercial theatre sector, charities and / or other groups who see a vision for the Floral Pavilion and may be willing to operate it.

- Investigating the opportunity to create a Charitable Trust for the purpose of operating the Floral Pavilion.
- Exploring the market viability for designing & developing an Arts & Cultural Hub Model and potential alignment to the corporate strategies within the Council Plan.
- Investigating the option of closure or mothballing of the venue.

Recommendations of Place Culture Report

3.3 The evaluation returned the following recommendations:

- That, as a priority the Council should consider the integration of complementary services and development of new services within the asset to create an Arts & Cultural Hub for Wirral. Examples of such services could include a new Library, Youth Services, Community & Family hubs, Adult & Children's support, as well as creating warm spaces impacting health, wellbeing, and fitness.
- There are no venues of this kind in the Borough and many other Councils have already created, or are considering this approach (examples include Chester Storyhouse, HOME in Manchester, The Edge Theatre & Arts Centre in Manchester, Venue Cymru in Llandudno).
- Business Growth – increasing capacity & a new sales strategy – booking fees & levies, a new audience, membership growth & conferencing.
- To consider the catering offer to be run as a trading subsidy or outsourced. This is currently operated in house as a loss-making service.
- Creating a hybrid governance model to include management, charity & trading functions.

3.4 The Place Culture report highlighted that libraries nationally are under threat from a declining visitor base (down 52% since 2010), out of date building stock and changing trends, with lending in libraries also dropping by 63%. The Council currently spends £3.2m on its provision of library services, many of which are in outdated standalone assets and with limited connectivity to a broad spectrum of transport links and consequently, not maximising their potential.

3.5 The Place Culture report outlines that the main benefits of the combined co-location of services are to enhance outputs by increased scale, easier locations, and crossover. The development of an Arts & Cultural Hub would create new horizons for social benefit, a 'cultural heart', opportunities for outreach, and increase efficiencies. It could increase footfall to 404,000 into New Brighton (currently 285k) with new commercial opportunities, complimenting the Marine Promenade Masterplan and providing additional opportunities for funding.

3.6 The Place Culture report also highlights the scope and opportunity within the venue to increase capacity, review the current levies and booking arrangements to create a universal charge which would increase revenue, not currently applied in all cases. Increasing the conferencing to 312 conference-type events, reported to potentially achieve £256k gross profit and a £85k increase in revenue (up from £183k

currently). The report also stated that development of a member scheme, with tiered membership with the review of fees and offers should also be given consideration with the potential to generate income of £3,500 in the first year to £11,000 in year three. It also points to an opportunity to increase existing volunteers to support a new Arts & Cultural Hub, supporting increased footfall, community engagement, leading on projects, and supporting an out-of-hours library offer within the Floral.

- 3.7 The Place Culture report also provides for the opportunity to develop new audiences and better market penetration, noting that 89% of current audiences are within a 30-minute drive, with a quarter 'hyper-local' (65k) to the Floral. It indicates that there is significant scope for new markets with "Gen X" and "Millennials" being the new and future audience, who have different attitudes to programmes and quality of the experience.

Council considerations

- 3.8 The recommendation to develop an Arts & Cultural Hub would support the Council Plan and its priorities to deliver high quality efficient universal services to all, which are cost effective, efficient, and inclusive. The recommendation would also support the wider medium term financial strategy to support a balanced and financial sustainable future for the council, and the council's wellbeing strategy, seeking to provide a sense of belonging, feeling valued and having purpose. A hub facility may also provide significant economies of scale on cost and allow for services to benefit from extended opening hours due to the nature of the combined offer.
- 3.9 The recommendation directly supports the councils Asset Strategy, by seeking to deliver integrated and customer focused services, creating economic growth and reducing running costs. The opportunity to create an Arts & Cultural Hub would support the council's commitment to the Cool2 Climate Change Strategy, to stay within a local emissions budget and to ensure a climate resilient Wirral.
- 3.10 By developing an Arts & Cultural Hub it would successfully complement the Marine Promenade Masterplan, which includes the Floral Pavilion as a key asset within their existing regeneration plans. An Arts & Cultural Hub would make the current Masterplan offer more visible, it would increase footfall, and improve the setting and attractiveness of the Floral to a wider user group including community groups.
- 3.11 An Arts & Cultural hub would create space to celebrate performing arts history, famous acts, shows & events, e.g. New Brighton's 'Floor of fame' and 'super graphic public art canvas at Fort Perch Rock. Such a development would complement the wider regeneration plans including c.250 new homes, a new 90 bed hotel, housing, and a street scene to create a feeling of events, leading people to the hub.
- 3.12 Any new approach should consider the recommendation that the catering function is not sustainable and should be run as a trading subsidy or outsourced. A change in governance would be needed as it would not be feasible to continue to run a commercial, profitable operation on local government terms and conditions, a

constraint which currently contributes significantly to the deficit in the existing trading position. With increased footfall (supported via the development of an Arts & Cultural Hub) the potential savings by year 2 could be in the region of £418k.

Next Stage

- 3.13 The Outline Business Case will include detailed investigation into these recommendations. Work will be required to explore the Floral Pavilion' repairs and maintenance costs which have been estimated at £2.9m over the next 10 years. The capital costs required to undertake the transformation of the service to develop a new Arts & Cultural Hub within the Floral Pavilion will also need further exploration. There would be an expectation that revenue savings be generated from this new model but further work to understand the potential return would be required. The methodology that will be used to score each of the four options can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.14 Following the completion of work internally to fully explore the recommendations, identification of a clear evidence base to support the findings and potential benefits, it would be necessary to commission a feasibility, business, and design study. The study would set out the required works to redevelop the venue, associated costs, design solutions and development of a business plan. To facilitate the success of the feasibility study, work would be required to:
1. Confirm the key asks for the use of the asset as an Arts & Cultural Hub inc. library services, outreach, catering, café, bar etc;
 2. Review the offer for performances & events reflecting the consultant report.
 3. Scope the demand for Outreach through arts & culture; and
 4. Align with the Marine Promenade Masterplan & opportunities this would present for funding.
- 3.15 The outline business case would also include a programme for community consultation ensuring we engage and consult on any future offer for the Floral Pavilion with Wirral residents.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report. The outline business case for an Arts & Cultural Hub will be developed and produced within existing resources between officers from the Council's Programme Management Office, officers from the service and consultation with stakeholders across complementary or affected Council directorates. Any future anticipated costs including the commissioning of feasibility, business, and design studies would be included as part of the outline business case.
- 4.2 The financial performance of the Floral Pavilion is monitored on a monthly basis by the Council's corporate finance team and officers from within the service. Committee will be provided with quarterly updates on financial performance. The Floral Pavilion is currently expected to achieve a balanced budget at 24/25 financial year end.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with the recommended option in this report. However legal implications may arise if any of the other options are adopted which have been highlighted in the March 2024 report. These will be explored in detail as part of the Outline Business Case.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no resource implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

6.2 The Floral Pavilion currently employs 51 staff (equivalent to 42.53 FTE). In accordance with the Council's redeployment policy, any employees affected by any closure, cessation service or cessation of part of any service would be offered suitable alternative employment within the Council where any such vacancies may exist.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Any operation of a commercial nature will always carry a risk of under achievement of income, or increases in costs, sometimes because of macroeconomic factors. Both spend and income are being continuously monitored by the service and corporate finance teams to identify any overspends or underachievement of income and corrective action taken. The service is currently forecast to come in on budget.

7.2 There are formal project management arrangements in place including management of risks and issues via the appropriate Risk Register and Issue Register. Monthly PAM Highlight Reports are produced to provide updates and monitor and track risks or issues. The OBC will include detailed risk assessment on the options.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation with trade unions and the affected staff would be required if it were proposed to terminate the employment of those working in the Floral Pavilion, on the grounds of redundancy.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken for this report, which can be viewed on the Council's website: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>

9.2 The EIA will continue to be developed as part of the recommendations within the Outline Business Case and following approval of the preferred option.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no significant environment or climate implications associated with the recommended option within this report. The outline business case will identify any improvements, savings or reductions in CO2 emissions as a consequence of operating a co-located facility. Due regard will be given as appropriate in respect of procurement and expenditure decision-making processes that contribute to the outturn position.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Floral Pavilion makes a number of significant contributions to the Community Wealth Building agenda, including the employment of apprentices and care leavers, a resident choir, thriving volunteer programme (170 regular volunteers) and the hosting of many community focussed activities within the New Brighton area. Any future operating model should be designed to sustain and build on this foundation to provide new opportunities for community wealth building. The local focus of activity within New Brighton has the potential to complement the existing offer and create new economic opportunities for local groups. The existing Social Value calculation for the asset and its activities is estimated at c. £370k.

11.2 The Floral Pavilion also delivers social projects with diverse resident and community benefits such as its beach wheelchair project allowing those who require the use of a wheelchair access to the local beaches.

11.3 According to the Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre in the document Priorities for an Incoming Government October 2023 it is stated that theatre audiences contribute to additional spending in local economies. When visiting a performance. For every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, an additional spend of £1.40 is generated in local economies, adding up to £1.94bn per annum of extra value added to local economies by theatre audiences.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Consultant Report 2024

Appendix 2 – Options Assessment Criteria & Weightings

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Priorities for an Incoming Government October 2023 - Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre (SOLT)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee

Committee in accordance with section (f) of its Terms of Reference, “concerning tourism, the arts, culture and heritage, including provision of theatre, entertainments, conferences and events”.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Tourism, Communities, Leisure, and Culture Committee	07 March 2024

Floral Pavilion Future Options

- Option 1: Existing model operating with max. £500k (or less) council subsidy (Council only)
- Option 2: An Arts and Cultural Hub (Council + Commercial + Community)
- Option 3: Alternative Delivery Model (Fully Outsourced Commercial Operation)
- Option 4: Service closure.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria	Considerations	Proposed Weighting 0 – 100 (100 representing an extremely important criterion and 0 representing one that isn't important)
Ability of the option to support the priorities of the Council Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver high quality efficient universal services to all residents • To prioritise those with the greatest needs • To deliver council services within the means of the Council budget • To be prepared to innovate and face the future • To play our part in addressing the climate emergency and protecting our environment • To work across communities with community, voluntary and faith organisations and partners to improve all residents' life chances • To deliver our ambitious regeneration programme through increased investment, jobs and new businesses throughout the borough • Assets Strategy • Climate Strategy • People Strategy • Customer Experience Strategy • Community Wealth initiatives 	100 (17%)
Ability of the option to support the regeneration priorities of the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the option support the local culture and visitor economy? • Does the option align to the Marine Promenade Masterplan? • Does the option attract people to the area? 	80 (14%)
Ability of the option to improve the Council's wider service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the option allow for improved service delivery? • Does the option make services more accessible for residents? • Does the option support joined-up service delivery? 	70 (12%)
Ability of the option to create long-term sustainability for the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the option give opportunity for the service to improve efficiencies and potentially reduce council subsidies? 	80 (14%)
Ability of the option to positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the option positively contribute towards the M/LTFS? 	100 (17%)

contribute towards the Council's Medium/Long Term Financial Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would significant savings be achieved by the option? 	
Ability of the option to provide a return on investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the option allow an opportunity for the service to generate income? • Does the option provide a service that has reasonable cost vs income generation opportunities? • Does the option provide any non-cashable benefits (Improve social value, economic value, people focused regeneration etc) 	80 (14%)
Ability of the option to attract partner & community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the option provide a venue that partner and supplier organisations could access? • Does the option create/enhance collaborative working with partner organisations? 	70 (12%)

Scoring Mechanism:

0. Not appropriate (0% of the weighting)
1. The Option significantly fails to meet the Criterion (25% of the weighting)
2. The Option falls short of meeting the Criterion, meeting some but not all elements (50% of the weighting)
3. The Option satisfies the Criterion (75% of the weighting)
4. The Option satisfies and provides additional benefit to the Criterion (100% of the weighting)



TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19 September 2024

REPORT TITLE:	BIRKENHEAD PARK: WORLD HERITAGE PROJECT UPDATE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCING
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to:

1. provide an update on progress and achievements regarding the Birkenhead Park World Heritage project;
2. set out the steps ahead for achieving the park's recognition as a World Heritage Site; and
3. seek approval for the allocation of additional funds to realise the site's successful nomination to UNESCO, and thereby bring about the associated wide-ranging benefits of such global recognition.

In April 2023, the UK Government, through its Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), announced the inclusion of 'Birkenhead Park, the pioneering People's Park' on its 'new' Tentative List of potential sites for World Heritage Site nomination to UNESCO over the next 10 years. Birkenhead Park is one of only five sites on this exclusive list for the United Kingdom and its overseas territories.

This success comes after a great deal of preparatory work over the last 8 years. Whilst being on this 'shortlist' does not guarantee that the site will be inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, it is the formal 'first step on the ladder' in the journey to seek this prestigious international recognition.

The current phase of the initiative is now to work towards a formal nomination to UNESCO. This will be submitted by the UK Government and will form the basis on which UNESCO's World Heritage Committee will decide on inscribing Birkenhead Park as a World Heritage Site.

Birkenhead Park is within the Claughton ward, although it is anticipated that in the long-term this project will have positive benefits for all wards in the Borough.

This is a Key Decision due to the financial implications contained within this report.

This report supports the following Wirral Council Plan Priorities: -

- To deliver high quality efficient universal services to all residents

- To play our part in addressing the climate emergency and protecting our environment
- To deliver our ambitious regeneration programme through increased investment, jobs and new businesses throughout the borough

This report also supports the following Wirral Council Plan Themes: -

- Theme 1 – Working together to create a more efficient, effective and accessible council
- Theme 4 – Working together to deliver people focused regeneration
- Theme 5 – Working together to protect our environment

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee is requested to:

1. Note the progress made on the Birkenhead Park World Heritage project;
2. Endorse its support for the nomination to UNESCO of Birkenhead Park as a World Heritage Site; and
3. Recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee the allocation of a £975,000 Capital bid, and £580,000 revenue bid, both spread across 4 financial years..

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Birkenhead Park's journey to achieving World Heritage Inscription is now at a crucial and exciting stage. Having been formally recognised in April 2023 by the UK Government as a prospective future World Heritage Site nominee to UNESCO, Birkenhead Park is now being considered for early nomination, within the next 2 years.
- 1.2 As a consequence, there needs to be a real drive and focus on completing the required preparatory work to support nomination, including developing the nomination submission itself, and carrying out priority improvements and restoration to the site's physical historic assets and its presentation. If the Park's nomination proposal is to be successful, additional capital and revenue funds, as detailed in this report, need to be allocated to support the nomination and achieve the wider benefits of inscription.
- 1.3 Revenue funds are required to complete the existing preliminary Nomination Dossier and draft the accompanying Management Plan for the prospective World Heritage site. The Nomination Dossier is the document that comprehensively details the case for World Heritage inscription, describing the site's universal significance and how it meets UNESCO's exacting criteria.
- 1.4 This work will be ongoing through the Technical Evaluation (DCMS's quality assurance process to assess a site's readiness for nomination) and nomination phases of the project. This process will need to be informed by undertaking various studies, including physical condition surveys of the site, a setting and visual assessment study, a comprehensive long-term tree and vegetation strategy, and a masterplan. It is envisaged that most of the work in drafting the nomination submission package itself will be undertaken by 'in house' staff. This will be supplemented by the commissioning of external expert support and advice to undertake the accompanying studies.
- 1.5 Engaging stakeholders in a highly participatory approach is an essential element of the World Heritage initiative. Consequently, a fixed term, full-time community engagement officer is required, over 4 financial years until 2027/28, to provide additional and focused staff capacity in supporting a successful outcome to the nomination.
- 1.6 As well as developing the nomination package, additional capital funds are also needed to deliver a programme of priority improvements and restoration to the park's physical infrastructure in readiness for UNESCO's formal assessment. The condition and presentation of some of the park's key natural and cultural heritage attributes and landmarks are not presently at the level of World Heritage Site expectations and will need to be addressed as a matter of some urgency for a successful nomination. Various elements need improvement including: park railings and gates; structures including the Grand Entrance, Swiss Bridge and Roman Boathouse; boundaries; and lake platforms. Given that it has been nearly 20 years since the park has received significant investment through the then Heritage Lottery Fund, such additional capital funds are needed even if the Council was not seeking World Heritage recognition.
- 1.7 The ambitions for Birkenhead Park to be recognised as a World Heritage Site fully support the Council's strategic priorities and the vision to promote fairness and

opportunity for people and communities is as important today as when Birkenhead Park was created in 1847, nearly 180 years ago.

- 1.8 The benefits of becoming a World Heritage Site are potentially very significant for Wirral Borough and the wider region, including:
- building international awareness and a global reputation;
 - growing the Borough's visitor economy, specifically national and international tourism. The World Heritage 'brand' is recognised as a significant driver;
 - increasing opportunities for inward investment and grant funding, and making significant contributions to Birkenhead's comprehensive regeneration programme;
 - increasing community and civic pride; and
 - securing the protection and improved management of this unique public heritage asset for future generations (a key factor for UNESCO).
- 1.9 Birkenhead Park's World Heritage ambition sits 'hand in glove' with the priorities of Birkenhead's regeneration programme and its enormous potential should not be underestimated in:
- driving economic regeneration (generating investment and employment opportunities);
 - enabling social regeneration (tackling the causes of health inequalities for example); and
 - transforming our neighbourhoods (focusing on benefits for people and the environment).
- 1.10 The UK National Commission for UNESCO published a report in 2020 titled, '*The National Value of UNESCO Designations to the United Kingdom*'. It confirmed that UNESCO designations (most importantly World Heritage Sites) are significant contributors to the UK economy, notably finding that:
- UK World Heritage Sites generate nearly £6 million per year per site, on average, in additional revenue resources; and
 - World Heritage Sites are very successful in attracting external funding – over 14 years the National Lottery Heritage Fund invested £566 million in 24 UK World Heritage Sites.
- 1.11 The 2015 report, '*An assessment of the Current and Potential Economic Impact of Heritage*', for Gwynedd Council, which has overall responsibility for the UK's most recently inscribed World Heritage Site, The Slate Landscape of North Wales, stated that:
- Visitor numbers will increase between 6% and 50% after a site is designated as a World Heritage Site;
 - World Heritage Sites promote wider economic growth in the local area of between 1% and 3% in the years following designation;
 - World Heritage Sites can help alleviate socio-economic problems in their local areas;
 - the World Heritage Site inscription process can generate PR worth very large sums. This alerts international visitors of the importance and specialness of a site.

- 1.12 There is certainly some evidence of the positive impact of World Heritage association following the announcement that Birkenhead Park was to be included on the UK's Tentative List. The Tentative List announcement provoked a plethora of national, regional, and local press coverage and hugely raised awareness of the park and the wider area. 'Visits' to the park's website increased by 900%, and there has been much interest from specialist and professional organisations in terms of articles and talks.
- 1.13 Birkenhead Park is greatly valued, particularly so by local communities. It is currently visited by nearly 2 million people every year and, like parks and green spaces throughout the UK as well as further afield, it has been even more important in recent years, providing a much-needed sanctuary for people during the coronavirus pandemic. It has proved that it continues to serve the purpose for which it was created – supporting the public health and recreational needs of the local population.
- 1.14 The attainment of World Heritage Site recognition for the park would be, amongst other things, an enormous boost in terms of local pride, as well as providing a platform for realising the opportunities that exist for expanding and developing the delivery of environmental, health, and educational programmes for our communities.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 At this stage in the project to seek Birkenhead Park's future recognition as a World Heritage Site there are only two options which are either to continue to prepare a nomination to UNESCO, or not to proceed.
- 2.2 Following enthusiastic support from residents, Friends Groups and Elected Members over several years, the site has been accepted on to the UK Government's World Heritage Site Tentative List and is now favoured to proceed to an early nomination. Effectively stopping or delaying the initiative now would no doubt result in considerable reputational damage for the Council and, more significantly, would put an end to realising the significant benefits to Wirral of having a site of such global importance.
- 2.3 Not continuing with the project is likely to be unacceptable to Wirral residents who have stated their wish to achieve the World Heritage Site ambition for the park.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 World Heritage Sites are places of 'Outstanding Universal Value', recognised as such under the terms of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. 'Outstanding Universal Value' is defined by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee as cultural and/or natural significance "which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and of importance for present and future generations of all humanity".
- 3.2 World Heritage Sites are nominated by their national government to the World Heritage Committee, evaluated by international Advisory Bodies to the Convention and inscribed on the World Heritage List by the intergovernmental UNESCO World Heritage Committee, a process that takes at least 18 months from submitting a nomination.

- 3.3 To be inscribed on the List, a site has to demonstrate and meet one or more of ten criteria, six cultural and four natural, established to assess 'Outstanding Universal Value', satisfy requirements of authenticity and integrity, and supported by a study of comparable international and national World Heritage and other sites which demonstrates the site's importance.
- 3.4 Sites must have in place adequate legal protection and management systems to protect their 'Outstanding Universal Value', including authenticity and integrity. The international advisory bodies evaluate nominated sites against the criteria before making recommendations to the World Heritage Committee. The Outstanding Universal Value of a World Heritage Site is defined by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription.
- 3.5 Before a site can be nominated to the World Heritage Committee, it must first be included on the Tentative List of its national government. A Tentative List is a list of sites which a government might consider nominating over a ten-year period. Since 2023, 'Birkenhead Park, the pioneering People's Park' has been on the UK's Tentative List and preparations are being made for its nomination to UNESCO.
- 3.6 Birkenhead Park is the World's first publicly funded municipal park. It was created for the growing population of Birkenhead using public money and has continued in public ownership since its creation. It signified a critical stage in human development in response to the declining health conditions brought on by the Industrial Revolution in the mid-nineteenth century.
- 3.7 Birkenhead Park represents innovation both through its design, incorporating features from cultures across the world, and through its vision of providing a community space where the barriers of social class, age, colour, and creed are non-existent. As a consequence, it profoundly influenced the creation of urban parks worldwide.
- 3.8 It is one of the UK's most significant and important parks and is listed Grade I on Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.
- 3.9 In recognition of its worldwide significance, officers and volunteers have been working for several years to seek its recognition as a World Heritage Site. A committee consisting of UK experts on World Heritage, individuals from local community groups, and Council staff have been in the process of pursuing this ambition. Since being on the UK's World Heritage Site Tentative List that committee has been reformed into the World Heritage Steering Group, chaired by the Chair of the Council's Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee.

Future programme

- 3.10 The process of preparing a World Heritage Site nomination is time consuming and can take several years. Following discussions with DCMS and Historic England officials, who manage the process of WHS nominations in the UK, Birkenhead Park is working to a programme that could see it inscribed as a World Heritage Site as early as Summer 2027, (set out in more detail at Appendix 1).
- 3.11 Initially, the Park will have to satisfy a rigorous 'Technical Evaluation' process by the UK Government prior to developing the formal submission package of nomination

documents. This has commenced with a view to completing this part of the process in the Summer. Birkenhead Park has a considerable advantage in that a comprehensive preliminary nomination document for the site has already been prepared and shared with DCMS, receiving extremely positive feedback.

- 3.12 Once the Technical Evaluation has been successfully completed, the nomination process will begin in earnest. This phase essentially will involve the preparation and formal nomination submission to UNESCO. The submission will consist of two documents:
- the Nomination Document; and
 - the Site Management Plan.

Officers are currently working towards a draft nomination submission in September 2025, with the following full submission in February 2026.

- 3.13 During UNESCO's consideration of the nomination submission, the Park will be expected to host site assessment visits by its appointed Advisory Body. These will likely take place in Summer 2026.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Commencing in 2024/25, the next phase is anticipated to be undertaken over 4 financial years. The associated investment required is significant and anticipated as:
- £580k revenue costs directly associated with preparing for nomination; and
 - £975k on priority capital improvements to the condition of the Park's heritage features.
- 4.2 Revenue funds required to support the development of the World Heritage Site nomination include:
- Additional staff capacity, including a fixed term full-time community engagement officer (£54,000 per year, including 'On-costs', for 4 years – total of £216,000);
 - Commissioning expert support and advice in developing the Management Plan for the World Heritage Site, including carrying out condition surveys, setting study, park masterplan, tree and vegetation strategy, conservation area design guide, etc. (£310,000);
 - Community engagement and consultation activities (£24,000);
 - Presentation of the nomination submission package (£20,000); and
 - Assessment visit by UNESCO's advisory body (£10,000).

This additional revenue will be sought from Budget Growth and appropriate Regeneration funds.

- 4.3 Capital funds required to support the development of the World Heritage Site nomination include:
- Restoration and replacement of gates and railings (£120,000);
 - Restoration of main historic buildings and structures – specifically Grand Entrance, Swiss Bridge, and Roman Boathouse (£230,000);
 - Ancillary improvements to park boundaries, site furniture, and lake platform structures (£180,000);

- Refurbishment of the park's visitor centre and facilities (£50,000);
- Facility improvements including visitor centre refurbishments, and installation of automated visitor counters (£100,000);
- Capitalised staff capacity to deliver the capital improvements (£120,000); and
- Allowance for inflation and contingency (£195,000).

This additional revenue will be sought from a Capital Bid as previously submitted in January 2024 (Appendix 4).

- 4.4 This investment is set out in more detail at Appendix 2 (revenue) and Appendix 3 (capital) of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 World Heritage Sites are places of 'Outstanding Universal Value', as set out in UNESCO's 1972 World Heritage Convention. As a State Party to the Convention, the United Kingdom is required to protect, conserve, present and transmit to future generations its World Heritage Sites. In the United Kingdom, this is done primarily through the spatial planning system.
- 5.2 At the local level, local authorities play an important role. They are responsible for spatial planning as well as having important roles in communication, management, promotion, and sometimes as owners of parts of World Heritage Sites.
- 5.3 Local Planning authorities must ensure that appropriate policies are in place to protect and conserve World Heritage Sites and their settings, including any defined buffer zone or its equivalent.
- 5.4 Birkenhead Park has a number of recognised protected heritage designations already. It is a Registered Historic Park (Grade I), is within a conservation area, and within the proposed World Heritage Site area there are 42 listed structures (one is Grade II* and the remainder Grade II listed). Birkenhead Park is therefore well placed to meet the requirement of World Heritage status, as it is already working to a range of protected heritage designations.
- 5.5 As the owner of the majority of the proposed World Heritage Site, and as the local planning authority with powers to control proposed development, the Council already holds a key position in protecting and conserving the site. As part of the work to develop the Site Management Plan, advice will be sought from officers in the Regeneration and Place Directorate's Planning team to ensure the robustness of planning policies to cover a World Heritage Site in the Borough.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 ICT: there are no additional ICT implications.
- 6.2 Staffing: additional capacity will be required to support the nomination phase of the project, specifically with regard to engaging stakeholders in the initiative. Consequently, a fixed term, full-time community engagement officer is proposed, over

4 financial years until 2027/28. This role will enable the establishment and development of strong, long-lasting relationships with the various stakeholders with an interest in the park. This is an essential role in helping to support the requirements of the Site Management Plan – to show that stakeholders are actively engaged in the site. The nature of this role is such that, although being focused on and based at Birkenhead Park, the postholder will be able to provide support for initiatives at other parks.

- 6.3 Assets: in support of the World Heritage Site nomination process it will be necessary to undertake improvement and restoration work to a number of key buildings, structures, and features in the park. The park in many respects is overdue this level of investment with the last major refurbishment of the park taking place in 2006 using Lottery Grant money.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Assuming that the recommendations in this report are approved, there is a risk to the Council of being unsuccessful in its bid to see Birkenhead Park recognised as a World Heritage Site – either that the UK Government decides not to nominate it to UNESCO, or UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee does not approve its nomination after assessment. To minimise this, officers will continue to liaise closely with DCMS, Historic England’s advisors, and other influential individuals and organisations as the nomination process progresses.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Engaging the wide range of stakeholders with an interest in Birkenhead Park and its potential World Heritage Site recognition is an essential element of the overall initiative presented here. Consequently, a fixed term, full-time community engagement officer is proposed, over 4 financial years until 2027/28 to provide additional staff capacity.
- 8.2 A comprehensive programme of ‘engagement’ with visitors, local people, interest groups, and wider stakeholders will be developed to gain a thorough understanding of park use, views, and perceptions. This participative approach will form the basis for enabling stakeholders to have a role in decision-making on aspects of the park’s management and development.
- 8.3 The long-established community group, the Friends of Birkenhead Park, is working extremely closely with the Council in our aspirations for the park and is fully supportive.
- 8.4 Community consultation exercises which have been undertaken by the park’s team in recent years have received overwhelming support and enthusiasm for the park potentially becoming a World Heritage Site.

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 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of this report. It is published here: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>
- 9.3 Birkenhead Park, like all parks and green spaces throughout the Borough, is provided for the benefit of the whole community and any programme or initiative that seeks its improvement will be undertaken to endeavour that there is no discrimination towards any section of the community.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 As a large public park in an urban conurbation, Birkenhead Park has a potentially huge contribution to make in terms of increasing biodiversity as well as combating the effects of a changing climate – not only within its site boundary but also in raising awareness and promoting behavioural change to its visitors and local residents.
- 10.2 The site's future designation as a World Heritage Site will certainly provide an extra level of protection for the historic park, and its immediate surroundings, as an internationally significant cultural landscape. Indirectly, it will also provide spin-off benefits to access expertise and external funding to realise the biodiversity opportunities and address the park's resilience to a changing climate.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Wirral is facing stark economic, social and health inequalities. The Wirral Plan is committed to addressing this. With Community Wealth Building at its heart, the Wirral Plan sets out how to tackle this and makes a major contribution to improving the economic, social and health outcomes of the borough.
- 11.2 The significance of success in having Birkenhead Park inscribed as a World Heritage Site must not be underestimated. Such a designation would bring enormous benefits to the wider regeneration of Birkenhead as outlined earlier in this report – in terms of economic, social, educational, and health impacts, as well as the more obvious environmental outcomes of such a public space.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Anticipated timescale to World Heritage Site nomination and inscription

Appendix 2 – Indicative additional revenue budget requirement for the World Heritage Site nomination phase

Appendix 3 – Indicative additional capital budget requirement for the World Heritage Site nomination phase

Appendix 4 – Capital Bid for Birkenhead Park (January 2024)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council's (Draft) Preliminary Nomination Document for Birkenhead Park People's Garden, 2023

UNESCO's 'Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention', July 2019

United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO's 'The National Value of UNESCO Designations to the United Kingdom', 2020

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee in accordance with Sections B, C and F of its Terms of Reference;

(B) community engagement, incorporating the Council's approach to equalities, inclusion communities, neighbourhoods and the voluntary and charitable sector, community wealth building and social value;

(C) in considering options and develop proposals for neighbourhood arrangements, including capacity building, use of assets and devolving powers and services to neighbourhoods;

(F) concerning tourism, the arts, culture and heritage, including provision of theatre, entertainments, conferences and events.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee	23 November 2020

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Appendix 1

Anticipated timescale to World Heritage Site nomination and inscription

The anticipated timescale for a World Heritage Site nomination to be submitted for Birkenhead Park, and for it to be successfully inscribed, is set out below:

Date	Key Milestones and Activities
April 2023	UK Government's announcement of Birkenhead Park's inclusion on new Tentative List for future World Heritage Site nominations
April – September 2024	Preparing for, and working through the UK Government's Technical Evaluation process
May 2024 – September 2025	Preparing nomination package of documents, commencing site improvement works, and developing stakeholder engagement.
September 2025	UK Government submits draft nomination documents to UNESCO
February 2026	UK Government submits final nomination documents to UNESCO following feedback The key documents for the nomination submission are (i) a Nomination Dossier, and (ii) a Management Plan. The preparation of these documents will be informed by undertaking various studies, including physical condition surveys of the site, a setting and visual assessment study, a comprehensive long-term tree and vegetation strategy, a masterplan.
Summer 2026	UNESCO's Advisory Body visits the site for assessment
January 2027	UNESCO's Advisory Body provides nomination response
June/July 2027	UNESCO's World Heritage Committee meets to determine nomination

This anticipated programme suggests that it is possible to achieve Birkenhead Park's inscription as a World Heritage Site by 2027. However, the decision as to when a nomination to UNESCO will be submitted rests with the UK Government.

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Appendix 2

Indicative additional revenue budget requirement for the World Heritage Site nomination phase

The following table lists what are considered to be the 'direct' expenditure requirements to enable a successful World Heritage Site nomination for Birkenhead Park. Given that the draft Nomination Document for the proposed World Heritage Site is well-developed, the focus must now be on producing an accompanying comprehensive Management Plan, which will involve a great deal of informative work to be undertaken.

Indicative revenue costs (£'000): Nomination process support	Financial years				
	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Total
Staff: - full-time community engagement officer from 2024/25 (£30k/annum incl. 'on costs') - increased contractual hours for existing information assistant and assistant ranger from 2024/25 (£15k/annum incl. 'on costs') - increased overtime hours for Estate Management team to provide additional capacity over the summer months, from 2024/25 (£5k/annum incl. 'on costs') (Figures assume 5% annual increase)	50	53	55	58	216
Commissioning expert support and advice including: - preparation of a strategic development plan for the park (a masterplan); - undertaking comprehensive physical condition surveys and reports; - undertaking a landscape visual assessment study and report; - development of a comprehensive long-term tree and vegetation strategy; - production of a design guide for the conservation area.	100	105	105	0	310
Community engagement and consultation - support for activities including online content design, promotional material, outreach and educational activities, room hire, etc.	6	6	6	6	24
Preparation of document package - graphic design, photos/images, printing, etc.	0	10	10	0	20
ICOMOS assessment visit	0	0	10	0	10
Total	156	174	186	64	580

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Appendix 3

Indicative additional capital budget requirement for the World Heritage Site nomination phase

The following table lists the priority capital expenditure requirements to enable a successful World Heritage Site nomination for Birkenhead Park. They mainly relate to the condition of the park's physical infrastructure – its landscape and some of its key natural and cultural heritage attributes and landmarks - and are not presently at the level of World Heritage Site expectations for a successful nomination. The last major investment in Birkenhead Park's infrastructure was in 2006. Therefore, even without seeking World Heritage Site nomination this capital sum would be required to improve the park.

Indicative capital costs (£'000): Priority improvements to infrastructure condition	Financial years				
	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Total
Staff (capitalised):					
- part-time development manager/coordinator from 2024/25 (£30k/annum incl. 'on costs')	30	30	30	30	120
Restoration and replacement of gates and railings	30	40	40	40	150
Restoration of main historic buildings and structures – specifically Grand Entrance, Swiss Bridge, and Roman Boathouse.	50	75	75	30	230
Replacement of lake platforms in the Upper Park.	50	0	0	0	50
A programme of park boundary improvements, replacing damaged walls and replacing some entrance paths that do not meet current standards. Suggest introducing an annual rolling programme.	10	30	30	30	100
Refurbishment of the park's visitor centre and facilities (including toilets, decoration, and general visitor facilities)	25	25	0	0	50
Data collection and monitoring of visitor numbers - purchase and installation of automated visitor counters at all of the Park's entrance gates	50	0	0	0	50
Comprehensive overhaul of notice/information boards (including content); benches; waste bins; and other site furniture.	6	8	8	8	30
Sub-total	251	208	183	138	780
Contingency and inflation allowance (25%)	63	52	46	34	195
Total	314	260	229	172	975

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Appendix 4

Capital Bid for Birkenhead Park (January 2024)

**NEW PROJECT PROPOSAL
OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE**

OVERVIEW

This Outline Business Case template should be completed for all new projects or one-off investments including external grant applications. The OBC will be assessed to determine how well the project fits with Council strategy and priorities to determine if the proposal is either: A. rejected, B. supported but with implementation deferred, C. proceeds to implementation or D. a full business case is required.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Check	Yes / No
Is this a request for capital funding?	Yes
Is this a request to acquire new IT equipment, software or digital services?	No
Is this a request to purchase land/property or enhance an existing Council building or Asset?	Yes
Has the Procurement Team been consulted on the approach / timescale required?	Yes
Has the legal team been consulted?	Yes

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Birkenhead Park People's Garden – a potential World Heritage Site (Capital improvements to enable a successful UNESCO nomination)
Business Area:	Neighbourhoods - Parks & Countryside – Birkenhead Park
Business Case Author:	Rob Belcher
Project Manager/Lead:	Rob Belcher

REVIEW PROCESS

REVIEW	DATE	OUTCOME
Director/Accountable Officer: Jason Gooding – Director of Neighbourhoods	06/11/2023	Support
Programme / Portfolio Board:		
Finance Business Partner:	17/11/2023	Sarah Cox
Is a key decision required to proceed? (A key decision includes expenditure being incurred above £500,000 or having a significant impact on 2 or more Council wards)		

As per the Investment Change Board, all new capital bids must be reviewed by the appropriate Director **prior** to submission to the Capital Team:

- Review all current approved capital schemes within the Department to determine whether any other scheme can be replaced or re-engineered to accommodate this scheme? Detail why the original scheme is no longer required and/or can still be delivered within remaining funds and whether there is any significant impact upon operations from removing the scheme/reducing the funding.
- The cost of borrowing must be met by the revenue budget? The Council has a Statutory Duty to set aside each year from its annual revenue budget an amount towards the eventual repayment of borrowing (minimum revenue provision – MRP).

DIRECTOR REVIEW

Review all current approved capital schemes within the Department to determine whether any other scheme can be replaced or re-engineered to accommodate this scheme? Detail why the original scheme is no longer required and/or can still be delivered within remaining funds and whether there is any significant impact upon operations from removing the scheme/reducing the funding.

Current capital schemes within Parks have been reviewed and there is no additional funding available that can be vired across to this scheme. Capital expenditure against most schemes has been committed this year.

State whether the cost of borrowing can be met by the revenue budget? The Council has a Statutory Duty to set aside each year from its annual revenue budget an amount towards the eventual repayment of borrowing (minimum revenue provision – MRP).

This expenditure cannot be met from the Revenue Budget for this area without ceasing to fund and provide services in other areas – which include statutory duties. The Neighbourhoods budget, including the Parks & Countryside Budget, has been significantly reduced over previous years and is currently overspent. While action is being undertaken, in year, to reduce this overspend at this time no revenue budget can be committed from the service to contribute towards the cost of borrowing.

It is important to note that the Council has already given an undertaking to Government to fund this submission which has benefits to the whole of Wirral not just Birkenhead Park.

CAPITAL FUNDING ONLY

REVIEW		Revenue Code	EVIDENCE (from Director)
In all cases the Finance Cost will be funded from revenue. Provide full revenue cost centre	No		See comments in Directors Review
Finance Cost to be funded from re-engineering of existing capital schemes?	NO		See comments in Directors Review

OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE TEMPLATE

1. Executive Summary – Provide a high-level summary of the key points in the business case including the need for the project, the key benefits and return on investment. Include any key partners/stakeholders and their commitment to the project.

In early April 2023, the UK Government (through its Department of Culture, Media & Sport - DCMS) announced its 'new' Tentative List of sites (for potential future nomination to UNESCO as World Heritage Sites (WHS) over the next 10 years). Significantly, Birkenhead Park is included on that list of only seven sites in the United Kingdom and its overseas territories.

Now that Birkenhead Park is on the UK's short list, the current phase is to work towards a formal nomination (which will be submitted by the UK Government) to UNESCO. Such a nomination is the basis on which UNESCO's World Heritage Committee will decide on whether or not to inscribe it as a WHS. There is much to be done to prepare for nomination and it is a process that may take several years.

The benefits of WHS recognition

Firstly, the ambitions for Birkenhead Park fully support the Council's strategic priorities and the vision to promote fairness and opportunity for people and communities – this is essentially the reason why the Park was created in the first place nearly 180 years ago.

The benefits of becoming a WHS (and even of initially being included on the UK's Tentative List) are potentially enormous for the Borough and sub-region, including:

- building international awareness and a global reputation;
- growing the Borough's visitor economy, specifically national and international tourism – the WHS 'brand' is recognised as a significant driver;
- increasing opportunities for inward investment and grant funding, and making significant contributions to Birkenhead's comprehensive regeneration programme (specifically in terms of attracting businesses to the area and creating job opportunities for local residents);
- increasing community and civic pride; and
- securing the protection and improved management of this unique public heritage asset for future generations (a key factor for UNESCO).

Specifically, the initiative sits 'hand in glove' with the priorities of Birkenhead's regeneration programme and its enormous potential should not be underestimated in:

- driving economic regeneration (generating investment and employment opportunities);
- enabling social regeneration (tackling the causes of health inequalities for example); and
- transforming our neighbourhoods (focusing on benefits for people and the environment).

Evidence of the economic impact of WHSs in the UK is substantial:

- UK WHSs generate nearly £6 million per year per site, on average, in additional revenue resources*;
- WHSs are very successful in attracting external funding – over 14 years the National Lottery Heritage Fund invested £566 million in 24 UK WHSs*;
- Visitor numbers will increase after a site is inscribed – anywhere between 6% and 50%**;

- WHSs promote wider economic growth in the local area of between 1% and 3% in the years following inscription**;
- WHSs can help alleviate socio-economic problems in their local areas. In some cases, poverty rates fell from 46% to 9% over the 18 years following inscription**;
- The WHS inscription process can generate PR worth very large sums. This alerts international visitors of the importance and specialness of a site**.

(Information from:

** Report by United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO, 'The National Value of UNESCO Designations to the United Kingdom', 2020*

***Report for Gwynedd Council (The Slate Landscape of North Wales WHS), 'An assessment of the Current and Potential Economic Impact of Heritage', 2015)*

Already, we have experienced the impact of WHS association. The Tentative List announcement in April 2023 provoked a plethora of national, regional, and local press coverage and hugely raised awareness of the park and the wider area. 'Visits' to the park's website increased by 900%, and there has been much interest from specialist and professional organisations in terms of articles and talks.

The initial investment provided by this capital bid will see a significant financial return for the Borough in the long-term through enabling a successful WHS nomination to UNESCO.

More visitors and increasing income opportunities

Currently, the annual number of visitors to Birkenhead Park is estimated at between 1.5 and 2 million. These consist mainly of people from the local area. As a direct impact of WHS recognition, it is anticipated that visitor numbers will increase by as much as 50%, i.e. to between 2.25 to 3 million a year. And, by establishing a global reputation, we will welcome more visitors from further afield – regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Given Birkenhead Park's geographic location close to a significant international city and with excellent public transport (with a dedicated train station), this consequent increase in footfall to the park – and indeed to Birkenhead and the wider Wirral peninsula - is a very realistic prospect. It will bring with it additional spending power and significant income, both for the park and, more importantly, in terms of Wirral's visitor economy.

Concerning the former, Birkenhead Park is fortunate in having a number of existing revenue income streams, and together these have typically realised circa £90k per annum in the years immediately prior to the Covid pandemic – income levels are still returning to those previously seen pre-pandemic. There is certainly great opportunity to significantly increase annual income from current sources, as well as identifying additional sources.

It is anticipated that a medium-term target to double the park's annual income is achievable and a successful bid for WHS recognition, maximising the heightened reputation that goes with it (and associated investment in its infrastructure and facilities through this capital bid), will undoubtedly provide a major driver to enable that to be realised. Some of the main opportunities for increasing the park's income will be:

- developing a range of catering opportunities - both at the Visitor Centre and various locations throughout the park,
- building a high-profile events and activities programme,
- encouraging commercial concessions,

- renting out of indoor spaces – gallery and function room,
- promoting the park for filming and TV productions (pre-Covid, the park was used in the filming of ‘The Irregulars’ Netflix series),
- merchandising and sales,
- sponsorship and donations programmes, and
- developing a centre of excellence / learning centre for the delivery of professional training on best practice in landscape management, heritage site management, forest schools practice, etc.

However, such an increase in revenue for the park will seem as insignificant compared to the growth in the wider visitor economy of Birkenhead and Wirral as a result of being the custodian of a World Heritage Site.

The next steps to WHS inscription

The process of preparing and submitting a WHS nomination is time consuming and will take several years. The UK’s most recently inscribed WHS – the Slate Landscape of North West Wales – took eight years from joining the Tentative List to being nominated to UNESCO. Jodrell Bank (inscribed in 2019) was of a similar timescale.

There are essentially two phases of work which need to be undertaken:

- the Technical Evaluation (by UK Government) and Preliminary Assessment (by UNESCO) phase; and
- the Nomination phase.

The indicative timescale for WHS inscription

The indicative programme suggests that it could be possible to achieve Birkenhead Park’s inscription as a WHS within the next 6 years. However, the decision as to when, and if, a nomination will be submitted rests with the UK Government, which will also be considering the progress towards nomination of other sites on the Tentative List. Of course, if DCMS feels that Birkenhead Park is ready to proceed earlier than assumed, then the timetable for the UNESCO nomination could well be shorter.

The potential costs of priority capital works for WHS nomination

As already stated, the process of preparing and submitting a nomination is time consuming. Consequently, the associated investment required will be significant, both in terms of the need for additional revenue and capital expenditure. A ‘Revenue Growth and Budget Pressures’ form has already been prepared and submitted in relation to the anticipated additional revenue costs associated with this project between 2024/25 and 2027/28.

There are also additional significant capital costs (anticipated to be £975,000) which need to be addressed and are the subject of this Capital Bid. These mainly relate to the current condition of the park’s physical infrastructure – its landscape and some of its key natural and cultural heritage attributes and landmarks. Their condition and presentation are not presently at the level of WHS expectations if we want to be considered for a successful nomination.

Such priority elements which require additional capital improvements in the short to medium term (delivered over 5 years) consist of:

- Replacement of a number of gates and railings (£190,000);

- Restoration of main historic buildings and structures – specifically Grand Entrance, Swiss Bridge, and Roman Boathouse (£250,000);
- Replacement of lake platforms in the Upper Park (£60,000);
- A programme of park boundary improvements, replacing damaged walls and replacing some entrance paths that do not meet current standards (£125,000);
- Refurbishment / replacement of the park’s visitor centre and facilities (including toilets, decoration, and general visitor facilities) (£60,000);
- A comprehensive overhaul of site furniture including notice/information boards, benches, and waste bins (£40,000);
- Data collection and monitoring of visitor numbers - purchase and installation of automated visitor counters at all of the Park's entrances (£60,000).

These proposals will be delivered by a part-time development manager/coordinator, whose salary will also be capitalised (£190,000).

All figures above include a contingency and inflation allowance at 25%.

In order to fully realise the significant benefits that will undoubtedly come from the international recognition of WHS inscription, further considerable investment will also be required in the long term.

At a fundamental level, it will be essential to:

- commit to appropriately protecting, managing, and looking after the special heritage asset and the attributes - both physical and intangible - for which Birkenhead Park is held in such high regard;
- do that in accordance with the Council’s response to climate emergency and its commitment to environmental sustainability;
- maximise the opportunities that WHS recognition would bring for our residents, in terms of health and wellbeing benefits, employment and business development, and broader ‘community’ outcomes;
- greatly expand opportunities for people to engage with, and learn more about, this important place and its role in the development of public parks across the world; and
- plan for future success.

With Birkenhead Park as an integral element in the wider regeneration programme for the town, such longer term investment will be sought from a cocktail of external grant funders including the National Heritage Lottery Fund, Liverpool City Region, etc.

Supporting Partners and Stakeholders

The site being almost wholly within the ownership of Wirral Council, the Council is the main stakeholder. However, there are also a wide range of external stakeholders, including:

- the owners and occupiers of private properties within and neighbouring the proposed WHS;
- local communities, largely represented by community and residents’ associations, schools and other educational establishments, and significantly by the ‘Friends of Birkenhead Park’;
- visitors to the park and various user groups (including sports clubs and third sector organisations) – visitor surveys conducted in 2019 and 2021 show that Birkenhead Park is considered to be a ‘very special place’ by local people, and there is strong public support for pursuing WHS recognition;
- volunteers undertaking a variety of valuable roles throughout the Park, and the ‘Friends of Birkenhead Park’ which has a significant part in providing and supporting volunteering, as well as fundraising and contributing to the management of the park;

- national, regional, and local communities of interest including Conservation Areas Wirral, Birkenhead History Society, Merseyside Civic Society, and University of Liverpool.

Since 2017, a Steering Group consisting of representatives from the major stakeholder groups has met on a regular basis to make progress on the WHS ambition.

Capital Strategy Criteria met:-

- Essential Health and Safety / Disability Discrimination Act Schemes
- Invest to save scheme, including those developed with the intention of avoiding future cost pressures.
- A Scheme that reflects Council priorities that could have a wider economic benefit that link in with the Wirral Plan

2. Background, Context and Need – Set out the reasons for undertaking the project and explain how it enables the achievement of corporate objectives or strategies.

In terms of the Council's WHS ambition for Birkenhead Park, the successful application to join the UK's Tentative List is the first fruit of much preparatory work over the preceding 8 years. The previous corporate approvals for this initiative are:

- February 2017: Cabinet and SLT supported an application for WHS inscription.
- December 2017: Cabinet and SLT established a revenue reserve budget of £250,000 to take forward its aspirations for Birkenhead Park.
- November 2020: Tourism, Communities, Culture & Leisure Committee endorsed support to progress the aspiration for WHS inscription.
- October 2022: SLT approved the submission of the WHS Tentative List application.
- April 2023: Wirral Council accepted the UK Government's decision to include Birkenhead Park on its WHS Tentative List and agreed to fund the nomination.
- December 2023: SLT received an updated briefing on the project and endorsed the approach to UNESCO nomination.

While being on the UK's 'shortlist' does not guarantee that a site will proceed in being nominated to UNESCO, it is the formal 'first step on the ladder' in the long journey to seek this prestigious international recognition.

The UK Government states in its Tentative List guidance that:

"Inscription as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is an acknowledgement of the global significance of such places. It is an honour and a privilege and can bring social and economic benefits. However, because all World Heritage Sites have to be of global importance, the World Heritage List is inevitably highly selective and many places of national or even of international significance will not make it on to the list."

The journey towards such recognition evidences the Council's high ambitions and will be an important catalyst for regeneration, contributing to increases in property values (particularly in the immediate surroundings), growth of the visitor economy, and a more diverse and higher quality retail offer. It will also help in unlocking external funding opportunities (lottery and others) and attracting businesses and development opportunities to the area. Indeed, the initiative rightly sits 'hand in glove' with the priorities of Wirral's regeneration programme:

- driving economic regeneration (generating new investment and new employment opportunities);

- enabling social regeneration (tackling the causes of health inequalities for example); and
- transforming our neighbourhoods.

The need to undertake an early programme of priority capital improvements in Birkenhead Park - focused on conserving the condition of its historic attributes - is essential to evidencing the Council's good custodianship of the site, and in preparing for a successful nomination to UNESCO.

3. Business Options / Preferred Option – Summarise your analysis of the base options considered (including do nothing) and your reasoning behind the preferred option.

Option Description	Reason for rejection
Do Nothing	<p>This option assumes that a programme of capital improvements to the park's infrastructure (as summarised in 1. above) is not undertaken. This will result in long overdue improvements to the condition and presentation of significant heritage attributes not being undertaken.</p> <p>Consequently, the condition of these elements will continue to decline without attention, delaying the inevitable time when even more considerable and costly remedial action is unavoidable.</p> <p>This worsening physical condition will clearly have an impact on the enjoyment of the park by visitors. And, in terms of the WHS ambition (and the potential benefits associated with such recognition), it will not be looked on favourably by UNESCO and its advisors in considering a WHS nomination.</p> <p>Consequently 'do nothing' is considered to be an unrealistic option at this time.</p>
Preferred Option	<p>A capital funding allocation of circa £1million to undertake a 5-year priority programme of infrastructure improvements in the Park would significantly contribute to a successful WHS nomination. Not only would it improve and conserve the condition of key elements of heritage importance but would also evidence to UNESCO the Council's good custodianship of the site.</p> <p>This preferred option (including its benefits) is obviously further described and detailed in this document, and it is proposed to take forward this option.</p>

4. Expected Benefits – These should be set out in measurable terms against the situation as it exists prior to the project. Benefits should be both qualitative and quantitative and aligned to relevant programme or strategic benefits. Any benefits realisation requirements should be stated.		
Financial Benefits:		
Benefit Description	Measurement Method	Benefit Owner
Improving and maintaining the physical fabric of the park to a high standard will ensure its attractiveness to visitors, and consequently provide opportunities to sustain and increase income generated from catering and hospitality, events and activities, visitor centre sales, etc.	Monitoring the park's annual income generated from various sources.	Wirral Council
The improvement of the condition and presentation of the park's key heritage attributes will ensure the best chances of a successful WHS nomination to UNESCO, which in turn will see growth in Wirral's visitor economy, and greater opportunity to attract external investment.	Monitoring the park's annual income generated from various sources. Monitoring visitor economy growth as a result of WHS inscription. Increase in external investment.	Wirral Council
The early improvement of the condition of the park's fabric will prevent further decay (which would be more costly to repair in the long run).	Cost comparison analysis.	Wirral Council
Non-Financial Benefits:		
Benefit Description	Measurement Method	Benefit Owner
Improved condition of the park's historic fabric.	Number and extent of the park's infrastructure elements are in a good condition.	Wirral Council Park visitors Local residents
A well-maintained park (which gives a greater feeling of safety) is more attractive to visitors and residents, enabling more people (and a wider range of people) to enjoy healthier lifestyles, take pride in their park, etc.	Number of visitors and qualitative surveys.	Wirral Council Park visitors Local residents

The improvement of the condition and presentation of the park's key heritage attributes will ensure the best chances of a successful WHS nomination to UNESCO.	WHS nomination and inscription	Wirral Council
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5. Expected Disbenefits – Highlight any outcomes perceived as negative by project stakeholders including any current and future increases on revenue budgets e.g. increased maintenance costs. These need to be actual consequences of the project rather than risks.

Disbenefit	Stakeholders Affected
No disbenefits anticipated as a consequence of the capital investment proposed.	

6. Constraints – Set out any anticipated constraints to the project e.g. timing issues, planning constraints, resources, external funding requirements etc. and the measures being taken to mitigate these.

Constraints	Measures to address constraints
No constraints are anticipated with regard to delivering the capital investment proposed. It is important that the works summarised earlier are undertaken in preparation for a successful WHS nomination to UNESCO. However, this is likely to take several years and so the capital works programme is proposed to take place over the next 5 financial years.	

7. Procurement – If your proposal requires any procurement activity, set out your procurement strategy for the project including any social value considerations.

It is anticipated that various elements of the programme's delivery will require the procurement of specialist contractors. Consequently, we will work closely with the Council's Procurement team (and where necessary, the Asset Management team) from an early stage to ensure that requisite procedures are followed correctly and the best suppliers and contractors are appointed to support this important project.

8. Timetable – Specify the expected start and end dates. Set out key milestones against the project timeline, these will be used to monitor delivery progress. and the period over which benefits will be realised. Include any funding end-dates as milestones. **For capital funding timetable only – please complete appendix 1**

Start Date:	April 2024	End Date:	2028
Milestone Description		Target Date	
Condition surveys undertaken/updated where necessary		Autumn 2024	
Complete work to remove/repair lake platforms in the Upper Park		Winter 2024/Spring 2025	
Install of automated visitor counters		Spring 2025	
Refurbish the park's visitor centre and facilities (including toilets, decoration, and general visitor facilities)		Spring/Summer 2025	

Commence rolling programme of railings/gates repair and decoration	Spring 2025 to 2028
Commence redecoration and repair programme of main historic buildings and structures – Grand Entrance, Swiss Bridge, and Roman Boathouse.	Summer 2025 to 2028
Commence rolling programme of overhauling site furniture - notice/information boards (including content); benches; waste bins.	Autumn 2025 to 2028

9. Project Costs – A summary of the project costs and funding arrangements as well as any impact on operational budgets. Applications for capital resource require completion of Appendix 1.						
Project/Programme Costs						
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Council Borrowing	75,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	0	975,000
External Grants						
Revenue						
External Grants						
	Funding Body	Amount Funded	Funding Secured	Funding announcement	Funding end	
		£	Yes/No	date	date	

<p>10. Investment Appraisal – Compare the aggregated benefits/disbenefits to the anticipated project /programme costs and any on-going operational costs to determine the value of the project as an investment. (Liaise with your business partner if you have any questions about presenting your investment appraisal).</p> <p>As this document seeks to communicate, the capital budget currently sought is not simply about improving the condition of specified priority elements in Birkenhead Park (although of course that is an extremely valuable result in its own right). The prime reason for submitting this capital bid at this time is to support the wider ambition of seeking WHS recognition for the Park. Since being selected to join the UK’s new ‘Tentative List’ of potential future WHSs this ambition is now very realistic.</p> <p>A future successful WHS inscription would have far-reaching benefits not only for the park and its immediate neighbourhoods, but also for the Borough and indeed the wider Liverpool City Region. It is integral to supporting the delivery of the Council’s strategic priorities for People, Business, and Environment. The benefits of becoming a WHS are potentially enormous, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • securing the protection and improved management of this unique public heritage asset for future generations (this is a key factor for UNESCO); • raising international awareness of the value of this special place; • increasing community and civic pride; • growth in the Borough’s visitor economy, specifically in the form of national and international tourism; and • increasing inward investment and external funding, and significant contributions to Birkenhead’s comprehensive regeneration programme. <p>For this reason, it is considered that this proposed capital bid is an extremely valuable investment for the Council.</p>
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11. Risks – Provide a summary of the key risks associated with the project. Score the likelihood and impact from 1 – 5 (1 = low and 5 = high), the assessed risk score is the likelihood score multiplied by the impact score.

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Assessed Risk
Works prices are higher than available budget leading to insufficient funds and consequent time delays.	3	4	12
Programme delays in appointing contractors/suppliers leading to over-run of whole project.	2	4	8

End of document

APPENDIX 1 – CAPITAL COSTS AND FUNDING

enter / change year if required	2024/2025				2025/2026				2026/2027				2027/2028				2028/2029				Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	£000
Capital Expenditure:																					
Internal costs e.g. legal, design, PMO, Architects	0	0	0	5	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	0	0	0	0	185
External Costs e.g. contractors, build			20	50	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	0	0	0	0	790
Total	0	0	20	55	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	975
Funding																					
Grant																					0
Other External Funds																					0
Revenue																					0
Reserves																					0
Borrowing	0	0	20	55	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	975
Total	0	0	20	55	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	975
Revenue Expenditure																					
Employee																					0
Running costs																					0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Income (show as a negative figure)																					
additional income generated																					0
savings generated																					0
Total																					0
Net Revenue impact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2024

REPORT TITLE	UPDATE REGARDING THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL'S TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update regarding the work carried out by the Trading Standards Service and its performance in carrying out that work.

The enforcement work carried out by the Trading Standards Service supports the Council Plan: Wirral Working Together 2023-27, specifically Theme 3 and 6, by updating the Committee regarding the regulatory enforcement work carried out by the Service in the past calendar year.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

This is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is recommended to :

Note and endorse the content of the report and highlight any areas requiring further clarification or action.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure that Members of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee have the opportunity to monitor the performance of the Trading Standards Service. Regular monitoring of performance will ensure public oversight and enable Elected Members to make informed decisions.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 This report has been provided in line with a request from Members of this Committee. No other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Trading Standards Service is a regulatory, intelligence led statutory service. The Service is required to carry out the full range of statutory trading standards enforcement duties in relation to weights and measures, food standards, feed standards, product safety. The Service is also required to carry put a range of other functions, as well as non statutory functions such as, intellectual property, fair trading law, door step crime and age restricted sales legislation which includes alcohol, tobacco, vapes, solvents, knives and fireworks.
- 3.2 The Service works in conjunction with partner agencies such as HMRC, Food Standards Agency, DEFRA, Office of Product Safety and Standards, Merseyside Police and Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service
- 3.3 The Trading Standards Service also works in partnership with the central government agency the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline Service (CABx) The CABx triage all first line enquires and complaints on behalf of the service. CABx will provide civil advice to consumers as the Trading Standards Service only provides a criminal enforcement service. In the past year the Service received 2178 enquiries from CABx. The Trading Standards Team Leader will review all enquiries from CABx and approximately 600 enquiries were allocated to an officer within the service for further investigation and/or intervention.
- 3.4 The Service participated in several multi-agency operations with partner agencies such as Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire Service and HMRC, including Operation Evolve (counterfeit goods) Operation Sceptre (knives), Operation Bangor (fireworks), and Operation CeCe (Tobacco). (Further details are provided in Appendix 1 of this report).
- 3.5 In conjunction with colleagues in Legal Services, the Service has instigated legal proceedings in four cases. Three cases were brought to a successful conclusion and 1 case is still before the Courts awaiting sentencing in October 2024. (A summary of the cases is provided in Appendix 1)

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 In recent years, the Trading Standards Service has struggled with recruitment and retention of qualified and competent officers. Currently the Service has three officers enrolled to undertake the statutory qualifications to become fully qualified Trading Standards Officers. As a result, to ensure the service can carry out its statutory functions, the service has had to engaged contractors.

6.2 In 2023-24, Wirral Council's Public Health Service agreed to grant fund two fixed term posts within the Trading Standards Service for two years to tackle issues related to the supply of illicit and illegal Tobacco, Vapes and Alcohol within the Borough. The Service has successfully recruited to these posts and is in the process of agreeing the scope of the project and Key Performance Indicators for the projects with colleagues in Public Health.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Information on key risks faced by the Service and associated mitigations and planned actions are included in the Directorate and Corporate Risk Registers. There are no specific risk implications relating to this report which is a general service update.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

8.1 There are no engagement or consultation implications arising out of this report.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The 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 assist Council Services to identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular decision or activity. There is no impact or equality implications arising directly from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental and climate implications generated by the recommendations in this report.

10.2 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO2

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Update report in relation to the enforcement work carried out by the Trading Standards Service.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

Appendix 1

Multi-agency work

The Trading Standards Service participated in several multi-agency operations with partner agencies during the past calendar year:

Operation Evolve

Operation Evolve Wirral is a project designed to build communities into more prosperous and safer areas resilient to gang-related activity.

In May 2024, Officers from the Trading Standards Service worked in partnership with Merseyside Police and on the co-ordinated day of action, officers seized 92 illegal vapes and 37 packs of illicit cigarettes.

<https://wirralview.com/safe-vibrant-communities/evolve-wirral-chalks-800-arrests-over-first-12-months>

Operation Banger

Op Banger covers the key Halloween /Bonfire period from 28th October until 5th November each year.

Officers work closely with multi-agency partners to ensure retailers do not sell fireworks to persons under 18 years of age. Compliance visits are carried out to all retailers licensed by the Fire Service to sell fireworks. Legal advice guidance will be provided to the businesses.

Operation CeCe

This operation is a collaboration between HMRC and Trading Standards Services to tackle the supply and trade in illegal tobacco. Trade in illegal tobacco undermines legitimate traders, including small, independent shops that serve local communities, and takes funding away from our vital public services. That's why coordinated activity such as Op CeCe is vital to ensure that we are creating a level playing field for businesses and citizens.

The aim of this project is to reduce the demand for illicit tobacco and tackle organised crime gangs which supply businesses with illicit tobacco products.

In the past year the service has seized 16514 cigarettes from Wirral businesses. In line with Wirral Council's enforcement policy warning letters have been sent to the businesses.

Operation Joseph

The Government announced in May 2023 that funds were to be made available to National Trading Standards (NTS) for enhanced work and coordination across England regarding the sales of vapes to young persons (under the age of 18) and the supply of illegal vapes, that are non-compliant with UK legislation. Local authority Trading Standards Services contribute to this project by carrying out enforcement and compliance inspections and seizing non-compliant vapes. In the past year this service has seized 6771 illicit vapes from Wirral businesses. Officers have engaged with the businesses supplying the illicit vapes and in line with Wirral Council's enforcement policy, issued warning letters to the businesses and the businesses have agreed to sign over the illicit products to the Service for forfeiture and destruction. Also, the businesses have signed undertakings to cease and desist from supplying illegal and illicit products.

Operation Sceptre

Operation Sceptre is the national police initiative to tackle knife crime which took place in May 2023. Trading Standards worked in partnership with Merseyside Police to carry out age restricted test purchasing inspections at Wirral 8 businesses. 1 sale was made to a child volunteer.

Prosecutions:

In conjunction with Wirral Council's Legal Services, Trading Standards summonsed the following businesses:

Landscape Gardener:

This prosecution related to a landscape gardener who had taken substantial deposits from consumers and failed to complete work or refund money for work not carried out. The business did not provide the complainants with the required business address as required by the Companies Act 2006 nor a notice of their right to cancel the contract

The case was before Liverpool Crown Court. After a part-heard Trial the defendant pleaded guilty to 4 regulatory offences in relation to the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 for engaging in a commercial practice which contravened the requirements of professional diligence and 9 offences relating to the Companies Act 2006.

The defendant was sentenced to 40 weeks reduced to 38 weeks (5% credit) custody suspended for 18 months plus 150 hours unpaid work & 20 days Rehabilitation Activity Requirement.

The defendant was also the subject of a Proceeds of Crime (POCA) investigation. The Court accepted that the benefit figure derived from the defendant's criminal behaviour was £54571.40. However, the defendant had substantial debts, far in excess of £50k and no realisable assets. The Judge ordered a POCA order in the nominal sum of a £1.00 to be paid within 28 days with a 7-day custody default.

The Judge made an order for compensation for the victims in this case, whilst acknowledging it is woefully inadequate, the order was for £500 per victim totalling £1500.

Landscaper & building company:

This prosecution related to a local business taking money from a Wirral resident to purchase materials to relay a garden with paving, but no such works were carried out and no monies refunded. The complainant was not provided with their statutory cancellation notice nor informed of their right to cancel the contract. No details of the business address were provided to the complainant as required by the Companies Act 2006.

The defendant was summonsed before the Court for offences in relation to the Fraud Act 2006, Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and Companies Act 2006.

At Court, the defendant pleaded guilty to all offences. The Magistrates sentenced the defendant to an 18-month community order with 300 hours unpaid work for the Fraud Act offence plus 30 days RAR. No separate penalty for the regulatory and Companies Act offences. Costs awarded to the Local Authority of £3045.81 plus a victim surcharge of £114.00.

Indian Takeaway

This prosecution relates to a food safety incident at a local takeaway in Wirral. The Service had received a complaint that a resident had suffered an allergic reaction after consuming a takeaway meal from a local business. An officer from the Service visited the business and carried out a formal food standards' test purchase. The officer replicated the order previously placed by the complainant, ordering a vegetable korma meal 'without peanuts. The meal was sent away for analysis by the public analyst who declared that peanut protein was present in the meal.

The Director of the company who had sold the meal to the officer was summonsed before the Court in relation to offences under Food Safety Act 1990, Food Safety and Hygiene Regulations 2013 and Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading

Regulations 2008. He entered guilty pleas at Court and the case has been adjourned for sentencing until October 2024.

Newsagent

This prosecution relates to the sale of an e-cigarette (vape) to a child volunteer who was under the age of 18. The business was summonsed for alleged breaches of S92 of The Families and Children Act 2014 and Regulation 3 of the Nicotine Inhaling Products (Age of Sale and Proxy Purchasing) Regulations 2015 which provides for the prohibition of sale of nicotine products to persons under 18 years of age.

The Magistrates sentenced the defendant to a fine of £500, victim surcharge £200 and awarded costs to the prosecution of £2078.

In other legal enforcement work the Service has engaged with 25 businesses to secure voluntary undertakings in relation to the Enterprise Act 2002 to cease and desist from trading in illicit and illegal products.

Statutory Inspections

The Service undertook 216 inspections during the past year. This included inspections at factories, public houses, petrol stations, retail outlets and farms in relation to variety of statutory functions including weights & measures, food and feed standards and product safety.

Officers engage with the businesses to ensure that the business is trading in a legally compliant manner.

Some of the inspections are carried out as part of national or regional projects, which included:

FSA Feed delivery programme: 18 high risk inspections

Regional Weighbridge Project:

Regional Packaged Goods Project: Wirral was one of 14 local authority's to participate and the project group concluded that "Against the backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis, consumers are being doubly disadvantaged at the checkouts – first through increasing prices and second through the hidden detriment that is short measure.

The results of the project suggest there are problems with short measure products being placed on the market. These have been identified at retail level having been

produced and not identified or rectified at packing level. These packs should not have made it to the marketplace – the presence of them suggests failings in the systems and controls employed by each of the 8 packers. The presence of each short weight pack may also constitute an offence under the Packaged Good Regulations 2006. “

Office of Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) E-scooter Project: In April 2024, the OPSS wrote to all LA CEX requesting support for Trading Standards Services to participate in a project run by the OPSS aimed at tackling fires involving e-bikes and e-scooters, Wirral has carried out compliance visits at local businesses to provide advice and guidance to the business to ensure they supply safe products to consumers.

The results of this national project are still being collated by the OPSS and will be published in due course.

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TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Thursday 19 September 2024

REPORT TITLE:	COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER UPDATE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report has been requested by the Chair of this Committee.

It provides an update on the community asset transfers put into a programme by Members following budget decisions taken by the Council in the financial year 2022/23.

It is to be noted.

This report meets the following priorities in the Wirral Plan 2021-26

- Safe, vibrant communities where people want to live and raise their families.
- A prosperous inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations.

It is a non-key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that this report is noted.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the Community Asset Transfer Programme at the request of the Chair.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 There are no other options to consider as this is an update report on decisions previously taken by the Council, this Committee, Children, Young People and Education Committee and the Policy & Resources Committee.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In setting the Council's budget for 2022/23, Members made decisions to close several libraries (Irby, Pensby, Wallasey Village, Hoylake, Woodchurch, Bromborough, Prenton, and Higher Bebington) two municipal golf courses (Brackenwood and Hoylake) and one Leisure Centre (Woodchurch).
- 3.2 They decided to put these surplus assets into a Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Programme. The Policy & Resources Committee approved an updated Community Asset Transfer Policy on 16 March 2022. A budget allocation was provided for the transfer of the libraries, there was no budget allocated for the transfer of the municipal golf courses and there was a capital sum equal to the then estimated demolition cost of the leisure centre which was available to support a transfer of that asset.
- 3.3 Any transfer decisions were to be based on a viable business plan. All transfers have been done based on a full repairing and insuring lease (normally for 25 years) and the Council retains the freehold ownership of the asset. This means that if any transfers were to fail in the future (and to date none from the 2009-13 CAT Programme, or the 2022/23 Programme have failed) then the asset would return to the Council, who would then decide the next steps.
- 3.4 Decisions on the transfer of any asset, or alternative options, have been made by Members of this Committee, Children, Young People and Education Committee (Higher Bebington library for education purposes) and Policy & Resources Committee.
- 3.5 An internal group of officers, under the then Director of Resources (now the Director of Finance), was formed to progress the asset transfers. This group comprised of representatives from the Programme Management Office, regeneration, assets, legal, finance, neighbourhood services and was supported, for a time, by external consultants to advise on several of the expressions of interest and business plans. To be done well, community asset transfer is resource intensive, but this is repaid by ensuring successful transfers which bring significant community benefits.
- 3.6 Community Asset Transfers are a legal property transaction and can be complex. It is important to spend time ensuring that all the relevant matters relating to a transfer are thoroughly understood by all parties. Officers have worked extensively with those

organisations and groups seeking a transfer of an asset to ensure they have a viable business plan, that assets are in a condition to transfer, that the legal documentation meets the needs of all parties, that there is support available to assist, where this is needed, that legislation (Local Government Act 1972 and Subsidy Control Regulations 2022) is complied with, and that the outcomes of the transfer are agreed. Each transfer is then monitored annually by a member of the Council's Asset Team. The organisation and/or group can discuss any issues with the Council's asset officer at any time.

3.7 The progress of the CAT programme is set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The table below shows the amounts allocated (by capital and revenue) to support the transfer of the former library assets.

Funding Table for CAT Libraries		
Former Library	Total Allocated Capital	Total Allocated Revenue
Bebington	0	60,000
Irby	40,000	20,000
Pensby	67,000	69,476
Prenton	52,000	30,590
Wallasey Village	33,575	22,000
Total	192,575	202,066
Available - Total Original Allocation	500,000	282,000
Difference Remaining	307,425	79,934

4.2 The figures for Irby Library will change when the business plan is brought to this Committee in October 2024

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The terms of reference for the Policy and Resources Committee include to, amongst other matters, consider disposals of assets above £500,000 in value.

5.2 In general the Committee in reaching a decision must consider all relevant considerations and disregard irrelevant considerations and come to a reasonable conclusion. Not to consider alternative uses would expose any decision to legal challenge.

5.3 A relevant consideration is the Council's fiduciary duty to the Council Taxpayer to take account of its interests in maximising income or savings and obtaining the best price reasonably obtainable for the disposal of any asset. The Committee should therefore consider any income or capital receipt forgone because of transferring an

asset for community use. Any financial loss would have to be clearly outweighed by the strength of the community benefits. The Council's current financial position is a relevant factor.

- 5.4 In this regard it is important to ensure that the terms of a community asset transfer do not significantly reduce the savings made, or increased income achieved as a result of the measures already taken by the full Council to fulfil its legal duty to balance its budget.
- 5.5 If the community benefits are unlikely to be realised by a CAT transfer because, for example, of a lack of financial viability or necessary expertise, then they should be given little or no weight in the decision-making process.
- 5.6 The Council is under an additional duty under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable for the disposal of any interest in its land unless the disposal is for a lease for less than seven years. If the proposed lease is for a longer term, then a less than market rent would be lawful if the value of the community benefits outweighed any loss of income.
- 5.7 A further consideration is the Subsidy Control Act 2022 which prohibits subsidies by public bodies to an enterprise (even if not for profit) that offers goods or services on a market. If the financial assistance (e.g. charging a below market rent in a lease) conferred an economic advantage on the selected enterprise that might distort competition with other providers, it would be unlawful unless the advantage were below the "de minimis" level of £315,000 (measured over the length of the proposed lease) or the rigorous requirements for a lawful subsidy under the Act were satisfied. The figure of £315,000 includes any previous financial assistance provided to the recipient by a public body during the past three financial years. Financial assistance would include any future discretionary business rates relief which is not given to its competitors.
- 5.8 Any proposed disposal by the Council of an interest in land that is public open space (i.e. land held for the purpose of public recreation such as public parks or golf courses that are open to the public and not restricted to a private membership) must be advertised in local newspapers for two successive weeks. Any objections received would have to be considered by the Committee before any decision were made on the disposal.
- 5.9 The grant of a lease to a CAT transferee would confer exclusive possession of the land to the organisation. The Council could impose covenants on the lessee e.g. to keep the property in good repair or not to use it for any purposes other than those specified. Those covenants would be enforceable but any decision by the Council to forfeit the lease for non-compliance could be overturned by the Court in its discretion if the lessee sought relief from forfeiture. The Council would in effect lose control of the land for the duration of the lease (and the lessee would have the right to a renewal of the lease on its expiry unless its right were excluded pursuant to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954).
- 5.10 Any disposal of the land for a different use than the one formerly established by the Council would have to be compliant with any legally enforceable covenants imposed

by previous owners or current landlords and with any requirements for planning permission.

- 5.11 If the Committee decided not to proceed with a CAT transfer, decisions on the next steps would then be required.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 The Council has existing staffing and financial resources in place to progress the Community Asset Transfer 2022/23 Budget Programme as set out in this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 Transferring any asset carries a risk that it may not be successful. The Council uses a lease approach and retains the freehold of any asset, so that it will return to the Council if any transfer is not successful.
- 7.2 Under the CAT proposals the Council would be leasing the assets to the relevant organisation and if any transfer failed the asset would return to the Council but only after possible litigation and the Court or the lessee agreeing to the forfeiture of the Lease. Consideration could then be given to the options for the future of the site.
- 7.3 A communications strategy is in place to manage any reputational risks associated with the CAT project.
- 7.4 Any post transfer risks (e.g. ensuring compliance with the lease, maintaining the property etc) will be dealt with by lease provisions and regular annual monitoring of these matters.
- 7.5 A register of all assets transferred will be kept by the Asset Management Team. The annual report to members on the Asset Strategy 2022-27 will report progress on CAT.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Extensive engagement has taken place with all the organisations and groups interested in Community Asset Transfer. There has also been engagement with Ward Members relating to transfers in their ward.

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 It is not considered that the proposed transfer or its alternative will adversely affect any section of the community having protected characteristics. Indeed, it will have positive benefits. Each organisation must have an Equality Policy.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 These are considered in relation to each specific asset.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Transferring assets has community benefits. This can provide positive opportunities and empowerment for local organisations/groups and communities; bring in external investment not available to the Council; create permanent employment opportunities; promote voluntary work; and enable co-location of community activities for local benefits.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - CAT 2022/23 Budget programme update

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Community Asset Transfer Policy March 2022

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Tourism Communities Culture and Tourism Committee	16 June 2022
Report on CAT (stage 1)	
Report on CAT	25 October 2022
Report on CAT	2 February 2023
Report on CAT	9 March 2023
Report on CAT	22 June 2023
Children, Young People and Education Committee	19 July 2023
Policy and Resources Committee	27 July 2023
Policy and Resources Committee	21 November 2023
Policy and Resources Committee	17 July 2024

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER UPDATE

APPENDIX 1

TCCL COMMITTEE 19 September 2024

TRANSFERS COMPLETED

ASSET	UPDATE	STATUS	KEY ACTIONS/ TARGET DATES
Higher Bebington Library. Transfer of building to COOP Academy, Bebington for educational purposes	Following TCCL Committee agreement to transfer, the educational use was agreed by Children, Young People and Education Committee on 19 July 2023. A view has been taken on the covenant with Unilever by both parties Solicitors and the lease documentation has now been sealed by the Council.	Transfer Completed in February 2024.	The COOP Academy have now completed their internal works and the building is expected to be operational from September 2024.
Wallasey Village Library. Transfer to Wallasey Village Library and Community Centre.		Transfer Completed July 2024	The group are now completing their internal grant funded works and following that making arrangements to open.
Woodchurch Library	Members agreed asset can be used by adjacent school to support SEND pupils.	Completed in 2022	
Pensby Library. Transfer to Pioneer People	Building is now open for community uses – café, charity shop and community operated library.	Transfer Completed August 2024.	

TRANSFER IN PROGRESS

ASSET	UPDATE	STATUS	KEY ACTIONS/ TARGET DATES
Prenton Library. "Transfer" to St Stephen's Church	This building is owned by Magenta Living and leased by the Council. The assignment of the lease from the Council to St. Stephen's Church is progressing with Solicitors. Funding Agreement agreed.	Expected completion of assignment of lease and grant funding agreement in September 2024. This will then complete this "transfer".	End of September 2024 for completion.
Irby Library. Transfer to Friends of Irby Library (FOIL)	FOIL have advised that they have concerns about the delivery of their business plan as several items (e.g. cost of insurance) have increased significantly and a number of groups, who have previously expressed interest in using the building, have gone to other venues. Discussions are on-going and it is intended to bring a report to this committee on 17 October 2024 regarding the transfer.	Reviewing business plan and in discussion with local groups.	The intention is to bring a report to this Committee in October 2024.
Brackenwood Golf Course	Following the decision by Brackenwood Community Golf Limited not to progress with the agreed transfer, Policy and Resources on 17 July 2024 resolved the following: 1. The Community Asset Transfer Process for Brackenwood Golf Course not be reopened, but instead continue with the progression of the existing expression of interest from Link Golf UK Ltd. to allow Brackenwood Golf	Awaiting submission of business plan	Business Plan to be submitted by 31 October 2024.

	<p>Club and Link Golf UK Ltd to submit a detailed business plan for the transfer of the asset, by 31 October 2024, for determination by officers and in consultation with the Chair and Party Spokespersons.</p> <p>2. This detailed business plan is to be submitted on the terms set out in the Heads of Terms document agreed between Brackenwood Community Golf Limited and the Council at the Policy and Resources Committee on 27 July 2023. This comprises of an 18-hole golf course, two full size playing pitches (11-a-side), two mini-5-a-side pitches, Bio-diversity Net Gain and community access.</p> <p>3. The exceptional circumstances regarding the Community Asset Transfer of Brackenwood Golf Course to date be noted, and the Committee recognised that all steps contained in the Council agreed Community Asset Transfer Policy would not be adhered to in light of the agreed resolutions above, but that would not set a precedent for future Community Asset Transfers.</p>		
<p>Hoylake Municipal Golf Course. Transfer to Royal and Ancient (R&A)</p>	<p>The R&A continue to work on their business plan. There are significant costs "in the ground" due to drainage issues in the area which are being looked into by specialist consultants. This matter is also aligned with the negotiation of a new agreement for future Open Golf Championships.</p>	<p>Business Plan and Agreement for Future Open Golf Championships under discussion.</p>	<p>Next meeting in September 2024.</p>

ASSETS TAKEN OUT OF CAT PROGRAMME BY MEMBERS OR GROUP WITHDRAWS FROM TRANSFER

ASSET	UPDATE	STATUS	KEY ACTIONS/ TARGET DATES
Bromborough Library and Civic Centre	P&R Committee (23 July 2023) took a decision to dispose of this asset. The CAT is therefore not progressing. This asset is now with Asset Management.	Taken out of CAT Programme by Members.	
Woodchurch Leisure Centre. Group seeking the transfer Woodchurch Wellbeing	P&R Committee on 21 November 2023 decided not to transfer this asset. Asset Management now preparing demolition tenders. Demolition expected to take place in late 2024.	Taken out of CAT process by Members	
Hoylake Library	Business Plan for transfer unviable. Members agreed to market the property for commercial lease as no viable asset transfer opportunity. Building now with Asset Management.	Taken out of CAT process by Members.	
Brackenwood Golf Course. Transfer to Brackenwood Community Golf Limited	In February 2024, Brackenwood Community Golf Limited advised the Council that they could not progress the agreed transfer of the asset for financial reasons in the current economic climate. A report advising members of this was scheduled for P&R in June 2024, but delayed due to the calling of the General Election. The report will now be considered by P&R on 17 July 2024.	Brackenwood Community Golf Limited have withdrawn from the agreed transfer.	

Heritage Champion Report to Tourism Committee September 19th 2024

I wish to report the outstanding success of the Upton Viking Festival. This “historical model”, will hopefully be continued in the future, in maybe in other historic periods and other events on Wirral. Thank you to the Upton Community Groups, and others, who make the Viking festival a great success, every year..

Heritage Open Days, what can I say? From 6th to 14th September, run by the outstanding Wirral History and Heritage Association, who produce so much, with so few resources. Thank you to the site owners, who open their buildings and places. This has been going on, hugely successfully, for many years now, on Wirral. The diverse nature of these events, add’s greatly, to these history and Culture experiences.

The introduction of a “Wirral Guides Training Scheme”, has been a priority, for a number of reasons. We wish to tap into the rich knowledge, experience and enthusiasm of established Historian’s and Guides involved with Wirral Heritage. This scheme will add in appropriate training in an number of areas, with establishes training organisations, and added back up when needed, on the diverse history of Wirral. I have a meeting to discuss this with Officers soon. Many visitors to Merseyside, do not visit Wirral, we hope this initiative will be an important move forward, with increasing visitor numbers all the time.

I will have other future meetings with Officers, on progress with our Blue Plaque Scheme, as we wish to add more names of importance.

I have asked for a meeting with Planning over buildings at risk, and also important heritage buildings that are not listed by Historic England. Also the need to have more structures added. The ongoing projects, Battle of Brunanburh and Egremont Bloomery (Ancient ironworking site) with Wirral Archaeology.

Monitoring, progress on community/Heritage Group Street naming,

Continuing to Champion the work and dedication of Heritage/Culture Volunteers. Without this, we could never have achieved the numerous successes, that Wirral has been credited for.

I am hoping to see a much more modern website dedicated to encouraging Tourism on Wirral. I will be having future talks with Officers.

Working closely with the Birkenhead Park Committee and Volunteers, as we move forward on World Heritage Site status, and other projects.



TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Thursday 19 September 2024

REPORT TITLE:	TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
REPORT OF:	CHAIR OF TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

REPORT SUMMARY

Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee, in conjunction 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 Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is recommended to note and comment on the proposed Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee work programme.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To ensure Members of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 A number of workplan formats were explored, with the current framework 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:

- The Council Plan
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Council

3.2 Terms of reference

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee has responsibility for customer contact, community development and community services, including all of those functions related to community safety and also those regarding the promotion of community engagement. The Committee is charged by full Council to undertake responsibility for the Council's role and functions:-

- a. for customer and community contact services, including various offices and meeting points, customer contact centres and advice and transaction services
- b. community engagement, incorporating the Council's approach to equalities, inclusion communities, neighbourhoods and the voluntary and charitable sector, community wealth building and social value;
- c. in considering options and develop proposals for neighbourhood arrangements, including capacity building, use of assets and devolving powers and services to neighbourhoods;
- d. for the provision and management of leisure, sports and recreation facilities;
- e. for delivery of the authority's library and museums services, including but not limited to art galleries, historic buildings and their gardens and the functions of the Council regarding public records, and the Council's

f. concerning tourism, the arts, culture and heritage, including provision of theatre, entertainments, conferences and events;

g. in relation to bereavement services and support to the Coroner's service;

h. regarding community safety, crime and disorder and all associated matters; (i) for trading standards and environmental health, including but not limited to:

- consumer protection;
- product safety;
- fair trading;
- metrology;
- food standards and animal health;
- air pollution control;
- health and safety at work (except in so far as it relates to the Council as an employer);
- public conveniences (ix) food safety; and
- control of nuisances;

j. in respect of emergency planning and community resilience (community, regulatory and asset services);

k. providing a view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management in relation to the Committee's functions; and

l. undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to the above functions.

m. in respect of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the functions to:

- review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions; and
- make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions

Overview and Scrutiny

The Committee's role includes an overview scrutiny approach to its responsibilities which shall be conducted in accordance with the overview and scrutiny means of working set out at Part 4(4)(B) of this Constitution. As part of its work programming the Committee shall consider:

- a. Overview and Policy Development -The Committee may undertake enquiries and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development and may appoint advisors and assessors to assist them in this process. They may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations.
- b. Overview and Scrutiny – The Committee holds responsibility:
- for scrutinising and reviewing decisions made or actions taken by the Authority in so far as they have an impact on the role or functions of the Committee, its policies, budget and service delivery;
 - for the overview and scrutiny of external organisations whose services or activities affect the Borough of Wirral or any of its inhabitants where this does not fall within the role or remit of another service Committee or where it relates to cross cutting issues; and
 - for those overview and scrutiny functions in respect of crime and disorder as set out in paragraph 6.4(m) above which are to include the establishment and
 - functioning of joint arrangements as set out at paragraph 15 of this Section
- c. Stakeholder Engagement - The Committee may invite stakeholders to address the committee on issues of local concern and/or answer questions in so far as it impacts directly or indirectly on the role of functions 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 IMPLICATIONS

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

REPORT AUTHOR: **Daphne Courtenage**
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email:

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee Work Programme

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Constitution
Forward Plan
The Council's transformation programme

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Standing item.	



**TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

Contact Officer: Daphne Courtenage

19 September 2024 Agenda

Item	Key Decision	Lead Officer
Wirral Council's Trading Standards Service	No	Gill Vicary
Floral Pavilion – Future Operating Model	No	Andy McCartan
Update on CAT (Budget 2022/23)	No	David Ball
Birkenhead Park: World Heritage Project Update and Financial Resourcing	Yes	Rob Belcher/Matthew Humble

UPCOMING KEY DECISIONS – WAITING TO BE SCHEDULED

Item	Lead Departmental Officer	Wirral Plan Priority
Leisure Estate - Facilities Investment Strategy (following workshop)	Andy McCartan	Healthy and Active lives

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

Item	Approximate timescale	Lead Officer
Community Asset Transfer former Irby Library	October 2024	David Ball
Heritage Strategy including Battle of Brunanburh	October 2024	Jane Morgan/ Becky Lowry
Liverpool Visitor Economy Partnership update	November 2024	Jane Morgan/ Becky Lowry
Environmental Health Annual Update	November 2024	Deeta Cooper/Victoria Chadderton
Revocation & Update of Smoke Control Areas – Public Consultation Feedback	November 2024	Jennifer McKeown/Deeta Cooper
Public Conveniences and Changing Places Update	Early 2025	TBC

STANDING ITEMS AND MONITORING REPORTS

Item	Reporting Frequency	Lead Departmental Officer
Financial Monitoring	Quarterly – Next due October 2024	Carla Wright/Julie Frowe
Performance reports (Community Safety)	Annually – next January 2025	Mark Camborne/ Nancy Clarkson
Customer Experience Strategy update	Annual – next March 2025	Fergus Adams
Performance reports (Leisure/Libraries/Museums)	Annually – next July 2025	Andy McCartan
Annual Air Quality (ASR) update	Annual – November 2024	Deeta Cooper/ Jennifer McKeown
Third Sector Report	Annual - Last November 2023	TBC
Heritage Champion – Update	Every meeting	Jane Morgan/Rebecca Lowry

WORK PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE COMMITTEE

Item	Format	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Spotlight sessions / workshops				
Budget Monitoring	Workshop	2024	Carla Wright/ Julie Frowe/ Matt Bennett	Date of first meeting TBC
Leisure Estate - Facilities Investment Strategy - to present outcomes of consultant exercise	Workshop	TBC	Andy McCartan	
Playing Pitch update strategy (to go to ERH as responsible Committee, with comments from ECET and TCCL. Briefing note being drafted to outline process)	Briefing note	TBC	David Ball/ Andrew Fraser	
Communications effectiveness	Briefing note	TBC	Gail Mooney, Nancy Clarkson	

Consultations	Briefing note	TBC	Gail Mooney, Nancy Clarkson	
Air Quality Strategy	Briefing note	TBC	Victoria Chadderton (Health Protection)	
Corporate scrutiny / Other				
Risk (at request of Audit Committee)	Workshop	Early in Municipal Year	TBC	

Schedule of meetings:

- 19 September 2024
- 17 October 2024
- 28 November 2024
- 23 January 2025
- 6 March 2025

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Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee – Terms of Reference

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee has responsibility for customer contact, community development and community services, including all of those functions related to community safety and also those regarding the promotion of community engagement.

The Committee is charged by full Council to undertake responsibility for the Council's role and functions:-

- (a) for customer and community contact services, including various offices and meeting points, customer contact centres and advice and transaction services
- (b) community engagement, incorporating the Council's approach to equalities, inclusion communities, neighbourhoods and the voluntary and charitable sector, community wealth building and social value;
- (c) in considering options and develop proposals for neighbourhood arrangements, including capacity building, use of assets and devolving powers and services to neighbourhoods;
- (d) for the provision and management of leisure, sports and recreation facilities;
- (e) for delivery of the authority's library and museums services, including but not limited to art galleries, historic buildings and their gardens and the functions of the Council regarding public records, and the Council's
- (f) concerning tourism, the arts, culture and heritage, including provision of theatre, entertainments, conferences and events;
- (g) in relation to bereavement services and support to the Coroner's service;
- (h) regarding community safety, crime and disorder and all associated matters;
- (i) for trading standards and environmental health, including but not limited to:
 - (i) consumer protection;
 - (ii) product safety;
 - (iii) fair trading;
 - (iv) metrology;
 - (v) food standards and animal health;
 - (vi) air pollution control;
 - (vii) health and safety at work (except in so far as it relates to the Council as an employer);
 - (viii) public conveniences;
 - (ix) food safety; and
 - (x) control of nuisances;
- (j) in respect of emergency planning and community resilience (community, regulatory and asset services);
- (k) providing a view of performance, budget monitoring and risk management in relation to the Committee's functions; and
- (l) undertaking the development and implementation of policy in relation to the Committee's functions, incorporating the assessment of outcomes, review of effectiveness and formulation of recommendations to the Council, partners and other bodies, which shall include any decision relating to the above functions.
- m) in respect of the Police and Justice Act 2006, the functions to:

- (i) review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions; and
- (ii) make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions

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

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