



Local Strategic Partnership Executive Board (not a public meeting)

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|---------------|--|
| Date: | Wednesday, 20 January 2010 |
| Time: | 5.00 pm |
| Venue: | Mersey Maritime, Monks Ferry, Birkenhead |

Contact Officer: Lucy Beed
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AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME , APOLOGIES, INTRODUCTIONS**
- 2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Pages 1 - 6)**
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 4. LAA REVIEW 2009 & LAA REFRESH 2010/11 (Pages 7 - 14)**
Richard Perry, GONW & Carolyn Curr, Wirral Council
- 5. LAA PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - EXCEPTIONS (2 QUARTER RED) (Pages 15 - 34)**
- 6. LTP3 AND ENGAGEMENT WITH LSP'S (Pages 35 - 38)**
- 7. WIRRAL EQUALITIES FORUM - PRESENTATION (Pages 39 - 42)**
Jaccui Cross, Wirral Council & Michael Chantler, Wirral University Teaching Hospital
- 8. NHS WIRRAL STRATEGIC PLAN - PRESENTATION**
Kathy Doran, NHS Wirral
- 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS: VENUE - MERSEY MARITIME

Wednesday 17 February 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 31 March 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 19 May 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 30 June 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 11 August 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 29 September 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 10 November 2010, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 19 January 2011, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 16 February 2011, 5.00 - 7.00pm
Wednesday 30 March 2011, 5.00 - 7.00pm

Agenda Item 2

Minutes - Local Strategic Partnership Executive Board

(Not a public meeting)

Wednesday 11th November 2009

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Present | |
| Chair | Cllr Steve Foulkes (Leader, Wirral Council), |
| Public Sector | Cllr Simon Holbrook (Deputy Leader, Wirral Council and Leader of Liberal Democrat Group) Cllr Jeff Green (Leader, Conservative Group, Wirral Council), Stephen Maddox (Chief Executive, Wirral Council), Superintendent Chief Superintendent Jon Ward, (Merseyside Police), Gillian Thomas (Job Centre Plus), Paul Gibson (Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service), Kathy Doran (Chief Executive, NHS Wirral), Ian Davidson (Acting Chief Executive for Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust), Alberto Bertalli (Private Sector), Pat Higgins (Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) |
| Voluntary Sector | Clint Agard (Wirral Voluntary and Community Sector Network), Myrtle Lacey (Wirral Voluntary and Community Sector Network) |
| Private Sector | |
| Advisors | Richard Perry (GONW), |
| Secretariat | Wirral Council - Jim Wilkie (Deputy Chief Executive), Carolyn Curr (Head of Policy and Performance), Kevin Adderley (Head of Strategic Development), Marie Armitage (Joint Director of Public Health, Wirral PCT & Wirral Council), Howard Cooper (Director of Children's Services), Alan Stennard (Director of Regeneration), John Webb, (Director of Adult Social Services), Jane Morgan (Corporate Policy Manager), Lucy Beed (Corporate Performance Manager), Pete Molyneux (Chief Accountant), Brian Simpson (Wirral Partnership Homes) |
| Other | |
| Apologies | Gary Foulkes (Jobcentre Plus), Mike Hagen (Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service), Len Richards (Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) |

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Minute 174 - WELCOME, APOLOGIES, INTRODUCTIONS

Minute 175 - ACTIONS AND AGREEMENTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minute 176 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute 177 - WIRRAL LSP – REPORT ON WIRRAL'S RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Minute 178 – WIRRAL LAA 2008/11 PERFORMANCE & RISK REPORT

Minute 179 – CAA – LATEST POSITION REPORT

Minute 180 – CAA – SELF EVALUATION

Minute 181 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Minute 182 – DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Minute 174 - WELCOME, APOLOGIES, INTRODUCTIONS

Apologies received as stated above.

The Chair welcomed Carolyn Curr and John Webb to the meeting.

Minute 175 - ACTIONS AND AGREEMENTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- Minute 167 – Next LSP Assembly meeting is in the process of being rescheduled.
- Minute 169 - Peter Forrester has provided Jon Ward feedback on anti-social behaviour not receiving a green flag in the 2008/09 CAA assessment.
- Minute 172 LAA funding report was deferred at the last meeting as requested by the Chair pending further information provided by the Deputy Chief Executive relating to Myrtle Lacey enquiry regarding the availability of funding for welfare benefits posts in the community and voluntary sector and that no confirmation had been received regarding this issue. This report is covered in item 6 on the agenda.
- Any other business - The Chair at the previous meeting requested that enquiries be made to invite members of the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses to attend this board. This action has now been completed and representatives have accepted and will attend the next board meeting.

Minute Decision : Resolved that -

- 1) The minutes of the last meeting be accepted as a true record

Minute 176 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared

Minute 177 - WIRRAL LSP – REPORT ON WIRRAL’S RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Jim Wilkie introduced the report to outline the latest impact of global economic conditions on Wirral’s economy, and identify the steps taken by the Council and its partners to respond to the recession through the development of a Recovery Plan.

J Wilkie advised that the Plan will contain measures to mitigate the impact of the recession but at the same time maintain momentum on the Investment Strategy.

Clint Agard informed the board that Wirral Change has seen an increase in clients finding work. In addition, Future Job Fund vacancies have been filled at Wirral Change.

Cllr Green requested information about whether the partnership was geared up to deal with increases in mental health issues linked to the recession. Marie Armitage

responded that there was no evidence that demand was increasing for mental health services, however this is being monitored. Ian Davidson commented that NHS Wirral has invested significantly in mental health services and therefore there will be capacity to deal with any increase in demand.

Cllr Green requested information regarding levels of repossession. Alan Stennard commented that additional finance has been made available to address this issue and that data would be circulated to the board.

J Wilkie responded to a number of questions raised relating to the current position of a number of local businesses which impact on Wirral's economy.

H Cooper circulated information related to the apprenticeship and the impact on the NEET cohort.

Minute Decision:

Resolved that -

1) Executive Board members agreed to:

- Note this latest report on Wirral's response to the current economic conditions.
- Note progress towards the development of a Recovery Plan, aimed at minimising the impact of the recession on Wirral residents and businesses, and planning for future recovery.

Minute 178 – QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE & RISK REPORT

Jim Wilkie presented this report and advised that the report sets out progress of the LAA priorities at the half year stage and will inform Government Office North West's annual review of Wirral's Local Area agreement.

Key partnership achievements include:

- LSP response to the economic downturn and regular monitoring reports. Recovery plan now to be implemented.
- Robust negotiations for the LAA improvement targets – Audit Commission has used the dragon's den approach as an example of best practice
- Robust performance management framework including delivery plans and monitoring of risks
- Development of partnership comprehensive engagement strategy

J Wilkie advised that the overall position is very good with 72% (23) of indicators on target, 16% (5) are assessed as amber, and 13% (4) have missed the target by more than 10% (red). The report also includes additional section to demonstrate how the partnership is tackling inequalities.

J Wilkie requested that thematic leads provide feedback on performance issues raised within the report.

J Webb informed the board that the partnership is optimistic regarding achieving target relating to self directed support. Wirral's approach is being used as a national exemplar.

There was some discussion regarding the need for all partners to better understand the personalisation agenda.

H Cooper circulated information related to the apprenticeship and Connexions activity and the impact on the NEET cohort. H Cooper also indicated that he would report to a future meeting of the board the impact on national developments on apprentice programmes and the implication for Wirral.

Discussion also took place regarding the levels of NEET in the most deprived wards and the focus of activity to address this. The board welcomed the additional sections regarding narrowing the gap within the report and requested that the data be updated as part of future reports.

Discussion took place regarding the effectiveness and impact of relevant strategies and resource allocation.

H Cooper gave an update on performance issues relating to NI 68.

K Adderley gave an update on performance issues for NI 151 / 154.

Cllr Holbrook asked for consideration to be given in future reports to those indicators currently assessed as amber and the potential direction of travel.

Cllr Green requested for updates on a regular basis for annual indicators.

J Wilkie advised the board that part 3 of the report provides an overarching risk register for the partnership and this has been developed by the LSP management group. These risks will be taken forward as an overarching risk register by the LSP management group and reported quarterly to the board. Board members were requested to identify any further risks for inclusion.

J Wilkie advised the board that part 4 of the report advised the board that robust delivery plans have been developed for each improvement priority area. It is recommended that the delivery plans are managed and monitored by the relevant thematic partnership group. Should an LAA improvement target underperforms for a period of two or more consecutive quarters then it is recommended that the relevant delivery plan is reported to the LSP Executive Board for consideration and to identify any further action that can be taken.

Minute Decision :
Resolved that -

1) Executive Board members:

- Future reports provide consideration of amber performance indicators and that proxy measures / contextual information be included in future performance reports for annual indicators.
- Review the second quarter performance and risk information contained within this report and identify any areas for further action.
- Agree that delivery plans are reported to the LSP Executive Board for

improvement targets which under perform consecutively for a period of two or more quarters.

Minute 179 – LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE REWARD GRANT REPORT

Lucy Beed presented this report to outline the latest expected performance reward grant that Wirral will receive. £7.905m is expected to be achieved in performance reward grant which equates to 80% of the £9.824m available.

J Wilkie advised that the Corporate Policy Team within the Council's Corporate Services Department has to date provided essential resources for coordinating and developing the Local Area Agreement (LAA). This team has previously received funding from pump priming grant and match funding from NHS Wirral to fund temporary posts within the team. This provides funding for these posts until July 2010. It is requested that the remaining £108,546 is allocated to further extend these vital posts for the remainder of the 2008/11 LAA to support the work of the partnership and delivery of the LAA.

M Lacey requested that unallocated funding be communicated across the partnership. J Wilkie confirmed that the LSP Management Group and LSP Executive Board receive regular reports regarding unallocated funding.

The board discussed the need to ensure that the contribution made by the third sector is fully reflected in partnership activity. L Beed advised that further work can be taken to review the voluntary and community sector's contribution to partnership delivery in the LAA delivery plans.

Minute Decision : Resolved that -

1) Executive Board members:

- Review LAA delivery plans to ensure the contribution of the third sector is fully reflected.
- Note the expected performance reward grant and approve the indicative allocations outlined in section 4.3.
- Note the final position of the PPG expenditure and approve the following requests:
 - Allocate the remaining £2,074 pump priming grant to NHS Wirral as a contribution for delivery of the BME smoking cessation target;
 - Allocate the remaining £108,546 council contribution to the LAA is used to continue to fund temporary posts within the council's Corporate Policy Team.

Minute 180 – COMPREHENSIVE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Jim Wilkie presented this report to provide Wirral LSP Executive Board with an

update on the progress of the Comprehensive Engagement Strategy (CES) following the end of the three month consultation period.

The council has taken the lead in developing this key document and the board is asked to endorse the final version of the CES attached as Appendix A.

Cllr Green requested confirmation that the Conservative Group's comments have been received. J Wilkie confirmed that this will be followed up.

Minute Decision :
Resolved that -

- 1) The LSP Executive Board agreed to endorse the final draft of the Comprehensive Engagement Strategy.

Minute 181 – COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

Jim Wilkie provided a verbal update to the board and advised that the partnership has submitted its appeal for the red flag for safeguarding vulnerable adults and is awaiting confirmation that the partnership has met the grounds for appeal.

J Webb circulated a report regarding the progress that had been made in relation to the red flag for safeguarding adults.

J Wilkie informed the board that final CAA results will be provided to the partnership on the 4th December under embargoed and published on the 10th December. The partnership team will take forward the self evaluation work including the findings of CAA into a work programme.

J Wilkie thanked all partners for their support and involvement in the CAA process.

Minute Decision :
Resolved that -

- 1) Executive Board Members agreed to develop a work programme on the partnership's self evaluation and CAA findings.

Minute 182 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Kevin Adderley provided a verbal update to the board regarding the consultation of the core strategy and advised that consultation documents would be circulated in early January 2010.

Minute 183 – DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- **Wednesday 20 January 2010, 5.00 – 7.00pm**
- Wednesday 17 February 2010, 5.00 – 7.00pm
- Wednesday 31 March 2010, 5.00 – 7.00pm

WIRRAL LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP – EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY 20th JANUARY 2010

WIRRAL LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT ANNUAL REVIEW

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the outcome of the Annual Review discussion at the LSP Management Group, 6th January 2010. Senior Officers from the Partnership were joined by Government Office for the North West to discuss the progress that the Partnership has made in improving its governance and delivery arrangements and in delivering the Local Area Agreement (LAA). These discussions were informed by the performance information considered by the Board on 11th November 2009 and the outcomes of CAA.
- 1.2 The LSP Executive Board is also asked to note the designated National Indicators in Wirral's LAA that are to be 'refreshed' for 2010/11 and the timetable for doing so.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The publication of The Local Performance Framework in 2008 set out the arrangements for performance managing the delivery of Local Area Agreements. This is termed 'The Annual Performance Cycle' and places LSPs at the centre of this process. The completion of the first Comprehensive Area Assessment in December meant that, for the first time, the Annual Performance Cycle fell sequentially into place (copy attached as appendix A to this report).
- 2.2 The LAA / LSP Annual Review process enables the LSP to discuss with GONW the outcomes of CAA alongside progress on delivering priorities in the Local Area Agreement. The focus of these discussions is on identifying partnership priorities for the coming year and identifying any future support requirements for delivery of these priorities. Guidance from Government is clear that the Review process should not place any unnecessary bureaucratic burden on partnerships and should draw on existing performance information and the outcomes arising from CAA. The Review discussions at the LSP Management Group therefore drew from Wirral's Area Assessment, published by the Audit Commission, December and from the LAA Performance and Risk report, presented to the Executive Board, 11th November 2009.

3. LAA / LSP ANNUAL REVIEW FINDINGS

3.1 What's working well?

The Review considered the current Partnership arrangements which were felt to be operating more effectively due to:

- Improved governance and delivery structures

- Development of a Comprehensive Engagement Strategy as a framework to move forward
 - Formal adoption of the Sustainable Community Strategy and framework for reviewing partnership delivery of Wirral's long term vision
 - A performance management culture that focussed on addressing key challenges,
 - Improved analytical information supporting the performance framework
- 3.2 The half year performance and risk report highlighted the following indicators as achieving targets and where good progress is being made:
- NI 15 – Serious violent crime
 - NI 20 – Assault with injury
 - NI 39 – Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates
 - NI 55 – Obesity amongst primary school age children in Reception Year
 - NI 123 – Stopping smoking
 - NI 156 – Number of households living in temporary accommodation
 - NI 192 – Household waste recycled and composted
 - NI 195 a-d – Improved street and environmental cleanliness, good progress has been made particularly to reduce inequalities within the borough.
- 3.3 Areas which were emphasised in the CAA area assessment as good performance included the following priority areas which were judged by the joint inspectorate to be performing well:
- Response to the Recession
 - Crime and Community Safety
 - Children's Services
 - Recycling
- 3.4 The above priority areas will continue to be closely monitored by the LSP Executive board through the regular performance and risk reports presented to the board.
- 3.5 Areas for improvement
- The area assessment element of CAA for Wirral identified the following as priority areas of activity for the LSP over the next year:
- Adult Safeguarding
 - Health Inequalities
 - Tackling Inequalities
 - Impact of Recession
- 3.6 Additionally, the half year LAA performance and risk report presented to the Board in November 2009 identified indicators assessed as red as follows:
- NI 68 Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment
 - NI 117 NEET
 - NI 130 Social Care Clients receiving self directed support
 - NI 151 Overall employment rate

- NI 153 Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods
- NI 154 Net additional homes provided

3.7 The Review considered each of these areas and identified a significant amount of partnership activity already underway. Discussions will be ongoing with GONW and sector support organisations to determine any additional support that may be required to assist delivery.

The following table outlines the review findings for each area and Wirral's Partnership response:

| Area for improvement | Review Finding | Partnership response |
|--|--|--|
| Adult Safeguarding | <p>Current activity should be sufficient to bring performance back onto track.</p> <p>Support is available from Department of Health staff in GONW.</p> | <p>Additional resources and training now available should improve performance.</p> <p>This will remain a priority for the Partnership.</p> |
| Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment | <p>Current activity should be sufficient to bring performance back onto track.</p> <p>Support is available from Department of Children, Schools and Families staff in GONW.</p> | <p>Additional resources, training and data flow improvements should address performance issues.</p> <p>This will remain a priority for the partnership and is already subject to regular monitoring by the LSP Executive Board through the quarterly performance and risk reports.</p> |
| Impact of the recession | <p>The Review concluded that the impact and recovery from the recession would have a significant impact on the Partnership's ability to successfully address a range of priorities including NEET, Worklessness and Housing.</p> <p>Despite Partnership efforts, concern remains about the two worklessness indicators – NI 151 and NI153 – and there is an opportunity, reflecting the national difficulties caused by recession, for the Partnership to renegotiate targets for these two indicators. There is a similar opportunity to renegotiate NI 154 to reflect the adverse impact that the recession has had on the housing market.</p> | <p>The Partnership is in the process of developing and implementing a recovery plan which will be regularly reported to the LSP Executive Board.</p> <p>The impact of the recession and partnership response is subject to a regular report to the LSP Executive Board and a partnership group has been established.</p> <p>Targets will be subject to refresh negotiations.</p> |

| Area for improvement | Review Finding | Partnership response |
|---|---|---|
| Young people not in education, employment or training | NEET performance is improving against a very difficult economic backdrop, vindicating the Partnership's decision to focus Working Neighbourhood Funding very specifically on tackling worklessness, for example, the successful Apprenticeship Scheme. | This will remain a priority for the partnership and is already subject to regular monitoring by the LSP Executive Board through the quarterly performance and risk reports. |
| Health inequalities | The importance of Tackling Health Inequalities was covered during the Review, particularly the challenge faced by the Partnership in reducing premature mortality, rated as amber risk at quarter two. This area should continue to be a priority issue for the LSP over the next year. | The Partnership has approved a health inequalities action plan which will regularly reported to the LSP Executive Board. This will remain a priority for the partnership. |
| Tackling inequalities | The Review discussed the progress that the Partnership was making in tackling inequalities generally within the Borough and that it should consider how it could be more explicit about whether and how its activities were addressing inequalities. | The quarterly performance and risk reports include specific focus regarding how the partnership is tackling inequalities within Wirral. Further work will be undertaken to define how partnership activity is narrowing the gap. |
| Self directed support | Pilot phase ready to be rolled out. | This will remain a priority for the partnership and is already subject to regular monitoring by the LSP Executive Board through the quarterly performance and risk reports. |

3.8 The review concluded that the LAA priorities will continue to be regularly reported to the LSP Executive Board with specific focus on the following areas:

- Tackling Health Inequalities
- Impact of the recession
- Adult Safeguarding
- NEET
- Self Directed Support for Social Care Clients

3.9 It is furthermore proposed that a work programme for the LSP Executive Board be developed by the LSP Partnership Team to ensure that findings from the LAA / LSP review and the CAA are addressed by the Partnership.

4. LAA Refresh

4.1 Due to the impact of recession, Government and the Local Government Association reached agreement last year that all local areas should have the opportunity to revisit the targets for a small number of economy based targets as part of this year's LAA Review. For Wirral, these indicators are:

- NI 151 – Overall employment rate
- NI 153 – Working age people claiming out of work benefit in the worst performing neighbourhoods
- NI 154 – Net additional homes provided
- NI 155 – Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
- NI 171 - New business registration rate

4.2 Negotiations are underway with GONW and should be concluded by 17th February 2010 at the latest. Partners are asked to ensure that the Refreshed LAA is formally adopted by 12th March 2010. The refresh will also be an opportunity to revise any baseline data where latest information is now available. The refreshed LAA will be signed by CLG Secretary of State on 31st March 2010. A further progress report on the refresh negotiations will be presented to the LSP Executive Board in February 2010.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The LSP Executive Board is recommended to:

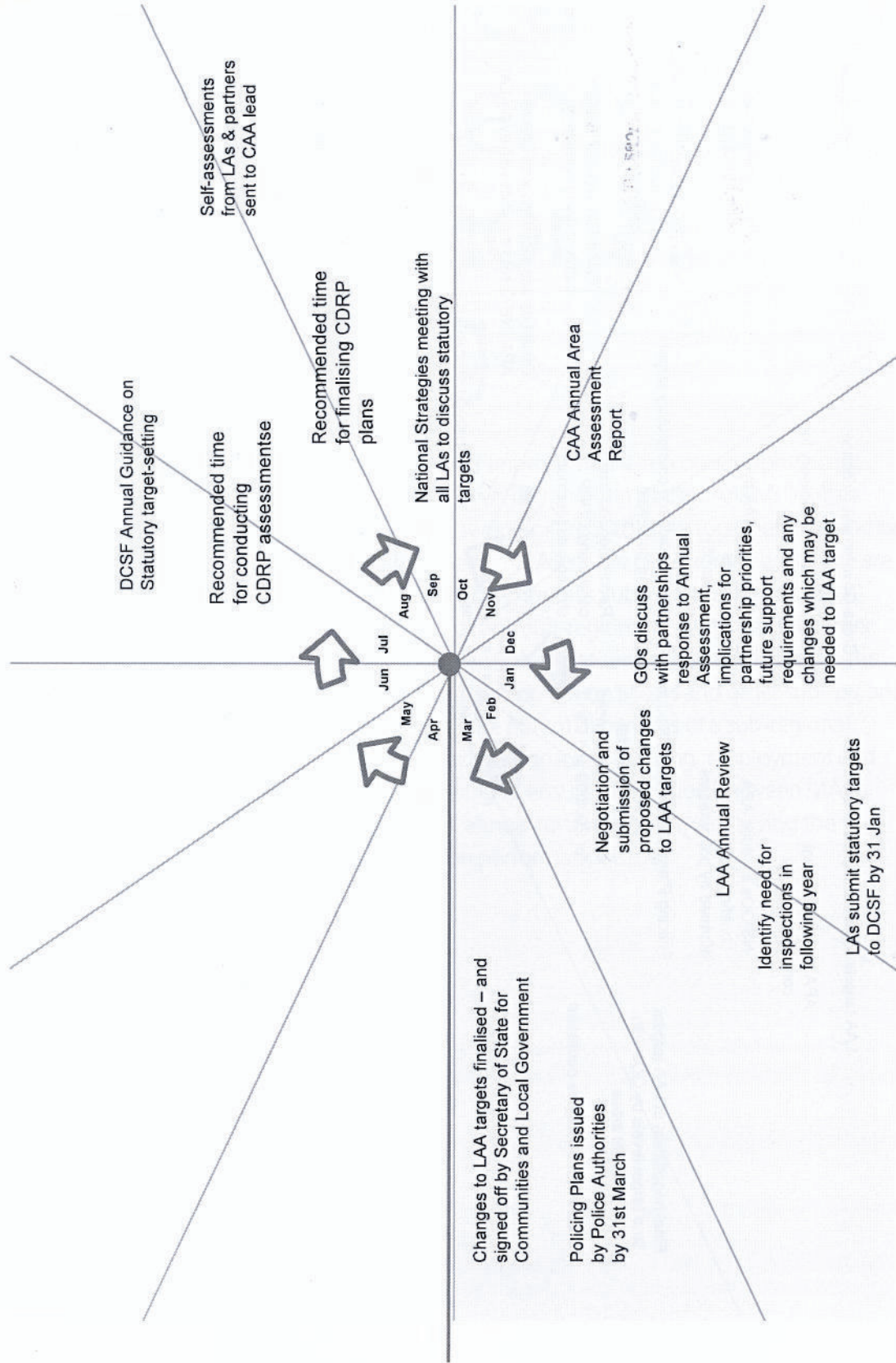
- I. Acknowledge the significant successes of the Partnership during 2009/10.
- II. Consider the conclusions of the LAA/LSP Review and confirm that the priorities identified will be the focus of Partnership activity over the coming year, and agree that a work programme for the LSP Executive Board will be developed on this basis and reported to a future board meeting for approval.
- III. Note the process for renegotiating the limited number of economic indicators.
- IV. Consider what further support the Partnership may require to deliver its priorities.

Carolyn Curr, Head of Policy and Performance, Wirral Council
Richard Perry, Locality Manager, Government Office for the North West

This report was prepared by Richard Perry and Carolyn Curr who can be contacted on 0151 224 6402 and 0151 691 8152 respectively

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Annex B: The Annual Performance Cycle 2009/10



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Wirral Local Strategic Partnership Performance Management - Exceptions

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Title: | National Indicator (NI) 68 – Referrals to children’s social care going on to initial assessment |
| Date: | 12th January 2010 |

1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report presents to the LSP Executive board the current position with regard to the performance of NI 68 - Referrals to children’s social care going on to initial assessment - following two quarters where the target was reported as red.

2 Background

2.1 The LSP Executive Board agreed at its meeting of the 11th November 2009 that should an LAA improvement target underperform for a period of two or more consecutive quarters then the relevant delivery plan / progress report will be reported to a subsequent board meeting for consideration and to identify any further action to be taken.

3 Introduction

3.1 This National Performance Indicator measures the percentage of referrals made to Children’s Social Care which progress to an Initial Assessment. The LAA target for the local authority is to increase the percentage to 72% by 31 March 2011.

3.2 Definition

The calculation is the percentage of the number of children referred into Children’s Social Care during the year – 2,677, who went on to receive an Initial Assessment during the year – 1,732 (31 December 2009 figures). Performance at the end of Quarter 3 is 64.7% (an increase from 60.4% at the end of Quarter 2).

A referral is defined as a request for services to be provided by Children’s Social Care. These are for children previously unknown, or who have previously received services and their cases have been closed. Referrals are frequently from professionals, such as health, education or the Police, but the definition is broad and includes for example self referrals, or anonymous referrals.

Local authorities will make an “initial consideration” to decide when looking at the details of the referral, whether there are concerns about the child’s health and development and / or potential harm that justifies an Initial Assessment. The Initial Assessment is a brief assessment of the child’s needs, to be carried out by



Children's Social Care within a maximum of 7 working days from the date of the referral.

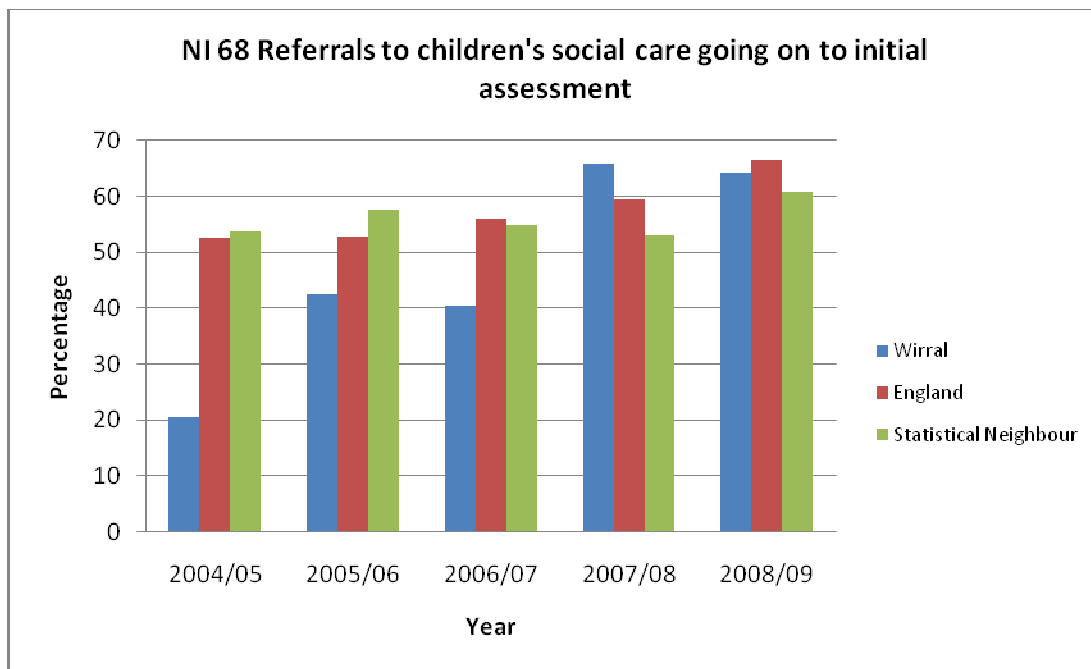
3.3 Rationale

It is important that local authorities respond to and address concerns in a timely and efficient way and ensure that all referrals to Children's Social Care are followed up where appropriate.

This indicator is a proxy for several issues: the appropriateness of referrals coming into Children's Social Care, which can show whether local agencies are working well together; and the thresholds which are being applied in Children's Social Care at a local level.

The revised Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance, published for consultation in December 2009 sets out how "over time, as a consistent understanding of local thresholds for referrals are developed, and the overall quality of those referrals improves, there will be an increasing correlation between referrals received and initial assessments undertaken (recommendation 19)".

3.4 Position



4 Learning from regional best practice

Government Office North West (GONW) in partnership with the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) commissioned a project to consider current causes and forces driving practice and performance in respect of children accessing appropriate support. The Project: *Making a Difference to the lives of Children across the North West, Pathways to Support* considered each of the relevant National Indicators (including NI 68), drawing evidence from the three authorities with the highest and three with the lowest performance to extrapolate what led to best practice, and the forces mitigating against this. The report was produced in November 2009. Regarding NI 68 they concluded that lower conversion rates suggest that referrals are not made appropriately and that resources are wasted in processing these. The aim should be for almost 100% conversion, provided it was clear that all

authorities were adopting the same response to levels of need and risk. One authority with the highest conversion rate attributed it to the successful implementation of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), embedding early intervention services and effective duty systems.

Other authorities identified the following as positive forces:

- Reduction in the numbers of referrals through greater clarity of thresholds with partners
- Development and implementation of a strategy to respond to Domestic Violence
- Appropriate signposting at first contact, reducing unnecessary referral rates
- Appropriate decision making at referral
- Effective multi-agency assessment teams

The following have been identified as adverse forces:

- Lack of resources
- High caseloads
- Impact of DV referrals

They concluded that threshold criteria, clearly setting out what constitutes an appropriate referral, good multi-agency working together at Level 3 (vulnerable children in need of additional support) and robust assessments and plans for these children (Common Assessment Framework and Team Around the Child plans), all provide the way forward.

5 Performance in Wirral

Local performance is showing some in year improvement. This is attributable to:

- Recruiting a dedicated Manager to provide managerial oversight at the Central Advice and Duty Team; this Team, which is located at Cheshire Lines Building, receives all incoming referrals. Prior to July 2009 managerial oversight was provided by a rota of Assessment Team Managers. Following review, the dedicated Team Manager post was established since there was concern about the Assessment Team Manager's capacity to sustain this work away from their substantive posts managing locality Assessment Teams, where social workers require on site support, managerial direction and supervision. Also, when the Assessment Team's are pressurised and busy, this may increase the potential for more referrals not to be accepted for an Initial Assessment based on capacity, as opposed to decisions being made based on a clear determination of children's needs against the threshold criteria.
- Recruiting additional social workers, and maintaining, wherever possible, a full complement of social workers in each Assessment Team, through a monthly rolling recruitment programme and providing a safe service by covering maternity leave, and temporary vacancies where required. Providing additional training and supervision for Newly Qualified Social Workers, as part of the Children's Workforce Development Council programme, and closely monitoring caseloads; taking remedial action if caseloads are becoming too high.

- Scrutinising incoming work through a weekly meeting, chaired by the Strategic Service Manager, to determine whether thresholds for accepting work have been applied consistently to all new children referred.
- Re-clarifying guidance about when a contact with Children's Social Care should be determined to be a referral, as opposed to a request for simple information or signposting to a more appropriate service.

Focusing on continuously improving practice through a fortnightly Contact, Referral and Assessment Meeting, where each Team's action plan is reviewed. Plans include monitoring of any outstanding assessments which require data to be entered into the Integrated Children's System (ICS). The programme of work is being developed to improve this, and develop the ICS system into a more useful tool to support more evidence based analysis and contemporaneous data entry. The Transformational Change Team is assisting with this activity. This is a significant programme of work which will continue to be implemented over the forthcoming year.

6 Further action to accelerate the pace of change includes:

- Continuing to implement the revised Children's Social Care management structure, this includes 4 Principal Team Managers commencing work in their new posts from 1 March 2010, and completing further recruitment activity to fill the remaining 4 posts.
- Implementing increased Area Team Leader capacity from 1 February 2010 (increased from 5.5 fte to 7.5 fte) and rolling out the co-location of Area Teams from 1 September 2010. This is to increase the support in each Area to deliver early preventative services to children and families who need multi-agency support, (but not at a level requiring Children's Social Care intervention) through CAF and Team Around the Child (TAC). Raising the profile and visible presence of Area Teams in the community and with professionals in each locality.
- Launching the revised Integrated Working Guide across the partnership to ensure consistent understanding of thresholds, and when it is appropriate to refer a child to Children's Social Care.
- Embedding improved casefile auditing processes (introduced September 2009) and in addition, auditing children's cases who are receiving support through Team Around the Child (TAC) and those children receiving support from Children's Social Care, with multiagency partners. This is to further determine whether thresholds are consistently being applied and that children can re-access Social Care in a timely way should their situation deteriorate (February – Staying Safe Strategy Group).
- Implementing the revised project plan (prior to March 31 2010), to strengthen integrated preventative services provision across Wirral; improving clarity about who does what, how services can be accessed and using data to determine how new services are commissioned to respond to identified gaps in service provision.
- Completing the revision of domestic violence protocols, ensuring referrals to Children's Social Care make specific reference to the impact of the adult's behaviour upon the children, further clarifying which referrals can be appropriately dealt with through Area Teams.

- Steering the full implementation of the Integrated Children’s System (ICS) through the re-launched ICS Project Board, so that the system supports best social work practice, and assessment activity is recorded in a timelier manner. This will be supported by the additional capacity provided by 4 new Data Officers, working with the ICS Project Manager.

7 Conclusion

Since the report into the tragic death of Baby Peter was published in November 2008, Wirral has seen a 40% increase in referrals, from the previous year, this is in common with many authorities nationally, and is a continuing trend. A higher number of referrals have progressed to an Initial Assessment, although the percentage of referrals progressing to an Initial Assessment has remained fairly constant since the year ending 2007/8.

There are 3 key strands of activity which will support the delivery of this LAA National Indicator target, and which will improve overall safeguarding activity. They are:

1. Ensuring that all agencies working with vulnerable children are completing Common Assessments and using the Team Around the Child Model to respond to children’s additional needs. Making sure that Area Teams are leading and driving early preventative work with children.
2. Scrutiny and intervention by the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board to ensure that all agencies are clear about thresholds, clear about how to make appropriate referrals and how to escalate concerns, so that children receive the right level of support.
3. Improving training, expertise and support to manage referrals where there are child welfare concerns and in particular concerns about children’s safety. Focusing on the importance of high quality, experienced social workers undertaking key management and supervisory roles in intake/duty teams. This includes system support through the development of ICS.

The body of the report sets out what has already been implemented to achieve this, and the future activity in progress.

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Wirral Local Strategic Partnership Performance Management - Exceptions

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Title: | National Indicator (NI) 117 – Not in education, employment or training (NEET) |
| Date: | 12th January 2010 |

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents to the LSP Executive board the current position with regard to the performance of NI 117 - Not in education, employment or training (NEET) - following two quarters where the target was reported as red.
- 1.2 The LSP Executive Board agreed at its meeting of the 11th November 2009 that should an LAA improvement target underperform for a period of two or more consecutive quarters then the relevant delivery plan / progress report will be reported to a subsequent board meeting for consideration and to identify any further action to be taken.

2 Background

- 2.1 Reducing the number of young people aged 16-18 that are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is a key cross-departmental government priority and a Wirral PSA (6.9% by 2010) and Local Area Agreement target. NEET, as a partnership priority is also reflected in the Children and Young People's plan and Integrated Youth Support Strategy.
- 2.2 The first national performance indicator for reducing NEET was set in 2002 for a 10% reduction in NEET between November 2002 and November 2004. Following this further targets were set against 'best ever' performance levels and enshrined within PSA and LAA targets. Since 2004 the way that NEET figures are calculated has also changed so it is impossible to compare like with like:
- 2.3 **NEET Count Version One:**
In April 2005 the concept of N.E.E.T. adjusted figures were introduced. Essentially this is a statistical adjustment involving counting a proportion of the "not known" group as N.E.E.T. The effect on Wirral has not been huge as the numbers "not known" are small but at times the net inflationary effect has been a one percentage point increase.
- 2.4 **NEET Count Version Two:**
In 2006 Personal Development Opportunities (PDO's) such as volunteering, previously counted as engaged in Education, training or employment were counted as NEET.



2.5 NEET Count **Version Three:**

In 2006, the November 'snapshot' of NEET was replaced by a 'Mean' review of a Borough's NEET. Partnerships are now required to report on the average of November, December and January NEET performance, rather than the single November figure.

2.6 NEET Count **Version Four:**

In 2008 the method for counting the cohort has changed again to 'residency' based so is based on where the young person lives not where they have studied or seek to 'register' for work. The impact of this change has been an overall increase in NEET numbers.

2.7 NEET Targets

In 2009 we experienced the impact of the global recession. A number of target areas deemed to be impacted upon by the change in the economic climate were adjusted accordingly. **The NEET target was not included amongst those adjusted.**

This report describes the complex picture behind the 'NEET count', brings Board members up to date with progress and highlights some next steps in terms of potential further reduction of NEET levels.

3 **The rationale for reducing NEET – the impact**

For all those engaged in work with children and young people the rationale for reducing NEET is simple and derives from a determination to help young people to overcome barriers to achievement, be settled, develop their skills through learning and start on a route to a fulfilling and successful adult life. Investigation of the 1970 British Birth Cohort study has shown that being NEET for six months is likely to mean that by the age of twenty one a young man is:

- More than four times likely to be out of work
- Three times more likely to have depression and mental health issues
- Five times more likely to have a criminal record
- Six times less likely to have any qualifications

(Bridging The Gap: New opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training – Social Exclusion Unit 1999.)

3.1 NEET Characteristics & at risk Sub Group

To address NEET there is a need to understand the characteristics of young people most likely to experience being NEET. Qualitative research conducted by the Connexions Service in 2007 with 77 young people identified the following:

| Triggers to NEET | Enablers to EET |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Primary Triggers</u></p> <p>Leaving care Homelessness Difficult parental relationships Lack of qualifications Early school leaver Criminal record Caring for a parent Bullying Pregnancy</p> <p><u>Secondary Triggers</u></p> <p>Parental separation Drug and alcohol misuse Lack of appropriate support at school Moving home frequently Bereavement Learning difficulties Poor access to transport</p> | <p><u>Primary Enablers</u></p> <p>Family/parental support Financial support Advice, guidance and information from specialists eg. Connexions PAs, support workers Post 16 education Entry2Employment (E2E) Transport Parenthood</p> <p><u>Secondary Enablers</u></p> <p>Being in a stable relationship Stopping drug/alcohol misuse Peer activities/influences Gaining work experience/ voluntary work Career planning</p> |

4 NEET levels in Wirral

4.1 Our progress

The Wirral NEET percentage for November 2009 (latest baseline data) is 9.10%

N.E.E.T. percentage by area at end of November 2009 (G.M.C.P. data).

| GMCP DATA | Halton | Knowsley | Liverpool | Sefton | St Helens | Wirral | Greater Merseyside |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| % Adjusted NEET 2009 | 10.89 | 9.18 | 8.44 | 6.62 | 8.89 | 9.10 | 8.53 |
| % Adjusted NEET 2008 | 13.93 | 12.76 | 9.93 | 8.39 | 10.16 | 9.52 | 10.14 |

- This is a reduction in a year on year comparison
- However the target trajectory for the NEET PSA (7.10%for November) to reach 6.9% has not been met.
- The pace of reduction remains a significant challenge and achievement of the target is unlikely in the current economic climate (fewer employment vacancies



available during 2009 than at any corresponding point in the life of the Connexions Partnership).

- In terms of the age breakdown a significant number of our NEET young people are in the upper age bracket and for **November 2009 16.8% are 16, 34.5% are 17 and 48.7% are 18 years old.**
- The data demonstrates that initial participation by the cohort is possible and the issue remains one of sustainability.

4.2 Wards with highest levels of NEET

The highest average 16-18 NEET % in Wirral is Bidston and St James at 20.48% NEET.

The lowest average 16-18 NEET % in Wirral is Heswall at 0.81% NEET and the average 16-18 NEET is 8.45%.

4.3 Churn

Government statistics suggest that only 1% of the NEET cohort remains NEET for the period between ages 16 and 18. As the figures suggest the cohort is in constant flux and significant effort is afforded to tracking young people in the population to ensure the NEET register is:

- a) Accurate
- b) Used to enable targeted support at young people when they become NEET.

During November there were 151 joiners to the NEET cohort in Wirral – 54 from FE/6th form destinations, 36 from employment, 26 from E2E/WBL and 7 moving into the area.

Our tracking capacity has improved and is better than regional and national benchmarks so the evidence we have is more accurate and compelling than ever. Currently we have the lowest ever levels of 16-18 young people not known to the Connexions Service at 2.94%.

4.4 NEET levels and the challenges ahead

- N.E.E.T. is reducing in Wirral in a year-on-year comparison.
- However the pace of reduction is still a significant challenge.
- The Annual Activity Survey is a Year 11 destination survey conducted and reported at the end of November each year. Please note that the survey results have not yet been finalised and this report has been drawn together to give Board members an indication of progress in this important area of work. The survey is a key measure of progression in the Borough and data is gathered in a consistent, valid and reliable manner in line with the D.C.S.F. Management Information Guide and reported to Government Office in January.

- In terms of the 2009 Activity Survey there are more young people in Wirral continuing in learning beyond Year 11 than ever before. The numbers who are N.E.E.T amongst the Year 11 leaver group has fallen to it's lowest ever level. The improvement over time (see table below) signals a marked and positive shift in outcomes for our 16 and 17 year olds reflecting higher achievement levels and a learning offer that more closely meets their needs and aspirations.

Provisional Activity Survey results by local area for 2009 Year 11 leavers.

| | Cohort | Moved out of contact | Baseline cohort | Into Learning Figure | Into Learning % 2009 | Into Learning % 2008 | No Response % 2009 | No Response % 2008 | NEET % 2009 | NEET % 2008 |
|-----------|--------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| HALTON | 1593 | 4 | 1589 | 1474 | 92.8 | 89.9 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 5.4 | 6.9 |
| KNOWSLEY | 1687 | 10 | 1677 | 1534 | 91.5 | 89.9 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 6.9 | 7.5 |
| LIVERPOOL | 5620 | 46 | 5574 | 5140 | 92.2 | 90.3 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 5.2 | 6.5 |
| SEFTON | 3669 | 9 | 3660 | 3490 | 95.4 | 93.1 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 3.2 | 4.2 |
| ST HELENS | 2218 | 11 | 2068 | 2068 | 93.7 | 92.7 | 0 | 9 | 4.9 | 5.5 |
| WIRRAL | 4241 | 34 | 4207 | 3951 | 93.9 | 92.1 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 4.6 | 5.6 |
| GMCP | 19028 | 114 | 18914 | 17657 | 93.4 | 91.4 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 4.8 | 6.1 |

- Our NEET group are predominantly 18 and over.
- The healthy high profile that the September Guarantee brings to Year 11 transition has significantly improved data exchange, particularly between the Learning and Skills Council, Local Authorities, F.E. Colleges and Connexions.
- Whilst outcomes for the Year 11 group as a whole are improving results for the most vulnerable young people are not improving at the same rate. This group has been hit hard by the reduction in the number of jobs with no training element.
- Numbers in work based learning are reducing nationally and locally as choice and volume has been reduced.
- Fewer young people are entering employment and numbers entering employment without training have significantly reduced.

4.5 NEET and vulnerable groups

- Significant progress has been made via the focus on 17 year olds and vulnerable groups. The numbers of 16-18 year olds in learning is increasing (84.91% November 2009 compared to 82.35% November 08), the number of 17 year olds NEET has been decreasing and whilst the impact on more vulnerable young people in these challenging times is noted above the number of Care leavers aged 19 who are in Education Employment or Training (EET) has increased to 40.63% compared to 35.29% at the same time last year. However the number of LDD young people EET has reduced in a year on year comparison 71.12% November 2009 (compared to 73.34% in November 2008 and the situation for this group is likely to worsen as:
 - Supported work and training places reduce in number.
 - Provider payment regimes that focus on full framework completion encourage risk averse recruitment practices.
 - The number of jobs with no training element reduces.



- Subsidies available to L.D.D. adults put young people at a market disadvantage.
- Young Offenders and teenage mothers in EET have decreased in a year on year comparison.

5 Challenges remaining:

The challenge remains to increase the pace of the reduction in line with the trajectory toward the 2010 PSA target of 6.9% which gives us considerable distance to travel. There are also significant priority groups within the NEET group, including those with LDD, care leavers, young offenders and teen mums for whom opportunities often contract more adversely than for their peers at times of economic pressure.

5.1 Risks Identified:

- Changes in economic climate impacting on availability of opportunities for the NEET group whilst target levels set before the recession are not adjusted.
- The change in the age profile of the NEET group and the challenges presented to Employers and Learning Providers of responding to the needs of the 'older' NEET group.
- Adult employment rates rising.

6 Continuing action:

- The Borough EET Strategy has been refreshed which outlines partner responsibilities and contributions to achieving the NEET target.
- The Activity Agreement pilot is a programme that focuses on structured activities and incentive payments for NEET young people and is delivered through Greater Merseyside Connexions. It continues to bear fruit with clear evaluation demonstrating improved progression rates, increased employability and reduced time spent NEET (on average 60% progressing into EET which is a significant achievement with some of the most marginalised young people). Confirmation was received in December that the Activity Agreement Pilot would continue through to 2011.
- The Wirral Wise Programme, supported by ESF, is embedding as part of the Wirral Learning offer, with its 3 strands of:
 - "Learn Wise"- preventative actions for young people in KS4
 - "Stay Wise"- preventative actions for Young people in post 16 education and training
 - "Work Wise"- Interventions targeted at young people who are NEET, aimed at progression via placements and work trials.
- The Wirral Apprentice programme is continuing to have a positive impact on opportunities for young people. Many of our NEET young people tell us that they 'want a 'job' and this programme has been able to offer positive choices

for young people and some really interesting opportunities from an apprenticeship in Rainwater Harvesting, through to Dairy Farming through to Jewellery Design!

- All apprentices appointed are Wirral residents and 22% were previously NEET, 31% would have become NEET without the programme and 16% were unemployed young adults who had previously been NEET. (figures current from 14-19 team at 15.12.09)
- Cabinet approval has been received for 50 further apprenticeships and the Wirral model is being promoted as an exemplar by NWEO to LGA groups.
- The September Guarantee thresholds have been met in Wirral this year, for 16 and 17 year olds.
- Targeted action with vulnerable young people and within NEET hotspot areas continues with enhanced GIS mapping capability.
- Teenagers can now receive text alerts for job vacancies by registering for the Job scan service via www.connexionslive

7 Current Priorities

In terms of the **blank sheet** there is clearly no single solution and a lot of existing provision is working and working well. The following aspects should support a swifter reduction:

- 7.1 **The Apprenticeship Challenge** – we need to continue to work with partners to promote the apprenticeship offer to young people and employers including identifying any available funding to continue to incentivise employer participation.
- 7.2 **The continuing development of the 14-19 ‘offer’** for young people particularly areas where there are a significant number entering and re-entering NEET.
- 7.3 **Developing an approach in Wirral that recognises ‘our learners’ rather than ‘my learners’** as part of developing collaborative approaches in the delivery of the 14-19 offer.
- 7.4 **The development of roll on roll off FE provision.** A number of young people start a course find that it isn't right for them and drop out (peak period January) after one term. They still want to pursue a course but cannot start an alternative until September. Some of these remain NEET until then. Work is underway with WMC to extend roll on roll off provision.
- 7.5 **Preventative work with key ‘feeders’ to NEET** – a lot of progress has been made here but a preventative focus as early as possible will pay further dividends.

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**Wirral Local Strategic Partnership
Performance Management - Exceptions**

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Title: | National Indicator (NI) 154 – Net additional homes provided |
| Date: | 12th January 2010 |

1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report presents to the LSP Executive board the current position with regard to the performance of NI 154 - Net additional homes provided - following two quarters where the target was reported as red.

2 Background

2.1 The LSP Executive Board agreed at its meeting of the 11th November 2009 that should an LAA improvement target underperform for a period of two or more consecutive quarters then the relevant delivery plan / progress report will be reported to a subsequent board meeting for consideration and to identify any further action to be taken.

3 Background to National Indicator (NI)154 – net additional homes provided

3.1 Current Targets

| 2008/9 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 3 Year Total |
|--------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 500 | 500 | 500 | 1500 |

The targets were based on the housing requirement for Wirral set out in Policy L4 and Table 7.1 of the North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (issued by the Secretary of State in September 2008).

820 new dwellings had been completed in Wirral during 2007/08 (564 net).

3.2 Performance

| |
|--------------|
| 2008/9 |
| 334 (actual) |

The impact of the economic downturn had already begun to be felt during 2008/09. This has deepened during 2009/10.



3.3 Trend Data (gross)

| 2007/08 | | | | 2008/09 | | | | 2009/2010 | | | Gross |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|----|----|-------------|
| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Quarter |
| 150 | 233 | 167 | 124 | 128 | 135 | 102 | 89 | 95 | 34 | 83 | Starts |
| 274 | 103 | 176 | 267 | 195 | 113 | 129 | 162 | 138 | 49 | 69 | Completions |

Wirral needs to complete at least 750 units each year (gross) to meet the target for a net requirement of 500 units per year. The number of dwellings demolished must be taken off this number to arrive at the net figure required under the Indicator.

An assumption of 250 demolitions each year was included in the Regional Spatial Strategy statistical calculations. 230 dwellings were demolished in 2007/08 and 242 dwellings in 2008/09. This means that Wirral needs to complete an average of at least 188 (gross) new units each quarter to maintain performance against the target.

The latest figures for 2009/2010 show a continued decrease in the number of dwellings started on site and a corresponding fall in the number of registered completions. Based on these figures, the Q3 year-end forecast for 2009/10 is currently 341 (gross) – 54% below the target figure. The reducing level of starts will continue to support a lower level of completions during 2010/11 and beyond.

The number of planning applications received for new build housing development has also declined over the period, reducing the number of new dwellings that can come forward in the short term:

| Planning Applications | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Major (10 units or above) | 42 | 26 | 12* |
| Minor | 143 | 100 | 39* |

*figures for April 09 to November 2009

The capacity of land with planning permission for housing at April 2009 was nevertheless 3950 dwellings.

4 Actions to Address Under-Performance

The vast majority of the previous supply of new dwellings has been provided as open market housing by the private sector.

Public sector activity has, however, continued at a high level in an attempt to maintain starts.

For example, performance within the Housing Market Renewal Area reached an all time high of 211 gross new units in 2008/2009 compared against 50 gross new units in 2004/2005.

The Council's New Growth Point area, which includes the Housing Market Renewal Area, obtained Growth Point status in December 2008. The Council has been actively working with the major land owner within the Birkenhead dock estate to deliver an accelerated number of new dwellings in line with the

Programme of Development submitted in September 2008. The Council has recently resolved to grant planning permission for 1672 new dwellings as part of phase 1 of Wirral Waters, subject to the signing of a Section 106 legal agreement. The Programme of Development shows a gross capacity of up to 19110 units across the HMRI area.

The Council is reviewing the use of land, through the preparation of its Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

The Spatial Options for the Core Strategy will be subject to public consultation during January and February 2010. The deadline for comments is 5pm on Friday 5 March 2010. The documents can be viewed on-line at <http://wirral-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>

As part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, the Wirral Employment land and Premises Study has identified 5 areas previously used for industry that could be re-designated for residential development. Planning permission for 348 units has already been granted for housing development within these areas and has commenced on 3 sites. The Council is in discussion with another land owner over future residential development at another site within one of these 5 areas. An additional site at the industrial complex at Lever Faberge in Port Sunlight is also under construction for 192 new dwellings.

The Council has also commissioned a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), jointly with Liverpool City Council, which is expected to report in January 2010. The Council has undertaken two “calls-for-sites” exercises to identify additional housing sites. The suitability of all these sites is being considered as part of the SHLAA.

The Council has commissioned Fordham Research to carry out a review of its 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment, to take into account the changes in housing markets and the impact of the recent downturn to help ensure Wirral’s housing policy is realistic and credible. An Economic Viability Assessment will determine through rigorous analysis, what affordable housing targets can be achieved without undermining site viability, preventing sites from coming forward and stifling the development of not only affordable housing but also open market housing. This work will be completed early in 2010.

To support the ongoing delivery of the affordable homes programme, Wirral has also actively sought opportunities made available to help support local developers via Homebuy Direct, Mortgage Rescue and through opportunities from the 2009 Budget Announcement.

With partners, the Council has been successful in securing 68 units under Homebuy Direct and have supported developer partners through offering advertising and signposting. Wirral has also been successful in securing funding for Kickstart Round 1 which will deliver 20 Homebuy direct units and in securing funding from the Challenge Fund for the delivery of 22 social rented units.

The following bids for Kickstart Round 2 are awaiting an outcome:

| Initiative | Scheme Name | Units |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--|
| KickStart | Kingsmead, Beechwood | 52 units, comprising all Homebuy but 15 outside of Kickstart |
| KickStart | The Dell, Rock Ferry | 67 units, comprising 19 Homebuy, 19 social rent |
| KickStart | Wirral Waters, Dockland Area | 141 units |
| KickStart | Woodlands Grange, Bromborough | 54 units, comprising 27 Homebuy |
| Total Units | | 314 |

The Council has also sought to make use of its land assets to support the delivery of affordable homes through the disposal of Council-owned land to housing providers at either nominal or discounted value. To assist the successful delivery of the current (2008 – 11) National Affordable Housing Programme, Wirral has released 9 sites, foregoing £3.4m, which once completed will provide 214 units of affordable housing.

The Council is in discussion with local RSL's to identify the viability of a number of potential Continuous Market Engagement affordable housing schemes totalling in excess of 128 units. 62 of these units are on sites which are in the ownership of the Local Authority, which the Council will, again, continue to make available to make affordable housing schemes viable, if successful in securing funding. These schemes could complete in 2010/11

The Council has also been able to progress with many affordable units which were in jeopardy due to the tenure proposed, altering tenure from shared ownership in areas where there was still a need for increasing social housing and agreeing to change schemes to intermediate rents for a period until the market recovers. This has enabled over 55 units to start on site in 2008/09; ensuring schemes remain viable and are completed.

As part of Wirral's First Time Buyers (FTBs) event we have set out all the initiatives which the Council can offer to assist FTBs accessing the housing market including access to grants and the pilot of the Council's Home Purchase Assistance Loan to help bridge the gap for FTBs in the current climate. This has meant that we have been supporting both potential buyers and our HMRI Developer partner through giving confidence to support people who are at present finding accessing deposits and mortgages difficult. The programmes we have in place will continue to operate for the foreseeable future. This event has also helped support our Developer partners who have Homebuy allocations to market and raise awareness of the opportunities available.

New dwellings can also be provided through the conversion of existing or empty property. Wirral's Empty Property Strategy acknowledges an increase in the number of vacant properties in Wirral and outlines the initiatives that are being developed to tackle this issue. These include piloting private sector leasing, continuing to develop partnership working with private landlords and delivering



'Improve for sale schemes'. These schemes focus on returning empty properties back into the market as decent affordable homes whilst improving tenure balance in fragile neighbourhoods to improve long term sustainability.

In tackling both empty homes and increasing affordable housing we have looked at the analysis of local data regarding both new developments coming forward and Long Term Empty Properties within the Borough which is supplied by Council Tax on a monthly basis (particularly in relation to new build developments). This has resulted in 19 units being taken forward and purchased by an RSL which otherwise would have resulted in the units becoming empty. A more in depth mapping exercise is being completed at present with the number of empty units by ward against Affordable Housing Net Annual Need requirements being assessed. Once this formal analysis is complete we will continue to work with local RSLs on an area basis to deliver a comprehensive programme for empty properties which will help deliver against local needs. Where possible and inline with the market recovery we will align those opportunities for grants and Equity Loans to help support home ownership routes.

5 Further Action

Wirral is proposing discussions take place with GONW as part of the refresh to consider a revision to the targets set for 2009/10 and 2010/11 in respect of NI154. The challenges which Wirral and its partners are facing in responding to the economic downturn have already been set out and submitted in a standard template.

The following amended targets were suggested, based on the analysis to **Q2**:

| 2008/9 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 3 Year Total |
|--------------|---------|---------|--------------|
| 334 (actual) | 350* | 300* | 984* |

**Subject to discussions as part of the refresh.*

These targets may need to be further revised to take account of the more up-to-date information now available.

Discussions with Government Office will resume during February and March 2010.

A further report to the Board may be required before the final submission to GONW.

6 Recommendation

That LSP agree the framework for revised targets for discussion with GONW.

| | |
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WIRRAL LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP – EXECUTIVE BOARD**WEDNESDAY 20th JANUARY 2010****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES****LTP3 AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF WIRRAL LSP****1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The aim of this report is to inform the LSP about the development of the third statutory Local Transport Plan (LTP3), and seeks initial views on how transport can be better integrated with the work of the LSP.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Increasing traffic growth has been coupled with increasing levels of car ownership, both of which will start to affect business productivity and future investment due to congestion and unreliable and delayed journeys. At the same time, transport-derived environmental impacts (air and noise pollution and green house gas emissions) are increasing and will impact on the health and quality of life for those who live, work and wish to invest in the city region.
- 2.2 In November 2008, the Government published its approach to long-term transport planning in its document titled 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System' (DaSTS). It outlines five goals for transport, focussing on the challenge of delivering strong economic growth whilst at the same time tackling climate change and carbon emissions.
- 2.3 This is a major task that requires a properly joined up approach, involving many diverse aspects, including land use and key service planning and demand management. Success will be dependent on an effective cross-sector approach.
- 2.4 The joint timetable of development of LTP3, Local Development Frameworks (LDF) and refreshed Local Area Agreements (LAA) offers a real opportunity for integrating transport with other policy agendas.
- 2.5 This report sets out how transport can support LSPs in delivering LAA targets.

3.0 PROGRESS

- 3.1 Work is being undertaken by the Merseyside LTP partners and Halton Borough Council to develop a joint LTP3.

- 3.2 As of January 2010, the focus has been on building a city-region transport model and gathering the evidence base upon which to build the future transport strategy for Merseyside and Halton.
- 3.3 Authorities need to determine & evaluate options for addressing local problems and achieving local priorities, whilst supporting regional & national policies.
- 3.4 Emerging model outputs are showing where future employment and housing changes will impact most across the city region area and the likely increases in the number of both highway trips and vehicle kilometres. Future option testing will allow the partners to see the impacts of different scenarios for managing projected traffic growth, particularly linked to new developments that support economic and housing growth.
- 3.5 The results from the modelling work will help steer the direction of transport policies and objectives across the city region from 2011/12.

4.0 IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPORT

- 4.1 Key challenges for the future of transport include how to support economic growth and promote equality of opportunity whilst reducing the impacts of transport emissions on the environment and contributing to better safety and quality of life.
- 4.2 Local transport authorities have a duty to consult when formulating policies and plans with various stakeholders, including local citizens. It is recognised that there is an important role for LSPs, as set out in the Transport Act 2008 and DfT statutory guidance on Local Transport Plans.
- 4.3 The way in which local authorities deliver their responsibilities for transport is key to the local economy, environment and quality of life. People depend on local transport to get to work, to school, to the hospital, shops or GP surgery. Businesses rely on efficient access to suppliers, markets and workforce. Even when people are not travelling, transport can have impacts on their health and enjoyment of the urban or rural environment.
- 4.4 When transport systems and networks are effective, a wide range of outcomes can be achieved, which mean:
- Both transport and non-transport targets in Local Area Agreements can be met (for example, targets on NEETs, obesity, climate change, air quality).
 - The Audit Commission will see that transport is contributing to improvement Comprehensive Area Assessment.
 - In the current economic climate, joining up transport with other areas and working in partnership with partners like PCTs, the Police, local businesses, the voluntary sector and Job Centre Plus, helps make funding go further, and identifies efficiencies.

5.0 DELIVERY OF GOOD TRANSPORT

- 5.1 Transport is expensive and requires both capital and revenue funding. Improvements can take time to plan and deliver; short-term “fixes” maybe more expensive over the longer-term. Transport patterns seldom replicate local authority boundaries. All of these make effective consultation, planning and delivery vital in order to sustain a balanced transport network that meets the needs of people.
- 5.2 The Local Transport Plan, required by statute, is a key document that pulls together transport strategy and delivery within a local area and relevant adjoining areas, and relates it to the wider corporate agenda. The Plan sets out long-term aims and a delivery plan for achieving them.
- 5.3 Good transport involves input from stakeholders that do not necessarily have formal responsibility for the statutory LTP. Nonetheless, all stakeholders have a vested interest in good transport systems, given the role transport can play in supporting wider outcomes, and must work together to achieve this.
- 5.4 Thinking about transport therefore needs to be at the heart of Local Strategic Partnership work. Effective delivery of Sustainable Community Strategies (SCSs) and Local Area Agreements (LAAs) is likely to depend on how well transport planning and delivery is integrated within wider plans.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Wirral’s SCS and LAA include some specific transport priorities, but there are other priorities that may also be complemented by transport. The attached paper (**Appendix A**) provides information and cross-references between the SCS Strategic Themes, transport issues and priorities, and LAA indicators.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that a full stakeholder consultation for LTP3 will be launched in February 2010. As part of this process, views will be sought from the various LSPs within the city region.
- 6.3 In recognition of Wirral’s LSP Governance Structure, it may be most effective for the LTP Partnership to engage with each of the LAA delivery partnerships to work up in more detail how transport might best integrate with the responsibilities of the LSP.
- 6.4 Such meetings will be arranged by the Merseyside LTP Support Unit in consultation with the lead officers of the Wirral LAA Thematic Delivery Partnership Groups.
- 6.5 After this work has taken place, and as the draft LTP3 emerges, the LSP Board members may wish to receive feedback from the LTP Partners and have an opportunity to comment further on the emerging transport strategy.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The LSP Executive Board is requested to:

(1) Note the ongoing development of LTP3 and the role of transport in helping to deliver Wirral's SCS and LAA; and

(2) Endorse that further engagement be undertaken with each of the LAA Thematic Delivery Partnership Groups to identify what transport priorities best meet the needs of local priorities with a view to reporting the outcome of this engagement back to a future meeting of the Board later in the year.

David Green,
Director of Technical Services, Wirral Council

This report was prepared by Debbie Simnor, Group Leader Transport Policy who can be contacted on 0151 606 2363.

WIRRAL LSP EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY 20TH JANUARY 2010

REPORT OF THE WIRRAL EQUALITIES FORUM

PROPOSAL FOR A WIRRAL EQUALITIES CHARTER

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides Wirral LSP Executive Board members with a brief overview of the Wirral Equalities Forum, alongside a proposal to develop an LSP Equalities Charter for Wirral.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Established during 2007 the purpose of the Wirral Equalities Forum was to bring together Wirral's public sector equalities officers to gain a better understanding of each others' work and priorities. Active members of the Forum currently include NHS Wirral, Wirral Council, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Merseytravel, and the Stonham Group.
- 2.2 Current Forum members have a very good understanding of each other's work programmes and priorities based upon each organisation's individual and shared duties and aspirations. Forum members have also supported each other's equality events, and some members are currently discussing the possibility of pooling resources for online equality and diversity training.
- 2.3 To complement the thematic delivery structures of Wirral LSP, a range of groups are necessary to support the enabling activities required. These include existing partnerships such as the Environmental Sustainability Appraisal Group, the LAA Development Group, the Comprehensive Engagement Strategy Group, and now the Wirral Equalities Forum (see Appendix A).
- 2.4 For the Wirral Equalities Forum to be an effective 'enabling group' for Wirral LSP there is now a need to:
- Obtain support from the Wirral LSP Executive Board for a partnership approach to further developing the equalities agenda across Wirral and our respective organisations.
 - Review the Forum's membership to a) ensure a consistent strategic approach to its work, and b) ensure a fairer representation of LSP members.
 - Identify joint priorities based upon identified local inequalities.

3. PROPOSAL FOR AN LSP EQUALITIES CHARTER FOR WIRRAL

- 3.1 The vision for Wirral LSP is ‘a more prosperous and equal Wirral’. As a consequence there are a number of policies and initiatives in place and being delivered to realise the vision.

The Wirral Equalities Forum recognises that it has a greater opportunity of supporting the LSP realise its vision, if it develops a shared set of equality principles and an action plan that all LSP members can sign up to.

Seeking to learn from best practice models, the Wirral Equalities Forum has looked at an Equalities Charter being developed by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities - AGMA (see Appendix B). By pooling resources and developing a shared vision, set of values, objectives, and an annual action plan AGMA have been able to create new opportunities to help the city region achieve a common vision of equity and fairness.

Members of the Wirral Equalities Forum support the development of an Equalities Charter for Wirral LSP, as a very visible statement to Wirral’s communities that it is fully committed to reducing inequalities.

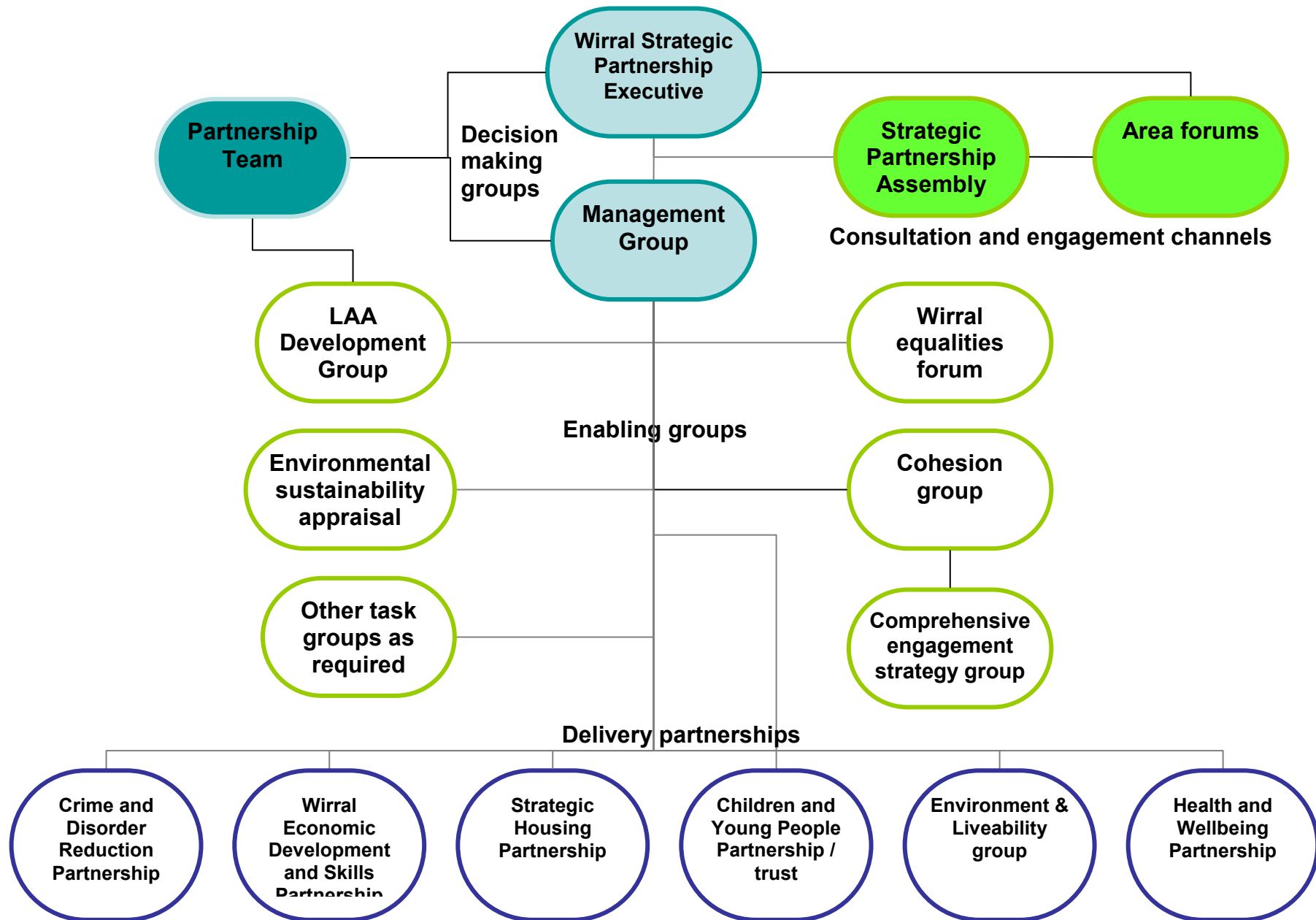
4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Wirral LSP Executive Board is requested to consider the development of an Equalities Charter for Wirral LSP.

Wirral Equalities Forum

This report was prepared by Jacqui Cross (Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager, Wirral Council) and Michael Chantler (Diversity and Inclusion Manager, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust)

Appendix A Wirral LSP Governance Structure



“Building a Fairer Greater Manchester”

Our Vision

The AGMA Family’s Equalities and Human Rights vision is to:

‘Build a fairer Greater Manchester’

Our Values

Our underpinning values are to promote:

- **Equality** – by recognising people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removing the barriers that limit what people can do or be.
- **Human Rights** – by placing key human rights principles, such as dignity, respect and equality at the heart of policy and planning.
- **Diversity** – by understanding that every individual has a personality, abilities, gender, ethnicity, beliefs, sexual orientation, age, familial and social responsibilities that make him or her unique.
- **Community Cohesion** – by building strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.
- **Fairness** – by making judgements between competing demands and resources, ensuring that decisions are fair, reasonable and reflect our legal obligations.

Our Objectives

To achieve this aim the AGMA family will strive to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and provide fair and responsive services for our diverse population.
- Deliver public services that enable people to achieve equal life outcomes.
- Ensure our workforces reflect the diversity of the population we serve.
- Promote diverse individual and community talents for the benefit of everyone, and actively promote good relations between people.
- Influence and support our partners and other organisations within the City Region to reduce inequality.

Signatures:-