



Cabinet

Date:	Thursday, 14 October 2010
Time:	6.15 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Brian Ellis
Tel: 0151 691 8491
e-mail: brianellis@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Cabinet are invited to consider whether they have a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any of the items on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting have been printed and published. Any matters called in will be reported at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes be approved and adopted.

FINANCE AND BEST VALUE

3. BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2011 - 2015 (Pages 1 - 8)

4. IT STATIONERY AND CONSUMABLES TENDERS (Pages 9 - 14)

5. ICT STRATEGIC REVIEW (Pages 15 - 24)

The appendix to this report is exempt because disclosure may provide personal information about individuals.

6. CONSULTATION ON THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS RATE REVALUATION (Pages 25 - 34)

7. **JOINT WORKING WITH HER MAJESTY'S REVENUES AND CUSTOMS (HMRC) (Pages 35 - 38)**
8. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE FORMULA GRANT DISTRIBUTION - CONSULTATION PAPER (Pages 39 - 54)**
9. **VALUE FOR MONEY EFFICIENCIES 2010-11**

Report to be circulated separately.

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION

10. **PERSONAL BUDGETS**

Report to be circulated separately.

11. **CARE QUALITY COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORT - IMPROVEMENT PLANS UPDATE (Pages 55 - 116)**

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

12. **WIRRAL STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING VIABILITY ASSESSMENT - KEY FINDINGS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR WIRRAL (Pages 117 - 128)**
13. **DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY (Pages 129 - 166)**
14. **WIRRAL'S HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 201-11 (Pages 167 - 178)**
15. **MERSEY HEARTLANDS GROWTH FUND (Pages 179 - 188)**
16. **ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY AND GUIDELINES - WIRRAL'S PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION ASSISTANCE POLICY (Pages 189 - 196)**

REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY

17. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL - EVIDENCE BASE - APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A WATER CYCLE STUDY (Pages 197 - 200)**
18. **EXTENSION OF WIRRAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME (Pages 201 - 206)**

STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES

19. **THIRD MERSEYSIDE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - PREFERRED**

STRATEGY AND PROPOSED WORKSHOP (Pages 207 - 214)

- 20. WINTER MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2010/11 (Pages 215 - 264)**

CORPORATE RESOURCES

- 21. CHANGE PROGRAMME (Pages 265 - 266)**

- 22. INTERIM MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Report to be circulated separately.

- 23. CENTRALISATION OF FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Report to be circulated separately.

- 24. COMMITTEE REFERRALS - AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - 28 SEPTEMBER 2010 (Pages 267 - 270)**

- 25. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - HESWALL AND ALEXANDER HALL, HESWALL (Pages 271 - 284)**

- 26. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - OVERTON COMMUNITY CENTRE (Pages 285 - 290)**

- 27. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - GROSVENOR BALLROOM AND LISCARD COMMUNITY CENTRE, WALLASEY (Pages 291 - 302)**

- 28. THE SAIL PROJECT**

Report to be circulated separately..

- 29. SCHEDULE OF RATES 2010/13 - TENDER REPORT (Pages 303 - 306)**

- 30. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)**

To consider any other business that the Chair accepts as being urgent.

- 31. 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. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

FINANCE AND BEST VALUE

32. ICT STRATEGIC REVIEW - APPENDIX - CONSULTANT'S REPORT (Pages 307 - 368)

The Consultant's report is exempt because disclosure may provide personal information about individuals.

CORPORATE RESOURCES

33. SCHEDULE OF RATES 2010/13 - TENDER REPORT - APPENDIX (Pages 369 - 370)

The Financial Appendix is exempt, because the information it contains is commercially sensitive to the respective tendering parties.

34. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 2)

To consider any other business that the Chair accepts as being urgent.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2011-2015

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. This report updates the projected budgets for the years from 2011 to 2015 in line with the decision of HM Treasury to undertake a four year Spending Review.

2. ASSUMPTIONS UNDERPINNING THE PROJECTIONS

2.1. Inflation – HM Treasury is assuming a return to a long term inflation rate of 2%. Therefore prices are assumed to increase by 2% per annum with income to continue to increase by 3% per annum. Pay awards will be limited to those employees earning less than £21,000 per annum for 2011-13.

2.2. Capital Financing – HM Treasury is assuming that the level of capital investment will reduce by 50% between 2009-10 and 2013-14. The annual increase in capital financing charges has therefore been reduced to £2.0m.

2.3. Pension Fund – The increase arising from the actuarial valuation currently underway is projected at 1.5% or £2m per annum. In addition the outsourcing of the highways and engineering services contract is likely to increase the contributions by £0.2m per annum.

2.4. Waste Disposal – the increase in the levy will be dependent on delivery of the waste disposal strategy. The Landfill Tax will increase by £8 per ton per annum, an increase of 50% between 2010-11 and 2014-15. The levy is assumed to increase by 8% per annum.

2.5. Merseytravel – the levy is assumed to increase by 3% per annum.

2.6. Private Finance Initiative – the latest projections are included.

2.7. Benefits – the Department for Work and Pensions is estimating an annual increase of 1.7% and has announced a review of Benefits.

2.8. Schools – it is assumed that the Schools Budget will vary in line with the Dedicated Schools Grant.

2.9. Adult Social Services Reform – the Reform Grant of £1.9m will cease in 2011-12 with the assumed implementation of the personalisation agenda.

2.10. Personal Care At Home – the Government has now abandoned this policy and reduced the Area Based Grant.

- 2.11. Carbon Reduction Commitment – payment of £1.0m commencing in 2011-12. It is assumed that the Authority will reduce the carbon footprint sufficiently to recover these payments.
- 2.12. National Insurance – the proposed 1% increase in the employers rate will not now be implemented.
- 2.13. Home Insulation – increased cost from 2011 of £1m.
- 2.14. Guinea Gap and Leasowe Recreation Centres – restoration into budget at a cost of £0.6m each.
- 2.15. Other Unavoidable Growth – a number of items of unavoidable growth of less than £0.2m will arise. These usually total about £1m per annum.
- 2.16. Efficiency Investment – in order to continue to deliver efficiencies in future years it will be necessary to continue to invest and therefore £2m per annum has been provided.
- 2.17 Area Based Grant (ABG) – Cabinet on 22 July 2010 agreed to reductions in expenditure for 2010-11 only to meet the £3.9m reduction in ABG.
- 2.18 Swimming - the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has deleted the grant of £0.3m to fund free swimming.
- 2.19. Government Grants – the DCLG has indicated that Government Grants will be reduced by 30% to 40% over the period 2011-15. I have only assumed a reduction of 30%.
- 2.20 Council Tax – the Government has announced a freeze in Council Tax increases for 2011-12, although Local Authorities could be permitted to increase Council Tax by upto 2.5% to be matched by Government grant. From 2012-13 any proposed increase above the rate of inflation would be the subject of a local referendum.

3. GRANT NEGOTIATIONS

- 3.1. The Government has agreed to the following elements of the Local Government Finance Settlement being reviewed as part of the 2011 settlement:-
 - a. Area Cost Adjustment
 - b. Highways Maintenance
 - c. Day Visitors
 - d. Income Support/Tax Credits
 - e. Students
 - f. Concessionary Fares
 - g. Coast Protection/Flood Defence
 - h. Capital Financing
 - i. Dedicated Schools Grant
 - j. Housing Benefit
 - k. Pensions
 - l. Schools Deprivation.

- 3.2. Consultation is currently underway on a number of options as part of the 2011 settlement and is reported elsewhere on this agenda.
- 3.3. The Local Government Finance Settlement due to be announced in December 2010 may cover 2011-15 as HM Treasury intends to deliver a four year Spending Review on 20 October 2010. However there is a possibility that the DCLG will issue either a one year or a two year settlement covering 2011-13 with a subsequent two year settlement for 2013-15 announced after the completion of the review of Local Government Finance.
- 3.4. The Government has commenced reviews of public sector pensions and welfare benefits, and has announced a review of Local Government Finance to commence in 2011. The Government has also announced that Council Tax Revaluation will be postponed until after 2015.
- 3.5. During the course of this budgeting period the results of the Census 2011 will become available and will be incorporated into the grant distribution formulae. The Office for National Statistics has now released the Mid 2009 estimated populations. The reduction for Wirral since the census 2001 is greater than for any other metropolitan or unitary authority. If this is confirmed in the Census 2011 then the reduction in grant receivable could be significant.

4. **BALANCES**

- 4.1. The budget for 2010-11 includes balances of £6.5m.
- 4.2. The financial out-turn for 2009-10 was reported to Cabinet on 24 June 2010 and showed an overspending of £1,385,000 offset by increased investment income of £1,185,000 and a contribution from the Collection Fund of £515,000 to produce a net surplus of £315,000.
- 4.3. The Government has announced that the Personal Care at Home scheme will not be proceeding. The revenue budget for 2010-11 will therefore be reduced by £2.6m with a reduction of £1.6m in Area Based Grant.
- 4.4. The Government announced on 10 June 2010 that there would be the following grant reductions for 2010-11:-

	£000
Area Based Grant	3,927
LAA Reward Grant	1,400
Local Authority Business Growth Incentive	<u>200</u>
	5,527

Cabinet on 22 July 2010 agreed that the reduced Area Based Grant will be matched by reduced expenditure in 2010-11.

- 4.5. The Insurance Fund Annual Report was presented to Cabinet on 24 June 2010 including the transfer of £2,471,000 to General Fund balances.

- 4.6. Cabinet on 24 June 2010 agreed that additional VAT of £240,000 recovered from HM Revenue and Customs should be placed in balances.
- 4.7. Cabinet on 26 August 2010 agreed to continue to provide free swimming after the withdrawal of the Government grant of £0.2m in 2010-11.
- 4.8. Cabinet on 2 September 2010 agreed to transfer £3.4m from the Insurance Fund to General Fund Balances following the actuarial valuation of the Insurance Fund.
- 4.9. The budget for 2010-11 provides for pay awards of 1% totalling £1.7m. No pay award has yet been offered.
- 4.10. The Cabinet has not agreed to any projected overspendings in 2010-11

	£m
4.11. Opening Balances	6.5
Out-Turn 2009-10	0.3
Personal Care at Home	1.0
LAA Reward Grant	- 1.4
LABGI	- 0.2
Insurance Fund	5.9
VAT	0.2
Free Swimming Grant	- <u>0.2</u>
	12.1

5. EFFICIENCIES

- 5.1. The previous Government increased the efficiency target for 2010-11 to 4% which for Wirral equates to £14.9m. The previous Government expected that this saving would be reinvested in order to enable delivery of increased efficiency requirements in 2011 to 2014.
- 5.2. The efficiencies that the Authority will need to deliver for 2011-15 are well in excess of the statutory efficiency target. The main mechanism for delivery of the required efficiencies is the change programme. Cabinet on 14 January 2010 agreed a revised change programme, progress on which was to be reported quarterly to the Cabinet.
- 5.3. Revised governance and programme management arrangements for the change programme were reported to Cabinet on 22 July 2010.
- 5.4. Cabinet has to date agreed a number of efficiencies:-
- a. Cabinet agreed that £1m will be saved from office accommodation from 2011. Progress was reported to Cabinet on 24 June 2010.
 - b. Cabinet on 15 October 2009 agreed to the implementation of an integrated Human Resources IT system with initial projected savings of £254,000 for 2011-12, £220,000 for 2012-13, £100,000 for 2013-14 and £20,000 for 2014-15.

- c. Cabinet on 22 February 2010 agreed to the creation of an integrated transport unit with projected savings of £130,000 in 2011-12, £340,000 in 2012-13 and £250,000 in 2013-14.
- d. Cabinet on 18 March 2010 agree to investment in an assistive technology project in Adult Social Services with projected additional savings of £8.8m over 2011-13 after additional investment from the Efficiency Investment Budget of £6.0m.
- e. Cabinet on 15 April 2010 agreed to investment in family group conferencing to deliver savings of £70,000 in 2011-12 and £130,000 in 2012-13.
- f. Cabinet on 22 July 2010 agreed to proceed with a parks and countryside service procurement exercise. Following a call-in on 31 August 2010 the estimated savings have been revised to £173,000 in 2011-12, £1,255,000 in 2012-13 and £1,255,000 in 2013-14.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The assumptions outlined above are reflected in the budget projections in the Appendix.

7. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

11. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

12. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

13. MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2011-2015

	2011-12 £M	2012-13 £M	2013-14 £M	2014-15 £M
Base Budget	330.8	315.0	303.7	292.6
Increased Requirements				
Pay Inflation	1.0	1.0	3.5	3.5
Price Inflation	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8
Capital Financing	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Pension Fund	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2
Waste Disposal	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7
Merseytravel	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Private Finance Initiative	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Benefits	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5
Home Insulation	1.0	-	-	-
Guinea Gap	0.6	-	-	-
Leasowe Recreation Centre	0.6	-	-	-
Swimming	0.3	-	-	-
Other Unavoidable Growth	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Efficiency Investment	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	<u>349.9</u>	<u>331.7</u>	<u>323.2</u>	<u>312.2</u>
Reduced Requirements				
Income Inflation	-1.0	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1
Benefits Subsidy	-2.2	-2.2	-2.3	-2.3
Savings Agreed	<u>-1.6</u>	<u>-2.0</u>	<u>-1.6</u>	<u>-</u>
	345.1	326.4	318.2	308.8
Resources				
Grants	180.5	165.9	151.3	136.7
Council Tax	<u>134.5</u>	<u>137.8</u>	<u>141.3</u>	<u>144.8</u>
Forecast Resources	315.0	303.7	292.6	281.5
Shortfall	30.1	22.7	25.6	27.3

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF STATIONERY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSUMABLES AND COPIER PAPER

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the award of a contract to the most economically advantageous tenderer for the supply and delivery of stationery, Information Technology Consumables and copier paper.
- 1.2 The report outlines the procurement process undertaken by the Procurement Team in partnership with the Merseyside Collaboration Procurement Group. The lead authority was Knowsley Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Seven Local Authorities (Wirral, Liverpool, Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens and Cheshire West and Chester) form the Merseyside Procurement Group where knowledge and best working practices are exchanged on a regular basis. The group focuses on procurement opportunities that are consistent throughout each of the authorities; to aggregate expenditure and volume with a view to delivering efficiencies and obtaining best value across the sub region.
- 2.2 The current framework agreement for the supply of copier paper and office stationery supplies expired on 30 September 2010.
- 2.3 The 12 months' expenditure from January to December 2009 through the contract by six authorities within the collaboration was as follows.

Authority	2009 Expenditure
Liverpool CC	£609,317
Sefton MBC	£353,436
Knowsley MBC	£332,673
St Helens MBC	£187,459
Halton BC	£162,585
Wirral MBC	£415,012
Total	£2,060,482

3. TENDER PROCESS

- 3.1 A “Buying Solutions” framework, let in January 2010 was considered and proved to offer the flexibility required to conduct further competition which met the requirements of the Collaborating Authorities. This approach provides exemption from a full procurement process under the contract procedure rules as tenders have already been invited by a public body.
- 3.2 The framework approach was agreed in a meeting of procurement representatives held on 1 April 2010. In addition to stability in the prices and availability of key product lines and process efficiency other value for money and sustainability decisions taken during this meeting included to:-
- Adopt a single source agreement as currently operated
 - Switch, where possible, to own branded products
 - Rationalise and consolidate the product range significantly
 - Continue the use of 100% recycled copier paper and favour other products with recycled content where economically advantageous
 - Conduct the process via an e-Auction
- 3.3 The quotation responses were evaluated, independently by each Collaborating Authority against non financial criteria, as detailed below:

Quality 40%
Price 60%

Quality Criteria	Weighting
Assurance of Supply	12%
Quality Management	10%
Service	12%
Sustainability	6%

A sampling exercise was also conducted, as part of the evaluation, to ensure that generic items were ‘fit for purpose’. The Wirral Stationery User Group took part in the product evaluation.

- 3.4 Following the completion of the E-Auction conducted on 12 August 2010, the Most Economically Advantageous Tender was submitted by **Banner Business Services**.

4. BENEFITS

- 4.1 Maintaining the ‘one stop shop’ approach to this commodity will continue to maximise the efficiencies in processing orders, receipting goods and invoicing that exists with the current arrangement. This will be further enhanced when full electronic transaction processing to punch out / punch in to the Oracle i-Procurement system is implemented.

- 4.2 Rationalisation of the range of key / catalogue products and the switch to own branded product maximises the leverage in terms of prices for these items which has resulted in the potential savings stated below. Further support from senior management will be required to enforce the message amongst departments to purchase from the key product list.
- 4.3 Product and price stability will be achieved by contract stipulations and an agreed formula for annual price adjustment, capping any increase to the Retail Price Index.
- 4.4 The award of the contract for an initial two year period with options to extend, will provide an incentive for the supplier to maintain expected performance standards.

5. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The annual savings potential for six of the Collaborating Authorities is estimated at £879,000 or 42.6%. If this is pro-rated in terms of the comparative expenditure in 2009 of each Authority, the potential savings are as follows:

Authority	Estimated Annual Savings
Liverpool CC	£260,000
Sefton MBC	£151,000
Knowsley MBC	£142,000
St Helens MBC	£80,000
Halton BC	£69,000
Wirral MBC	£177,000
Total	£879,000

- 5.2 On receipt of the breakdown by item, further analysis demonstrates the following potential savings for Wirral: If own brand products and compatible/re-manufactured ICT cartridges are purchased, there is a potential 41% saving which equates to approximately £160,000.
- 5.3 The contract will be managed by the Procurement Team, in conjunction with the established user group and the other Merseyside Authorities.
- 5.4 There is some impact on information technology as a result of this framework agreement. The Procurement Team will work closely with the Oracle Systems Team to ensure that the electronic catalogue from the recommended supplier is implemented and managed on the Council i-Procurement system.
- 5.5 To develop the capability to move to full electronic Procure to Pay transaction processing will require input from the Information Technology Systems Team.
- 5.6 The use of compatible/re-manufactured ICT cartridges is supported by IT Services, subject to successful trials.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The tendering process has taken place against an existing Buying Solutions framework that has been successfully awarded in compliance with current European Union Procurement Legislation; therefore the risk of a legal challenge against the award decision is significantly reduced.
- 6.2 The capability of each supplier on the framework has previously been assessed and rigorously scrutinised by Buying Solutions therefore the risk of selecting a supplier who is not capable of meeting the requirements of the Collaborating Authorities is low.
- 6.3 As a change of supplier is to take place, there is the risk of disruption to supplies during the implementation period. To mitigate this risk, potential suppliers were evaluated on their capability to implement solutions with new customers and provide draft implementation plans. The plan for the proposed supplier has been evaluated by representatives of the Collaborating Authorities and passed as fit for purpose.
- 6.4 The performance of the supplier will be monitored and maintained by a combination of Management Information supplied to a required format and demonstrating performance against key performance indicators stipulated and agreed in the response to the Invitation to Quote. This information will be reviewed and feedback provided to the supplier in scheduled formal review meetings.
- 6.5 The reduction in the number of products available in the i-Procurement catalogue may result in users not being able to purchase certain items that may be their preference. This increases the risk of maverick spend but could be mitigated by the introduction of a policy to only purchase standardised items. Hard copy full range catalogues will not be circulated.
- 6.6 There may be some issues around the compatibility of own label or re-manufactured cartridges and toners. To mitigate this risk, propriety brands will be included initially as key products. In the case of Hewlett Packard, prices will remain stable as a result of a Corporate Support Package that has been agreed, meaning that prices will only be reviewed on an annual basis on the anniversary of the agreement.

7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equal opportunities implications arising from this report.

8. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no planning implications.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no implications under this heading.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no implications under this heading.

11. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications under this heading.

12. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications under this heading.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1. Tender documentation.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 That Cabinet agrees to the award of a contract for the supply and delivery of stationery, Information Technology Consumables and copier paper commencing 1 October 2010 for a period of two years with an option to extend for up to a further two years.

14.2. That Cabinet approve the adoption of a rationalised product list, including limited availability of branded products.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/196/10

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

ICT STRATEGIC REVIEW

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 A report has been commissioned from Socitm Consulting (the Society of IT Management) into the technologies and organisation of Information Technology (IT) Services. This report informs Cabinet of the recommendations of the report.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 IT Services is the Council information technology provider and was formed in 2005 by the merger of Wirral IT Services (WITS) with the departmental IT teams of Corporate Services, Education and Cultural Services, Social Services and Technical Services. This was approved by Cabinet on 1 December 2005.
- 2.2 IT Services delivers services to all Council departments and Members and also to schools in Wirral.
- 2.3 Following an appropriate procurement exercise the Society of IT Management (Socitm Consulting) was engaged to conduct a high level review of the existing ICT provision in the light of current best practice for a major local authority and in the context of stability, scope and sustainable cost in the current financial environment.

This has included an overview of the areas of:

- Hardware and networks
- Applications and systems
- Resilience and availability
- Organisation and structure
- Methodologies and working practices

2.4 In addition, a number of members of staff with extensive experience of Wirral Council IT services, infrastructure and departments are reaching an age at which they are able to retire should they so choose which would bring to an end a period of stability and continuity. This means that systems and processes need to be in place which are not reliant on informal networking or accumulated knowledge.

3 OVERVIEW OF CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Some services could be rated as “gold” or “silver” e.g. hardware investment while others may be considered as “bronze” e.g. disaster recovery.

3.2 Customer perceptions range from excellent to poor and there is poor understanding by customers of the performance of the service.

3.3 Each section of IT Services individually provides an effective response to perceived customer needs but those needs are not managed within a corporate governance process.

3.4. IT developments should be commissioned as part of the strategic process and aligned with Council priorities as part of improved corporate governance and therefore responsibility should be transferred to the Deputy Director of Finance.

3.5. Professional methodologies for assessing and managing projects should be employed, including

- Business cases for all projects and IT investment – this is not currently enforced
- PRINCE2 – project management methodology
- MSP (Managing Successful Programmes) framework and concepts
- ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library) - service management
- SFIA (Skills Framework for the Information Age) – IT skills structure.

Cabinet on 15 April 2010 agreed to the implementation of MSP, ITIL and SFIA.

3.6. Business lead risk assessments should determine appropriate levels of business continuity and disaster recovery for business processes and service delivery, underpinned by appropriate IT services. This process should be lead by the Deputy Director of Finance.

- 3.7. The Business Architecture team of IT Services should be transferred to the Deputy Director of Finance to separate the determination of security standards from implementation. Again, this would represent good corporate governance.
- 3.8 The previous decision to form a corporate IT unit is endorsed by Socitm Consulting and while any continuing outposts of IT staff should be incorporated, IT staff should be visible in departments in line with the distributed office model.
- 3.9. Emphasis must be placed on improving communication and customer service using corporate Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and centred on a strengthened account management function and service desk.
- 3.10 Most systems remain appropriate but the Council should review the business requirements for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Corporate Electronic Document Records Management (EDRM) systems currently in use to determine their ongoing suitability to meet the business demands and timescales.
- 3.11 A future wide area network renewal should consider a “ring” structure rather than a “star” structure for improved resilience.
- 3.12 Despite the requirements of Government Connect, networks will need more flexibility to accommodate a wide variety of different end-user requirements including third party and volunteer access to Council systems in future.
- 3.13 The IT service to schools should remain as it currently is pending any developments in schools provision.

4 HARDWARE AND NETWORKS

4.1 The Council is pursuing appropriate technologies in areas such as:

- Unix and Windows Server Virtualisation
- Storage Area network
- IP Telephony
- Thin Client Desktop
- Network technology

but needs to further develop appropriate business cases in support of these initiatives to ensure that the maximum value is derived from its investment in these technologies.

- 4.2 A programme of planned, phased replacement and life-cycle management of desk top equipment should be implemented. This will have an impact on resources required for desk top support and will reduce the number of calls to the service desk.
- 4.3 The Wide Area Network design should be reviewed when next appropriate to consider a “ring” design as opposed to a “star” design which will give greater resilience as it reduces dependence on individual points in the network.
- 4.4. Network security should be reviewed to give a more flexible approach e.g. to allow third party access to systems while still complying with Government Connect although it is recognised that having a network shared with schools and libraries is an added complexity.
- 4.5. The increasing need for wireless access and use of mobile media should be addressed in a secure manner where there is a business case for the use of these technologies.

5 APPLICATIONS AND SYSTEMS

- 5.1 Service specific applications are those in common use across Local Government.
- 5.2 The Oracle e-Financials system broadly meets Council requirements and is also in common use.
- 5.3 The Oracle CRM system has attracted criticism for issues with external support and for protracted development times and should be the subject of a business review to determine its suitability. Wirral may have to review this in the future in any case as Oracle’s roadmap for this project is uncertain as it has recently acquired a competing CRM product.
- 5.4 The Corporate Documentum EDRM system attracts similar comments to the Oracle CRM. The business requirements for an EDRM system at corporate level should be reviewed and then the Documentum specification evaluated against these requirements.
- 5.5 The Drupal open source system for the Council and Merseyside Pension Fund websites will give useful experience of the issues around the use of open source and if successful open source may be considered as an alternative sourcing method for other applications.
- 5.6 The Geographical Information System needs to be managed as a corporate technology asset to ensure further corporate exploitation and therefore responsibility should be transferred from the Change Team to IT Services.

6 RESILIENCE AND AVAILABILITY

- 6.1 The central hardware is configured to give a high level of resilience and business continuity but its location is poor for the purpose of disaster recovery.
- 6.2 The location of the data centre rooms, two in the Treasury Building and one in the Hamilton Building is unsatisfactory and should be resolved to provide greater physical separation and reduced reliance on local electricity and telephone networks. This was agreed by Cabinet on 18 March 2010

7 ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

- 7.1 All ICT developments should be managed and prioritised in line with corporate priorities and to common standards. This role should be transferred to the Deputy Director of Finance.
- 7.2 The concept of the central IT unit is endorsed and any remaining departmental staff should be absorbed into IT Services.
- 7.3 The Business Architecture team of IT Services should be transferred to the Deputy Director of Finance to separate the determination of security standards from implementation.
- 7.4 IT Services should be reorganised, placing greater emphasis and resources on the communications, performance and service desk functions which will eventually be responsible for first and second line support for all IT systems.
- 7.5 IT Services should engage with Members and other service users to establish the requirement for support outside of normal hours.
- 7.6 The schools IT service, which deals with 95 primary and 13 secondary schools, should remain as it is at present.

8 METHODOLOGIES AND WORKING PRACTICES

- 8.1 The help desk function should be re-named as the Service Desk and should be strengthened to provide a comprehensive contact point for all ICT issues, providing first and second line support, communicating with service users at a variety of levels and encompassing an enhanced account management function.
- 8.2 New corporate Service Level Agreements should be introduced for the benefit of IT Services and clients. These will set the standards of the IT service which is required by the Council and provide a means against which the success of the IT service can be reliably measured.
- 8.3 The new service desk software currently being implemented should act as a base for performance management information.

8.4 The service desk should rely heavily on “self service”.

8.5 Industry standard professional methodologies should be developed:

- Business cases for all projects, to enable projects to be aligned with corporate priorities and from which IT resource requirements will follow
- Prince 2 – project management methodology
- MSP (Managing Successful Programmes) framework and concepts
- ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library) - service management
- SFIA (Skills Framework for the Information Age) – IT skills structure.

8.6 ITIL is the most widely accepted approach to IT service management in the world.

It is a best practice framework that has been drawn from both the public and private sectors internationally. It describes how IT resources should be organised to deliver business value, documenting the processes, functions and roles of IT Service Management (ITSM).

Amongst the benefits of ITIL are:

- Reduced costs
- Improved IT services through the use of proven best practice processes
- Improved customer satisfaction through a more professional approach to service delivery
- Standards and guidance
- Improved productivity
- Improved use of skills and experience

8.7 SFIA provides a common reference model for the identification of the skills needed to develop effective Information Systems making use of Information and Communication Technologies.

It uses a common language and a sensible, logical structure that can be adapted to the training and development needs of a very wide range of businesses – or simply used ‘off the shelf’.

SFIA enables employers of IT professionals to carry out a range of HR activities against a common framework of reference - including skills audit, planning future skill requirements, development programmes, standardisation of job titles and functions, and resource allocation.

9 PRINCIPAL ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

Principal Actions	Responsibility	Comment	Date
Reorganisation of IT Services	Director of Finance		31.12.10
Assess appropriate levels of business continuity and disaster recovery	Deputy Director of Finance	Determine in conjunction with Asset Management Strategy and Health, Safety & Resilience Operations Manager.	30.09.11
Consult re out of hours support	Head of IT Services		31.03.11
Implement ITIL/ SFIA	Head of IT Services	Investigate training opportunities, identify relevant staff. May require assistance from external trainers.	30.09.11
Re-tender Wide Area Network	Head of IT Services	Determine in conjunction with Asset Management Strategy and investigate opportunities for sharing with Health Service.	Earliest 31.03.12
Review suitability of and business requirements for Oracle CRM and Documentum	Deputy Director of Finance/Head of IT Services	Extend current review	31.03.11
Implement planned replacement of desk top equipment	Head of IT Services	In conjunction with "thin client" roll-out and Strategic Asset Review.	From 2010
Review Service Level Agreements	Head of IT Services		31.03.11
Review Communications	Head of IT Services	In conjunction with Head of Tourism and Marketing	31.03.11

10 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 IT Services has a gross budget of £12.75m as follows:

	£m	
Corporate	10.06	(£8.50m controllable)
Schools Service	2.69	(income from schools)
Total	12.75	

10.2. One of the aims of this strategic review was to assess the possibility of reducing ICT costs by 20% over the period to 2015. Implementation of the recommendations in the report should achieve savings of £1.7m phased over four years.

10.3 The staffing establishment is 188 posts as follows:

Corporate	142
Schools	46
Total	188

10.4 It is anticipated that several of the initiatives currently under way, e.g. desk top thin client or in the near future e.g. lifecycle management of desk tops and fault recording self service, will reduce the need for staff resources.

11 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no equal opportunity implications.

12 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no community safety implications.

13 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no Local Agenda 21 implications.

14 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no planning implications

15 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no anti-poverty implications

16 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

16.1 There are no social inclusion implications

17 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

17.1 Members will be consulted on the requirement for out of hours support.

18 BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 ICT Service Delivery Review – SOCITM Consulting – August 2010.

19 RECOMMENDATIONS

19.1. That the recommendations of the report be implemented.

19.2. That, as agreed by Cabinet on 18 March 2010, a further report be prepared on business continuity and disaster recovery.

19.3. That consultation be undertaken on the provision of enhanced out of hours support, any proposals to be reported back to the Cabinet.

19.4. That, as agreed by Cabinet on 15 April 2010, ITIL and SFIA be developed possibility with initial assistance from external trainers.

19.5. That the suitability of the Oracle CRM and Documentum systems be reviewed as part of the current exercise.

19.6. That SOCITM be requested to agree to the public release of the report.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/193/10

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

CONSULTATION ON THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS RATE REVALUATION IN WIRRAL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. On 22 July 2010, the Cabinet considered my report on the impact of the 2010 Non Domestic Rates Revaluation upon the level of rates paid by Wirral businesses compared to the amount paid in 2009-10. Members requested that officers consult with representatives of the local business community on the impact of the increases and possible options to assist those most affected. This report details the result of those consultations and Members are requested to decide if any extra help should be given.

2. NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES / BUSINESS RATES

- 2.1 This is the national scheme of property tax based on occupiers and owners paying rates calculated by reference to a rateable value of a non domestic property multiplied by an annually reviewed rates poundage. Rates are collected by each local authority and paid to the Government. The national proceeds are then paid to local government based on population as part of the main revenue support grant settlement. Wirral in 2010/11 will collect around £65m and be paid £137.8m by the Government.
- 2.2 A revaluation of all business rate properties takes place every five years and the latest took effect from 1 April 2010. However, the rateable values, upon which the charge is based, are determined by reviewing rents that were passing at or around 1 April 2008. Values are assessed on actual rental evidence collected by the Valuation Office Agency. Five yearly revaluations make sure each ratepayer pays their fair contribution, by ensuring that the rates paid by any one ratepayer reflects the changes over time in the value of their property relative to others. The revaluation itself does not raise additional money for the Government or the Authority.
- 2.3 The effect of the valuation is that there is an overall increase of 17-18% in total Rateable Value for the Wirral area. However the national multiplier, the rate poundage, which is used to calculate ratepayers bills has reduced by 14.5% for 2010/11. There are a total of 7,900 properties in Wirral of which 38% have seen their rates bill rise, the charge for the remaining 62% of properties has reduced or remained the same.

- 2.4 During a five year cycle rental trends between types of property and between areas may change and thus values do not go up or down uniformly. Certain areas within Wirral are faced with larger increases in rateable values than the area norm. In addition changes of rateable values for certain categories of properties within those areas also fall outside the area norm. This reflects the changes in rental value since the previous re-valuation.
- 2.5 To assist businesses there are a number of support mechanisms within the national scheme and these are detailed below:
- i. **TRANSITIONAL RELIEF SCHEME** - allows the change in rates payable after a revaluation to be brought in gradually to help businesses adjust to increases. In 2010/11 £2bn nationally has been paid out by the Government mainly to offset large increases which are being phased in. Each year there is a maximum limit on increases and to help pay for this there is also a limit on the maximum reduction which is also being phased in at a higher rate.
 - ii. **SMALL BUSINESS RATE RELIEF (SBRR)** - assists small businesses that occupy one property whose rateable value is less than £18,000 but who can have additional properties but each must have a rateable value of less than £2,600 to still qualify. Qualifying properties then have a smaller rate poundage applied. Eligible properties with a rateable value of less than £12,000 receive further relief. Properties under £6,000 rateable value receive 50% relief and those between £6,000 and £12,000 receive a gradually reducing percentage of relief down to zero at £12,000. The Government has extended this relief for 2010-11 and 2011-12. Historically, take up of small business rate relief in Wirral has been good and is now over 90% of eligible businesses in receipt of relief.
 - iii. **DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF** - is awarded to charities and community amateur sports clubs who receive 80% relief by law and can receive the additional 20% at the discretion of the Authority. Wirral tends to award this 20% top up relief. Organisations not established or conducted for profit can at the discretion of the Authority receive up to 100% relief. Wirral has consistently given this relief in support of these bodies and organisations.
 - iv. **HARDSHIP RELIEF** - The Authority has the power to grant Hardship Relief to individual business ratepayers. 25% of any relief granted is funded directly by the Authority and Members have used the power only in exceptional cases. Whilst the legislation does not prevent local authorities awarding relief where it could be considered that the ratepayer would sustain hardship, Government guidelines detail that a blanket policy should not be implemented and each case should be considered on its merits.

- v. **DEFERRED PAYMENT OF 2009-10 RATES LIABILITIES** - In 2009 the Government introduced a one off scheme to assist ratepayers due to the increase in rates being set in November 2008 at 5% for April 2009 by which time the underlying level of inflation had reduced to almost nil.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1. Officers have met with representatives from the Wirral Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Birkenhead Market Traders Association
- 3.2. It was generally welcomed by the representatives that the Council was willing to consider options for relief; however, there was some acceptance that the level of relief may be tempered by both legislative and budgetary constraints.
- 3.3. The discussions appear to indicate that, in two of the three organisations, the current level of business rates had not resulted in a large degree of correspondence or contact from their members. This may well be due to a general acceptance from ratepayers that as a tax burden it was a cost that they would have no option but to meet.
- 3.4. There is concern, however, from the Market Traders Association that the levels of business rates charged in respect of their members' stalls appear to be somewhat higher than at other comparable sites in the country. The Association was successful in achieving a reduction in their rates from the 2005 Rating List, however this reduction does not appear to have been mirrored in the 2010 Rating List and, as a result, appeals are currently being lodged with the Valuation Office Agency.
- 3.5. The representative from the Federation of Small Businesses revealed that his organisation were lobbying nationally to persuade the Government to introduce automatic qualification for small business rate relief and was impressed by the 90% take up of the relief in this area. It was explained that there is a process of actively encouraging each new occupation that was potentially eligible for relief to apply, and the simplicity of the application greatly assisted in this endeavour.
- 3.6. Whilst the discussions did not prompt any new and potentially viable options for awarding additional relief to businesses in difficulties, it was recognised by each that certain areas of the Borough had been disproportionately affected by the revaluation as my previous report had indicated. The relationship between the transitional relief and small business rate relief schemes might result in much larger bills for 2010-11 for certain ratepayers in certain areas of the Borough.

4. LEGISLATIVE CONSTRAINTS

- 4.1 The Council has the discretion to award relief to ratepayers on the grounds of hardship or if the ratepayer is a charity or organisation not set up for, nor conducted for, profit.
- 4.2 In both cases, elements of the relief awarded are funded by the Government. In the cases of Hardship relief and relief to organisations not set up or established for profit the Council is required to fund 25% of any relief granted. In the case of top up discretionary relief for charities the Council is required to fund 75% of any top up relief awarded. In each case, the cost is met by the Discretionary Rate Relief budget.
- 4.3 Whilst the legislation does not prevent local authorities awarding relief where it could be considered that the ratepayer would sustain hardship, Government guidelines detail that a blanket policy should not be implemented and each case should be considered on its merits. The guidelines also stipulate that relief on the grounds of hardship should be the exception rather than the rule.
- 4.4 Options considered below could be construed as a blanket policy and therefore the full cost of such awards is likely to fall directly to the Council.

5. OPTIONS FOR RELIEF

5.1 Option 1 - Small Business Rate Relief

- 5.1.1 It is estimated that approximately 300 properties that were in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) during 2009-10 have been substantially and adversely affected as a consequence of the 2010 Revaluation.
- 5.1.2 The increase in rateable value has meant that the properties are in receipt of proportionally less SBRR in 2010-11 than in 2009-10. A breakdown of the areas affected is reproduced in Appendix A
- 5.1.3 The properties concerned have however had the increase mitigated by the recent extension of the SBRR scheme which has effectively doubled the amount of SBRR for the period 1 October 2010 to 30 September 2011. A list of those properties that may have been affected is attached in Appendix B.
- 5.1.4 Criteria to award a certain sum of relief amounting to £100 per property could be put in place e.g. the occupants of all properties with a rateable value between £6,500 and £12,000 and in receipt of SBRR could be requested to apply for a £100 grant. The total award for the Borough could be limited for a specific year and also the timeframe in which to apply could be limited.
- 5.1.5 This option need not be targeted at those areas most affected by the increase in business rates during 2010-11. There is no doubt businesses in other areas of the Wirral are struggling to pay business rates and so the criteria could be used to bring them into the scheme.

5.1.6. This option could give Members certainty by setting a total award at the outset. It is unlikely however that the Government would consider this option as hardship and therefore the full cost would have to be met from Council funds.

5.2 Option 2 – Relief for Small Businesses

5.2.1 Legislatively there are definitive criteria to define a small business, dependent on the rateable value of the property. For the award of an additional sum of relief Wirral could extend this rateable value limit further to assist other “small businesses” that occupy properties in the range £12,000 to £25,000 as their sole place of business.

5.2.2 This option can be targeted at all areas of the Borough and the amount per property could be set at £200 given the higher range of rateable values than in the previous option. Members can again set a total award to give certainty of budget and a defined timeframe in which to apply.

5.2.3 The entire cost of this option, as in Option 1, is likely to be required to be met from Council budgets.

5.3 Option 3 - Hardship Relief

5.3.1 The Authority has the power to grant Hardship Relief to individual business ratepayers. 25% of any relief granted is funded directly by the Authority and Members have used the power only in exceptional cases. In 2009/10 one application only was supported, for £2,081. This situation is similar to most other local authorities.

5.3.2 Whilst the legislation does not prevent local authorities awarding relief where it could be considered that the ratepayer would sustain hardship, Government guidelines detail that a blanket policy should not be implemented and each case should be considered on its merits. As guidance from the Government indicates that each case be considered on its merits then there is the potential for an administratively cumbersome process

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Whilst Hardship Relief is funded in part by the Government, the cost of options 1 and 2 would have to be met directly out of Council funds for which there is currently no provision.

6.2. If it is decided to implement either option 1 or 2 a £20,000 capped limit could provide assistance for either 200 or 100 business ratepayers respectively

6.3. The extension of Small Business Rate Relief from 1 October 2010 should result in far fewer businesses being adversely affected by the revaluation.

7. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are no specific staffing implications arising directly from this report.

8. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

8.1. An analysis of affected properties is shown in the Appendices.

9. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

10. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

12. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

13. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

13.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

14.1. None were used in the preparation of this report.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1. That Cabinet notes the extension of Small Business Rate Relief from 1 October 2010.

15.2. That Cabinet notes that the option of Hardship Relief exists for any business with particular difficulties.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/191/10

APPENDIX A

Ward	SBR Properties with increase over 3.5% cap	SBR Properties with increase over 3.5% adjusted for extension to SBRR scheme
Bebington	6	1
Bidston & St James	8	3
Birkenhead & Tranmere	39	4
Bromborough	10	2
Clatterbridge	12	0
Claughton	6	0
Eastham	4	1
Greasby, Frankby & Irby	16	0
Heswall	18	8
Hoylake & Meols	46	19
Leasowe & Moreton East	8	2
Liscard	7	1
Moreton West & Saughall Massie	10	1
New Brighton	2	0
Oxton	5	0
Pensby & Thingwall	8	0
Prenton	6	2
Rock Ferry	3	0
Seacombe	15	3
Upton	25	6
Wallasey	15	1
West Kirby & Thurstaston	11	2
Totals	280	56

APPENDIX B

Properties over 3.5% cap after SBRR Extension

Address			Percentage increase
2A CHURCH ROAD	BEBINGTON		11.77%
505 CLEVELAND STREET	BIRKENHEAD		10.41%
18 HOYLAKES ROAD	BIRKENHEAD		5.13%
6 TRINITY CHAMBERS (UNIT 7) IVY STREET	BIRKENHEAD		14.67%
UNIT, JACKSON STREET	BIRKENHEAD		4.65%
220 PRICE STREET	BIRKENHEAD		14.22%
62-64 WOODSIDE BUSINESS PARK, SHORE ROAD	BIRKENHEAD		5.31%
16-20 ST ANNE STREET	BIRKENHEAD		36.39%
115-117 MOUNT ROAD	BIRKENHEAD		4.19%
381 WOODCHURCH ROAD	BIRKENHEAD		5.58%
88 GREENDALE ROAD	BROMBOROUGH		12.51%
74 NEW CHESTER ROAD	BROMBOROUGH		87.56%
91 EASTHAM VILLAGE ROAD	EASTHAM		11.60%
52 PENSBY ROAD	HESWALL		29.34%
56 PENSBY ROAD	HESWALL		20.63%
68 PENSBY ROAD	HESWALL		26.17%
182A TELEGRAPH ROAD	HESWALL		10.77%
182B TELEGRAPH ROAD	HESWALL		8.83%
ORCHARD CHAMBERS, 4 ROCKY LANE	HESWALL		15.52%
FIRST FLOOR, 129 TELEGRAPH ROAD	HESWALL		8.90%
66 TELEGRAPH ROAD	HESWALL		11.60%
UNIT 1 CARHAM COMMERCIAL PARK, CARHAM ROAD	HOYLAKES		10.28%
UNIT 2A THE PRINT HOUSE, CARR LANE	HOYLAKES		6.53%
UNIT PRINT HOUSE, CARR LANE	HOYLAKES		9.15%
GARDEN CENTRE, BIRKENHEAD ROAD	HOYLAKES		21.70%
16/16A MARKET STREET	HOYLAKES		11.95%
18 MARKET STREET	HOYLAKES		12.38%
20 MARKET STREET	HOYLAKES		18.30%
29A MARKET STREET	HOYLAKES		39.88%
30 MARKET STREET	HOYLAKES		14.12%
113A REEDS LANE	LEASOWE		7.84%
157D HOYLAKES ROAD	MORETON		11.77%
OAKDALE HOUSE 125 OAKDALE ROAD	SEACOMBE		15.69%

LUNA HOUSE OLD GORSEY LANE	SEACOMBE		13.98%
3 ARROWE PARK ROAD	UPTON		7.26%
25 ARROWE PARK ROAD	UPTON		7.26%
27-27A ARROWE PARK ROAD	UPTON		17.04%
37 ARROWE PARK ROAD	UPTON		7.52%
146 FORD ROAD	UPTON		6.74%
167-169 FORD ROAD	UPTON		14.22%
196 SAUGHALL MASSIE ROAD	UPTON		29.53%
169-171 POULTON ROAD	WALLASEY		6.19%
24 SEAVIEW ROAD	WALLASEY		14.83%
265-267 WALLASEY VILLAGE	WALLASEY		30.38%
15 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		46.10%
84 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		24.91%
85-87 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		64.67%
86 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		17.01%
88 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		22.40%
90 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		17.01%
92 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		29.44%
98 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		40.74%
100 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		31.37%
108 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		24.91%
164-166 BANKS ROAD	WEST KIRBY		18.72%
40 GRANGE ROAD	WEST KIRBY		10.63%

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

JOINT WORKING WITH HER MAJESTY'S REVENUES AND CUSTOMS (HMRC)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report details the proposed move of Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) face to face enquiry office for Wirral to the Birkenhead One Stop Shop in the Conway Centre, Conway Street from February 2011. Members are requested to agree that this example of public sector joint working should be progressed.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Customer Services provide three main access channels, face to face, telephone and Web. The face to face areas focus on the network of One Stop Shops. One Stop Shops not only provide access to Council services but work with other public sector bodies and voluntary sector agencies.
- 2.2. Currently the organisations present at various sites include the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) via Job Centre plus and the Pension Service, the NHS, Merseyside Police, Wirral Partnership Homes and four voluntary sector agencies. Added to this staff are present in four Job Centre Plus sites giving advice on Council services to DWP claimants as well as to general visitors.
- 2.3. It is an objective of the Government that, wherever possible, national and local government services should be available to the public in one location and so this approach by HMRC has presented a further opportunity to build on the work already being done by One Stop Shops.

3. HER MAJESTY'S REVENUES AND CUSTOMS SERVICE ON WIRRAL

- 3.1 HMRC currently has a small face to face enquiry facility based at Birchen House, Canning Street, Woodside, Birkenhead. It is open Monday to Friday 8.30 to 17.00 with a later Wednesday opening at 9.30. Whilst it offers a drop in service it also has appointment based interviews.
- 3.2. HMRC has reviewed both its property in use and its contact strategy. This has culminated in a rationalisation of offices within its current estate. It has looked for a more efficient method of retaining face to face access whilst promoting cheaper access methods of telephone and web which will both remain unaffected by this development.

- 3.3. HMRC has already successfully moved to co-location of face to face access in a number of North West local authorities including Rochdale, Bolton and Blackpool.
- 3.4. Back office HMRC staff from Birkenhead are being re-located to Government offices in Liverpool to maximise their use and allow the Birchen House property to be vacated. HMRC wish to maintain a face to face presence in Birkenhead and having looked at alternatives have identified that the Conway Centre One Stop Shop meets their necessary customer service standards as well as having a town centre location.

4. CO-LOCATION OF HMRC AT THE CONWAY CENTRE OSS

- 4.1. Discussions have taken place on the HMRC requirements for an on site presence and the changes that would be required at the Conway Centre which is the busiest One Stop Shop.
- 4.2. HMRC and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management and the Director of Finance have reviewed requirements and agreed that while some internal re-modelling of one of the main rooms is required, along with minor changes on the first floor to accommodate staff while not on the booths, HMRC can be accommodated on site. An additional three booths will be created at a cost of £39,200 along with minimal back office re-arrangements. The booths will be mainly used by HMRC and suitably signed but will also be used by OSS staff. HMRC would also have access to the interview rooms and share the public space. HMRC IT requirements will also be catered for within this work.
- 4.3. This is the minimum work to achieve this change and by doing this there will be a co-ordinated public sector contact point in central Birkenhead. I will work with HMRC to ensure that the single reception and signposting arrangement is developed in such a way as to not be a detriment to either HMRC or the Authority.
- 4.4. The formal terms of the occupation are being agreed by the Head of Asset Management. The decision to undertake the work necessary to achieve this joint working was taken under delegated authority by the Cabinet Member for Corporate Resources on 16 August 2010.

5. PROPOSED TIMETABLE

- 5.1. HMRC have indicated that they would want to be in situ at Conway by late February 2011. There will be some disruption and inconvenience in the main room at the One Stop Shop while work is undertaken but this will be minimised. This timescale is considered to be achievable with work commencing in December 2010.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The cost of the proposed alterations will be £39,200. This will be jointly funded between HMRC and Wirral Council. The Wirral contribution is being met from the One Stop Shop reserve which was set up to deal with small scale building alteration.

7. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are none arising out of this report.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The co-location and ease of access to more services in one place will help respond to equal opportunity issues. The existing One Stop Shop facilities are DDA compliant and this will extend to the new booths.

9. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

10. ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The co-location and ease of access to more services in one place will help in addressing Anti Poverty, given the use of the site by people on low income who will now be able to access information and advice on a wider range of income related matters .

11. SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

11.1. The co-location and ease of access to more services in one place will further help in addressing Social Inclusion, as more services are available on site, thus more people will access the breadth of services many of which are aimed at broadening inclusivity especially via financial and benefit related services.

12. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

12.1. The co-location and ease of access to more services in one place will clearly help reduce double journeys and create a focus for a wide range of enquiries to be responded to in one place.

13. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

14. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are none arising directly from this report as the alterations proposed are all internal alterations and do not require planning permission. The alterations will retain the environment of the One Stop Shop whilst creating a distinct area for use by HMRC.

15. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

15.1. Birchen House and Conway Centre One Stop Shop are in Birkenhead and Tranmere ward.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1. Correspondence with HMRC.

16.2. Plans for alterations within the Conway Centre One Stop Shop.

17. RECOMMENDATION

17.1. That Members agree to the re-location of the HMRC Enquiry Office to the Conway Centre One Stop Shop.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/194/10

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE FORMULA GRANT DISTRIBUTION-CONSULTATION PAPER

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report informs Cabinet of the consultation paper issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 28 July 2010 regarding the local government finance formula grant distribution and the response to the consultation which has been submitted.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Formula Grant Distribution System is concerned with the distribution of a large part of the grant provided by the Government to fund spending by local authorities. As changes to the grant distribution formula can result in adjustments to the level of grant received it is important that the Council play an active role in the consultation and lobby strongly in favour of the options that are most appropriate and provide Wirral with the best financial outcome.
- 2.2. The current Formula Grant Distribution System was last reviewed before the 2008/09 Local Government Finance Settlement. The consultation process looks at grant distribution changes that could be introduced for the 2011/12 settlement onwards.
- 2.3. On 26 August 2010 officers from Wirral Council attended the Liverpool City Region Financial Planning Officers Group. The questions set out in the consultation paper were discussed and suggested responses formulated for Member consideration, to aid a maximum benefit for the area. Whilst a response is being submitted on behalf of the City Region each Authority is also submitting an individual response. The Council as a member of SIGOMA has also been involved in the preparation of a SIGOMA response.

3. CONSULTATION PAPER

- 3.1. The consultation paper poses a number of questions. These are set out in the Appendix together with details of the implications for Merseyside.

3.2 The consultation paper includes some questions relating to police and fire and rescue services. As Wirral Council does not directly provide these services no comment is provided on these areas. Responses to these questions will come directly from police and fire and rescue authorities. However there could be some minor impact on the Wirral formula grant allocation.

3.3 It should be noted that whilst the consultation paper and changes to the distribution of formula grant are important the upcoming Spending Review will have a greater impact on the resources available to authorities in the subsequent Local Government Finance Settlement.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The distribution of the formula grant may be influenced by the outcome of the consultation.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

7. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

8. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

9 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

10. LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

10.1. There are no particular implications for any Members or wards arising out of this report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. Local Government Finance Formula Grant Distribution – DCLG July 2010.

12. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 12.1. That Cabinet note the consultation paper and the responses as set out in the appendix to this report.

IAN COLEMAN
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

FNCE/196/10

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE FORMULA GRANT DISTRIBUTION - CONSULTATION PAPER

NB: Figures shown in the tables below are positive and therefore represent gains for the Authority unless preceded by a minus in which case they are negative and a loss to the Authority.

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

Q1) Do you agree that we should update the Low Income Adjustment (OPPSS1)?

Impact:

	£m
Merseyside	
Knowsley	0.1
Liverpool	0.4
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council supports this change. This adjustment takes account of local authorities' differing abilities to raise income from fees and charges for services provided in respect of Adult Social Care. The proposal is to use the latest data available as opposed to that currently used which relates to 2005/06. This adjustment is consistent with a needs based formula which Wirral has consistently supported.

POLICE

Q2) Do you agree that activity analysis should be updated and a three year average used instead of the current two year average (POL 1)

Impact:

	Option POL1	Option POL2
Merseyside		
Knowsley	0	0
Liverpool	0	0.1
Sefton	0	0
St Helens	0	0
Wirral	0	0
Merseyside Fire	0	0
Merseyside Police	-1	5.6

Q3) Do you agree that the log of weighted bars per 100 hectares indicator should be used in place of log bars per 100 hectares indicator (POL 4)?

Impact:

Merseyside	Option POL4
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	1.9

Q4) Do you agree that the three elements of Additional Rule 2 Grant mentioned in Chapter 4 “Police” paragraph 19 should be rolled into Principal Formula Police Grant (Main Grant) and therefore distributed as through the Police Allocation Formula (POL 3)?

Impact:

Merseyside	Option POL4
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	-0.3

Q5) Do you agree that the whole of the Rule 2 grant should be rolled into Principal Formula Police Grant (Main Grant) and therefore distributed as through the Police Allocation Formula (POL 4)?

Impact:

Merseyside	Option POL4
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	1

FIRE AND RESCUE

Q6) Do you agree that the expenditure data used to determine the coefficients should be updated (FIR1)?

Impact

Merseyside	Option F1R1
Knowsley	0.2
Liverpool	0.7
Sefton	0
St Helens	0.1
Wirral	0.2
Merseyside Fire	-2.9
Merseyside Police	0.2

Q7) Should annual cashable efficiency savings be added to the updated expenditure data used to determine the coefficients (FIR 2)?

Impact

Merseyside	Option F1R2
Knowsley	0.2
Liverpool	0.7
Sefton	0
St Helens	0.1
Wirral	0.1
Merseyside Fire	-2.7
Merseyside Police	0.2

Q8) Would you prefer either FIR 3 or FIR4 as an alternative to the current risk index?

Impact

Merseyside	FIR 3	FIR 4
Knowsley	0	0.1
Liverpool	0	0.3
Sefton	0	0
St Helens	0	0
Wirral	0	0.1
Merseyside Fire	0.8	1.1
Merseyside Police	0	0.1

HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

Q9) Do you agree that the daytime visitors component of daytime population per km should be removed? (HM1)

Impact:

	£m
Merseyside	
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council opposes this change. Although the data was last revised in 2002/03 no suitable alternative has as yet been identified by the Settlement Working Group. In the absence of more up-to-date data it would be preferable to retain the old data rather than remove this component from the formula as some measure of daytime visitors need to be included in the formula.

Q10) Do you agree that the expenditure data used to determine the coefficients should be updated? (HM2)

Impact:

	£m
Merseyside	
Knowsley	0.1
Liverpool	0.2
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council supports this change. It is agreed that using the most up to date data is the best option. However the use of past spend as a determinant of need is flawed and does not necessarily reflect need accurately. A better solution would be if the formula were needs based to consider authorities whose roads are based in urban areas and are used intensively for industrial and commercial purposes.

ENVIRONMENTAL, PROTECTIVE & CULTURAL SERVICES

Q11) Do you agree that foreign visitor nights is a suitable replacement for day visitors in the district-level and county-level EPCS RNFs (EPCS1)?

Impact:

Merseyside	£m
Knowsley	-0.1
Liverpool	-0.7
Sefton	-0.7
St Helens	-0.6
Wirral	-0.4
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0.2

Response

Wirral Council argues against the use of foreign night visitors. Whilst the day visitors' figures are out of date the proposed alternative indicator suffers from the same shortcomings as the primary data is apportioned to local authorities using the 1991 census, which is the same out of date apportionment method for day visitors. It therefore seems a fruitless exercise to use this as a replacement.

Q12) Do you agree that the new GIS-based flood defence formula should be used (EPCS2)?

Impact:

Merseyside	£m
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0.1
Sefton	-0.1
St Helens	0
Wirral	-0.6
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council does not agree that the new GIS-based flood defence formula should be used. The reason for this is Local Authorities have constructed defences under the Land Drainage Act and these are classed as defences against tidal flooding. There is no relationship between these defences and the length of ordinary watercourses. It is not clear whether or not these defences have been accounted for within the proposed formula.

Q13) Do you agree that the new GIS-based coast protection formula should be used (EPCS3)?

Impact:

Merseyside	£m
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0
Sefton	-1.6
St Helens	0
Wirral	-0.3
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council does not agree that the new GIS-based coast protection formula should be used. There are a number of concerns over the formula suggested, the main issue being that the formula focuses on property at risk of erosion as opposed to avoiding properties coming into that category. The best approach to risk management would be to concentrate resources on dealing with avoiding properties coming into that category.

AREA COST ADJUSTMENT

Q14) Do you agree with the proposal to update the weights given to the labour cost adjustment (ACA1)?

Impact:

Merseyside	£m
Knowsley	0.1
Liverpool	0.5
Sefton	0.8
St Helens	0.5
Wirral	0.8
Merseyside Fire	-0.1
Merseyside Police	-0.3

Response

Wirral Council supports this as the proposal does take into account evidence available and the weights are more reflective of what has happened in reality. However overall Wirral opposes the use of the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) in the distribution of local government funding. The ACA was established purely to take account of perceived variations in pay costs, but in recent years authorities in receipt of ACA have been able to subsidise their Council Tax as they have benefitted from more efficient methods of working. This has resulted in cost outputs lower than that assumed by the ACA. e.g. the development of information technology.

SCALING FACTOR

Q15) Do you think that the scaling factor for the central allocation should be close to one, so that equal importance is attached to the amounts above and below the minima?

Response

Wirral Council supports the proposal that the scaling factor for the central allocation should be close to one. The Formula Grant distribution should be fully reflective of need. If judgement can be made to increase Relative Needs this principle will be more closely met.

Q16) If so would you prefer Ministers to be able to set judgemental weights for the Relative Needs Amount, as in option CAS1, or the Relative Resource Amount, as in option CAS2?

Impact:

	£m (CAS1)	£m (CAS2)
Merseyside		
Knowsley	-0.5	1
Liverpool	-0.8	2.9
Sefton	-0.3	0.3
St Helens	-0.3	0.3
Wirral	-0.4	0.8
Merseyside Fire	-0.2	0.2
Merseyside Police	-0.5	0.7

Response

Wirral Council would prefer Ministers to be able to set judgemental weights for the Relative Resource Amount (CAS 2). The proposed increase in the Relative Needs Block proportion with a compensating decrease in the Central Block would make the system fairer and more closely correlated to relative needs.

FLOOR DAMPENING LEVELS

Q17) Over the next Spending Review period do you think that the floor level should be set close to the average change or such that it allows some formula change to come through for authorities above the floor?

Response

Wirral Council supports the floor remaining in place and that it is set close to the average change. This is key to Wirral and other authorities in giving a degree of certainty during this period of significant change and financial pressure. As a result Wirral maintains that the Government should not consider tampering with, or phasing out, the floor.

TRANSFERS AND ADJUSTMENTS

Q18) Which of the four options for removing concessionary travel from lower-tier authorities do you prefer (CONCF1, CONCF2, CONCF3, CONCF4)?

Impact:

Merseyside	Before Floor Dampening (£m)			
	CONCF1	CONCF2	CONCF3	CONCF4
Knowsley	0.6	0.6	0	0
Liverpool	1.5	1.5	0	0
Sefton	3.7	3.7	2.8	2.8
St Helens	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.5
Wirral	3.6	3.6	2.8	2.8
Merseyside Fire	-0.3	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2
Merseyside Police	-1.1	-1.1	-0.8	-0.8

Impact:

Merseyside	After Floor Dampening (£m)			
	CONCF1	CONCF2	CONCF3	CONCF4
Knowsley	0.4	2.1	0.5	0.4
Liverpool	0.1	5.2	1.3	0.4
Sefton	1.2	4.1	1.1	2.7
St Helens	0.8	2.6	0.6	1.5
Wirral	1.3	4.4	1.1	2.9
Merseyside Fire	0	0	0	0
Merseyside Police	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1

Response

Wirral Council has concerns over the lack of available exemplifications for CONCF1 and CONCF2 when considering the transfer of concessionary travel from lower-tier authorities to upper-tier authorities. Due to the lack of exemplifications full consideration of these proposals cannot be made. Purely from the distributional impact shown for CONCF2 as a stand alone change, Wirral would appear to benefit, but it is not possible to reach an adequate conclusion to support CONCF2 at this stage.

Of the remaining options CONCF4 takes funding out of the district level in line with the formula allocation and, therefore, is perceived to be the fairest of those exemplified by DCLG. This is the option supported by Merseytravel.

Q19) Which of the six options for rolling concessionary travel to upper tier authorities do you prefer (CONCF5, CONCF6, CONCF7, CONCF8, CONCF9, CONCF10)?

Impact:

Merseyside	Before Floor Dampening (£m)					
	CONCF5	CONCF6	CONCF7	CONCF8	CONCF9	CONCF10
Knowsley	-0.5	-0.5	0.3	0.3	-2.8	-2.8
Liverpool	-0.8	-0.8	1.7	1.7	-5.6	-5.6
Sefton	-0.8	-0.8	0.1	0.1	-3.5	-3.5
St Helens	-0.7	-0.7	0.1	0.1	-2.7	-2.7
Wirral	-1.1	-1.1	0.1	0.1	-4.3	-4.3
Merseyside Fire	-0.1	-0.1	0	0	-0.1	-0.1
Merseyside Police	-0.6	-0.6	0.1	0.1	-0.7	-0.7

Merseyside	After Floor Dampening (£m)					
	CONCF5	CONCF6	CONCF7	CONCF8	CONCF9	CONCF10
Knowsley	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.2
Liverpool	0.6	1.8	0.6	1.6	1.2	1.1
Sefton	-0.2	-0.2	0.1	0.2	-0.7	-1.3
St Helens	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	0.2	-0.6	-0.9
Wirral	-0.2	-0.1	0.2	0.3	0.9	-1.4
Merseyside Fire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Merseyside Police	-0.1	-0.1	0	0	-0.1	-0.1

Response

Of the options available Wirral Council prefers CONCF8 for rolling concessionary travel to upper tier authorities. However the funding for Concessionary Fares should be delivered via the current Special Grant rather than transferring into the Formula Grant. The previous decision to allocate the resources as a Special Grant was correct as it allowed the resources to be easily identified and does not disadvantage floor authorities.

Q20) Should concessionary travel have its own sub-block (within the EPCS block)?

Response

Wirral Council is not able to support or oppose the option that concessionary travel should have its own sub-block within the EPCS block. This would provide some transparency to the amount of funding provided for a nationally determined scheme. As a result it would be possible to see when and if the Government meets its obligations to fully fund concessionary travel. However the consultation paper does not provide sufficient information on the impact of this proposal to draw a conclusion.

Q21) Do you agree with methodology for adjusting the base position for unadopted drains?

Response

The proposal allows for the transfer of responsibility for “private sewers” from local authorities to sewerage and water companies. Wirral Council oppose the methodology because there are concerns over the accuracy of some of the data. Also the formula should use population as a base instead of properties.

THE INCAPACITY BENEFIT AND SEVERE DISABLEMENT ALLOWANCE

Q22) Do you agree that the incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance indicators should use quarterly data rather than annual data (DATA1)?

Impact:

	£m
Merseyside	
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	-0.1
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council supports using quarterly data rather than annual data. This will more accurately reflect the current needs of local authorities.

REPLACING THE CHILDREN'S INCOME SUPPORT BENEFIT INDICATOR

Q23) Do you agree that children in out-of-work families receiving Child Tax Credit (CTC) should replace the current children of IS/ (IB) JSA claimants (DATA 2)

Impact:

Merseyside	£m
Knowsley	-4.4
Liverpool	-8.1
Sefton	-3.3
St Helens	-1.1
Wirral	-4.6
Merseyside Fire	-0.8
Merseyside Police	0.6

Response

Wirral Council opposes this. There seems some doubt concerning the close correlation between the two sets of data, particularly highlighted by the impact on the major city in the region (Liverpool.)

Further, the data on JSA claimants is relatively accurate and up to date whilst as has been seen previously the tax credit system has been subject to errors and fraud. Using Free School Meals eligibility could be a much simpler and easily obtainable data set to collect and use.

STUDENT EXEMPTIONS AND THE COUNCIL TAX BASE

Q24) Would you prefer that May data only is used for the student exemptions adjustment in the tax base projections (DATA 3)?

Impact:

Merseyside	£m
Knowsley	-0.1
Liverpool	0.1
Sefton	-0.1
St Helens	-0.1
Wirral	-0.1
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council opposes using May data only. This provides a distorted view of student exemptions, providing an overestimate of the amount of student exemptions.

Wirral would have more support for the use of an average figure (May & October) as this could improve the accuracy of the tax base projections.

UPDATING DATA ON LOW ACHIEVING ETHNIC GROUPS

Q25) Do you agree that the new definition of secondary school pupils in low achieving ethnic groups should be used (DATA 4)?

Impact:

	£m
Merseyside	
Knowsley	0
Liverpool	0
Sefton	0
St Helens	0
Wirral	0
Merseyside Fire	0
Merseyside Police	0

Response

Wirral Council opposes this. The inclusion of this indicator does not accurately reflect the attainment levels in the region of British White secondary school pupils in comparison to pupils classified within low achieving ethnic groups.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

Additional Question 1) Do you agree that we should treat the City of London as two notional authorities for floor damping purposes (DAMP 1)?

Wirral Council supports this. There is strong logic in the proposal for the treatment of the City of London.

OTHER COMMENTS

Wirral Council makes the following comments:

Damping

Wirral welcomes the continuation of damping within the Local Government Finance System and takes this opportunity to re-iterate the view expressed in response to Question 17. With the expectation of an extremely challenging Comprehensive Spending Review, the need to continuously generate substantial efficiencies, plus the potential major distributional impact of some of the proposals within this consultation it is imperative that damping is set at a reasonable level (i.e. average) to provide stability of funding.

Multi-year Settlement

The next couple of years are expected to be turbulent for local authorities following the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and implementation of the Government policy agenda. A fundamental part of the local government finance system has been the introduction of multi-year financial settlements to provide a degree of certainty in funding, which allows for sound financial planning. However the DCLG structural plan refers to reform of the local government finance system by 2012. Therefore, if the Government is seriously considering a major upheaval of the local government finance system it would be better to update the data within the formula, but not instigate any major changes that result in large re-distributions of Formula Grant.

Business Rates

There is concern that the Government is seeking to reform business rates. The current system ensures that business rates are re-distributed via Formula Grant on a more equitable basis. Furthermore, business rates now account for 83% of the total distribution of Formula Grant and any reform will require a fundamental reform of how local government is funded.

New Burdens/Additional Resources

It is vital that any additional funding for new burdens or initiatives is given as grant or as an adjustment to the 2010/11 formula base, otherwise floor authorities will receive no additional funding to implement the schemes. This is equally important for capital schemes as decisions on whether to provide capital grants or supported borrowing are usually based on Government Departments cash flow position whereas the outcome of this choice is fundamental to floor authorities who will gain 100% of the resources through grant, but potentially 0% if through supported borrowing. This principle should be taken into account in the allocation of resources from now on.

Efficiency Savings

It is felt strongly that any cashable efficiency targets set as part of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review are not netted off against Formula Grant allocations. These efficiencies are required by local authorities to fund the annual gap between cost pressures and available resources. If efficiencies are netted off the Formula Grant, local authorities will have no option but to make major service cuts.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET: 14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

CARE QUALITY COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORT - FIRST IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE AND DEVELOPMENT OF SECOND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Executive Summary

This report provides detail of progress towards addressing the service issues raised by the Care Quality Commission's Inspection of Adult Social Services in May 2010 and providing a second improvement plan to Care Quality Commission by 19 October 2010.

1 Background

- 1.1 Members will recall the presentation of the Care Quality Commission's Report on their inspection into the Adult Social Services Safeguarding and Adult Learning Disability Services on 2 September 2010.
- 1.2 Also presented at that meeting was the Council's initial response - the First Improvement Plan, which was well received by members and Inspectors.
- 1.3 Work towards achieving the First Improvement Plan has been undertaken alongside a consultation with partner agencies, customers and carer representatives which will result in a Second Improvement Plan, to be submitted by 19 October 2010.

2 Milestones in the First Improvement Plan

- 2.1 There was 1 Milestone for July (milestone 12). This required 'Make it Happen' reports to begin to be presented into the Learning Disability Partnership Board with the intention for the actions from the Learning Disability Commissioning framework being implemented by that Board. This has been completed.
- 2.2 There are no outstanding milestones for July.
- 2.3 In August there were 5 milestones.
 - (Milestones 62 & 112) Provider workshops to consult upon and shape new contracting arrangements for personal support provided by the independent sector which highlighted both safeguarding (62) and support planning (112) expectations were undertaken. The new contracting arrangements will be presented at December Cabinet.

- (Milestone 147) An analysis was undertaken to review and test the data collection procedures of the scope and levels of activity between Departmental teams and partner agencies to ensure the accurate and consistent reporting of information - complete.
- (Milestones 133 & 148) Weekly performance statistics for Local Indicators 8866 (percentage of safeguarding alerts dealt with in 24 hours) and 8867 (percentage of safeguarding incidents closed within 28 days) with exception reports were developed and began to be distributed to Locality Managers. This is now regular and will form the basis of the suite of information being offered to the Safeguarding Adult and Learning Disability Partnership Boards.

2.4 There are no outstanding milestones for August

2.5 September Milestones are still in the process of being completed and evidence being gathered. However, 13 of the 15 milestones for September have already been addressed. A complete report on September activity will be submitted to the next Cabinet.

3 Governance

3.1 A Monitoring Group has been established and will meet on 12 October 2010. The Group comprises of customer and carer representatives, Chief Officers, partner agency representatives and the regional chair of the Government's 'Valuing People Now' strategy. It is anticipated that the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board will also join the group.

3.2 Care Quality Commission support - the Care Quality Commission Performance Assessment Manager is consulted about the type and level of information they require during the progression of the Improvement Plans.

4 First Improvement Plan Consultation

4.1 Following the Care Quality Commission embargo until 2 September 2010, the First Improvement Plan has been shared with Corporate and Community partners, customers and carer representatives for comments on its appropriateness and effectiveness. It has also been presented to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 It has been presented to the Safeguarding Adult Partnership Board with particular reference to that Boards' pivotal role in driving the Safeguarding agenda in Wirral.

4.3 Similarly, it has been presented to the Learning Disability Partnership Board with the emphasis on the expectations Care Quality Commission have for that Board to drive and direct appropriate services for people with learning disabilities in Wirral.

4.4 The First Improvement Plan has been shared with those partner agencies which provide domiciliary care, residential care and supported living services. It has also been shared with representatives of Wirral's Black and Minority Ethnic Groups.

4.5 All responses are being used to formulate the first draft of the Second Improvement Plan which is due for submission to the Care Quality Commission on 19 October 2010. Feedback continues to be received; however, an update 'draft' Second Improvement Plan is attached as appendix 1.

5 Risk Assessment

5.1 Following consultation with the Council's Risk and Insurance Officer, a Risk Assessment specific to the needs of the Improvement Plan has been developed and circulated to Officers responsible for its delivery. This is in the process of evaluation and will be submitted to the next Cabinet.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising out of this report.

7 Staffing Implications

7.1 A range of issues have been addressed within the Improvement Plan to ensure that Wirral provides competent staff, who have appropriate support and training.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications/Health Impact Assessment

8.1 An equality impact assessment was undertaken on the safeguarding improvement plan which was implemented and delivered between June 2009 and June 2010.

9 Community Safety Implications

9.1 None arising from this report.

10 Local Agenda 21 Implications

10.1 None arising from this report.

11 Planning Implications

11.1 None arising from this report.

12 Anti Poverty Implications

12.1 None arising from this report.

13 Social Inclusion Implications

13.1 None arising from this report.

14 Local Member Support Implications

14.1 None arising from this report.

15 Background Papers

15.1 Care Quality Commission Service Inspection Report of Wirral Council (2 September 2010).

15.2 Adult Social Services First Improvement Plan.

16 Recommendations

That Cabinet;

- (1) notes this report on progress in the First Improvement Plan for Safeguarding and Services to Adults with a Learning Disability
- (2) the Second Improvement Plan be approved by Cabinet for submission to Care Quality Commission by 19 October, with any final amendments being agreed by the Interim Chief Executive.

JOHN WEBB
Director of Adult Social Services

Appendix 1

SECOND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

For

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS;

**MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION FOR ADULTS WITH
A LEARNING DISABILITY;**

**INCREASED CHOICE AND CONTROL FOR ADULTS WITH
A LEARNING DISABILITY;**

PROVIDING LEADERSHIP;

AND

COMMISSIONING AND USE OF RESOURCES.

**VERSION 3 (Note; -all revisions are recorded in bold in the body of this Plan,
and separately in Appendix 1)**

October 2010

FOREWORD

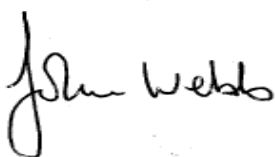
This is the **Second Improvement Plan** developed to respond to the issues raised in the Care Quality Commission's Inspection of Wirral' Council's Safeguarding Adults and Adult Learning Disability services. The Inspection took place in May 2010.

The Care Quality Commission Inspection Report was "embargoed" until presented to Cabinet on 2nd September and the First Improvement Plan had to be developed in that context.

It was agreed that a **second revised Improvement Plan** – along with a report outlining progress to date would be submitted to CQC by Tuesday, 19th October. This will enable further scrutiny of improvement areas and full involvement of partners, including the Safeguarding and Learning Disability Partnership Boards.

The Plan recognises the improvements to be made and the Council is determined to improve services in all 21 improvement areas.

The governance arrangements for this Second Improvement Plan will remain as those for the First Improvement Plan in that it will be managed by the Director of Adult Social services, with the close and direct involvement of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Inclusion.



JOHN WEBB
Director of Adult Social Services



COUNCILLOR BOB MOON
Cabinet Member for Social Care & Inclusion

IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Safeguarding Adults

Improvement Area 1 – Ensure that arrangements and policies for preventing abuse are comprehensive and co-ordinated.

1. A multi-agency mission statement for Safeguarding will be completed.
2. Multi-agency Safeguarding policies and procedures will be finalised.
3. The Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board will be chaired by an Independent Person
4. Lessons learned' from national serious case reviews and best practice will be regularly considered by the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.
5. The 'Dignity in Care' initiatives will be more widely promoted.
6. Hate crime incidents for people with disability and people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities will be more clearly reviewed.
7. Public information about safeguarding which particularly targets, carers, self funders, people from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and people who misuse alcohol or drugs will be made more accessible.
8. Relevant partners will be given access to the Department of Adult Social Services electronic case management system under information –sharing protocols.
9. Strengthened arrangements for consent to treatment will be implemented to ensure effective support for people with complex needs on admission to, and discharge from hospital.
10. The initial Equality Impact Assessment of the Safeguarding Adults Improvement Project undertaken in 09/10 will be reviewed.
11. Joint working arrangements on the prevention agenda across the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) will be further developed.

Improvement Area 2 – Embed a shared approach to recognising and responding to allegations of abuse.

1. Public information about safeguarding issues will be provided in a range of community venues
2. Joint working arrangements across Children's and Adults Boards will be established.
3. The Central Advice and Duty Team service level agreement with Department of Adult Social Services will be reviewed.
4. A comprehensive analysis of areas of risks and incidents of abuse will be undertaken.
5. A multi-agency Safeguarding Training Plan will be developed and implemented.

Improvement Area 3 – Ensure that staff involved in safeguarding adults and supporting people with high or complex needs have the appropriate knowledge and competences.

1. Develop multi-agency training plan
2. A staff competency framework will be developed.
3. The DASS supervision procedure will be revised to reflect a stronger focus on safeguarding, risk management and practice standards.
4. Appropriate training to safeguard people with high or complex needs will be implemented.
5. Poor workforce practices will be addressed and appropriate action taken.
6. The revised safeguarding procedures will be appropriately implemented in DASS

Improvement Area 4 – Ensure that safeguarding activity at all levels is focused on the experience of people who require safeguarding and on the outcomes achieved.

1. The experiences of people who have reported safeguarding issues in local communities will be routinely reported into the Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.
2. Individuals subject to safeguarding will be engaged in all stages of the safeguarding process
3. The Mental Capacity Action Plan will be implemented.

Improvement Area 5 – Ensure that safeguarding is supported by robust quality assurance arrangements across the partnership.

1. A Safeguarding quality assurance framework will be developed.
2. A regular process for sampling safeguarding cases will be developed.
3. Performance reports which track trends will be made available to the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board on a regular basis.

Improvement Area 6 – Improve scrutiny of provider activity and risks across the sector.

1. The contract monitoring of health and social care providers will be improved.
2. New contracts for personal support provided by the independent sector outlining safeguarding expectations will be developed.
3. A quality assurance partnership with representative groups will be developed to quality assure providers.

Making a positive contribution for adults with a learning disability.

Improvement Area 7 – Improve its focus on people who have limited opportunities to engage in and contribute to their local communities.

1. The Council's Comprehensive Engagement Strategy will be reviewed to ensure that the needs of people with limited opportunities for engagement are reflected in it.
2. **Issues raised in the Initial Equality Impact Assessment of the Three Year Strategic Commissioning Framework for People with Learning Disability will be addressed.**
3. The Volunteer Strategy will be implemented.
4. Payments made to people who attend Day Services will be reviewed to ensure an equitable approach.
5. The key priorities of the revised Commissioning Strategy will reflect access to local housing, employment, leisure opportunities and social networks in local communities

Improvement Area 8 – Ensure wider representation, involvement and support for people using services and their carers in planning and managing change.

1. The Learning Disability Partnership Board and its sub groups will continue to implement actions from the Learning Disability Commissioning Framework.
2. People with learning disabilities and their carers will be supported to fully engage in shaping Council services.
3. **The Learning Disability Partnership Board will be more closely supported to develop a more directive approach.**

Increased choice and control for adults with a learning disability.

Improvement Area 9 – Ensure that people with learning disabilities and their carers have access to appropriate advice, information and support.

1. A Wirral wide Information, Advice and Advocacy Strategy which explicitly includes learning disability services will be produced.
2. A sample of people who have been signposted to other services by the Central Advice and Duty Team will be audited.

Improvement Area 10 – Ensure people's needs are holistically assessed and supported by effective partnership working

1. A model for equitable access and delivery of health, housing, education and social care support will be developed and implemented.
2. **The updated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) will be used to identify the range of the social care needs of people with learning disabilities and their families and drive partnership working to support their resolution.**
3. The training plan for personalisation will be further developed.
4. Revised policy, procedure and practice guidance underpinning the Personalisation reforms will be implemented.

Improvement Area 11 – Transform support planning to provide a clear focus on the future, on risks to individuals, on the promotion of their independence and outcomes.

1. Implement policy, procedure and practice guidance and ensure staff attend mandatory training
2. The Phase 2 pilot of the Personal Budgets Project will be completed and Phase 3 will be initiated to roll the process out across the Department.
3. Providers will be engaged in new contract arrangements and involved in the development and delivery of Support Planning.
4. See also Improvement area 3, Actions 1, 3 & 6.

Improvement Area 12 – Address gaps in awareness of the needs of and support to carers.

1. Carer's legislation and a revised local carer's strategy will continue to be implemented.
2. Policy and procedures for carers will be implemented
3. **Information relevant to carers will be routinely circulated throughout the learning disability partnership**
4. See also improvement area 3, Actions 1 & 3

Improvement Area 13 – Ensure that reviews are appropriately timed and focused.

1. A schedule of reviews will be developed and implemented to ensure they are delivered in a timely manner to all people with learning disabilities who receive support from the Council.
2. Also, see Improvement area 3, Actions 3, 4 & 5.

Improvement Area 14 – Strengthen arrangements for management and learning from complaints and compliments.

1. A system for learning from complaints and compliments including root cause analysis will be developed and implemented.
2. A system for following up outcomes for people including informing them of improvements made as a result of the complaint will be further developed and implemented.
3. Learning from complaints will be embedded in working practices.
4. The use of advocates and mediation will be further established in the complaints and quality assurance process.

Providing leadership.**Improvement Area 15 – Ensure the Safeguarding Adults Board and Learning Disability Partnership Board drive improved outcomes for local people.**

1. The Learning Disabilities Partnership Board and its subgroups will continue to implement actions from the Learning Disability Commissioning Framework.
2. Clear performance-monitoring report processes for both Safeguarding Adults Partnership and Learning Disability Partnership Boards will be developed and implemented.
3. See also Improvement Area 8, Actions 1 & 2.

Improvement Area 16 – Promote stronger communication with and involvement of local people and service providers in shaping the vision and development of local services.

1. People with learning disabilities will be supported to engage in the Council's 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation.
2. People with disabilities will be involved with the Localisation Commission
3. The Department of Adult Social Services communication strategy group will refresh and re-align communication plans for transforming adult social care, safeguarding adults and the transformation of adult with learning disability services.

Improvement Area 17 – Develop robust joint planning to address local needs secured by effective deployment of resources and management of risk.

1. The Managing the Market Project (commenced August 2009) will be completed.
2. Voluntary agency contracts will be reviewed.
3. An analysis will be undertaken to determine levels of activity between teams and partners agencies (including the number of staff for safeguarding adults and learning disability services).
4. The Terms of Reference of the Joint Commissioning Group for people with learning disabilities will be revised.
5. Elected members will be involved in the safeguarding adults and learning disability agendas
6. The role of the Safeguarding Adults Sub Groups will be further developed.
7. An agreed Resource Allocation System will be implemented.

Improvement Area 18 – Expand its approach to prevention to deliver improved outcomes for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

1. The Early Intervention Strategy will be implemented.
2. Specific support for people with learning disabilities and carers will be identified through the early Intervention workstreams.
3. The offer of Assistive Technology to people with a learning disability and/or their carers will be made clearer.

Improvement Area 19 – Ensure the workforce across the sector has relevant knowledge, skills and experience to do their job well.

1. The Competency Framework will be developed with learning plans
2. Performance management and supervision policy will be integrated
3. HR Policies and their application will be reviewed (review will include trends and issues).
4. Managers will be trained in performance management for HR policy application

Commissioning and Use of Resources

Improvement Area 20 – Robustly challenge and enable the local market to address gaps, raise standards and meet new personalisation requirements.

1. Advocacy and brokerage support processes involving the voluntary and community sector will be developed.
2. The Emergency Duty Team arrangements will be reviewed.
3. See also improvement area 17, Actions 1 + 2

Improvement Area 21 – Ensure joined-up and efficient use of resources across the council, health and housing services.

1. The 'Total Commissioning' model will be agreed and implemented across the public sector in Wirral.
2. The Department of Adult Social Services Business Plan 2011-14 will be refreshed.
3. The Corporate Plan 2011-14 will be refreshed.
4. The Council will direct the use of in-house provider services. Cost efficiency will be driven within the Department and through the current 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation.
5. The medium-term financial plan will be strengthened as a result of the current administration budget and resource allocation, and following feedback from the 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation.
6. Robust contingency plans to manage decommissioning across the sector will be developed.

LIST OF LEAD RESPONSIBLE OFFICERS

John Webb	Director Adult Social Services – Wirral Council
Aiden Pollitt	Service Manager, Direct Locality Support – Adult Social Services
Andrew Swan	Safeguarding Mental Capacity Act Lead - Wirral University Teaching
Ann Marie Nobes	Head Of Safeguarding - Nhs Wirral
Carolyn Curr	Head Of Policy And Performance - Wirral Council
Chris Hyams	Head Of Hr & Organisational Development – Wirral Council
Francesca Tomlin	Principal Manager, Reform Unit – Adult Social Services
Gill Foden	Service Manager, Human Resources – Adult Social Services.
H Cooper	Director Of Children’s Services – Wirral Council
Ian Platt	Head Of Housing – Wirral Council
Jim Wilkie	Director Of Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive – Wirral Council
Malcolm Flanagan	Head Of Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services – Wirral Council
Maura Noone	Head Of Integrated Communities & Wellbeing Branch - Adult Social Services
Mike Fowler	Head Of Finance & Performance Branch – Adult Social Services
Peter Edmondson	Head Of Branch (Participation And Inclusion) – Children And Young People’s Department – Wirral Council
Paula Neate	Reform Unit Manager – Adult Social Services
Rachel Hughes	Principal Manager (Performance) – Adult Social Services
Rick O’Brien	Head Of Access And Assessment Branch – Adult Social Services.
Russell Grant	Integrated Commissioning Manager – NHS Wirral and Adult Social Services
Stephen Rowley	Head Of Support Services – Wirral Council
Sheila Hillhouse	Director Of Strategic Partnerships – NHS Wirral

FIRST IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Page 69

	PAGE
1. SAFEGUARDING ADULTS;	12
2. MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION FOR ADULTS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY;	26
3. INCREASED CHOICE AND CONTROL FOR ADULTS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY;	31
4. PROVIDING LEADERSHIP;	42
5. COMMISSIONING AND USE OF RESOURCES.	51

1. Safeguarding Adults

Improvement Area 1 – Ensure that arrangements and policies for preventing abuse are comprehensive and co-ordinated.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
1	1	A multi-agency mission statement for Safeguarding will be completed.	1	Safeguarding vision and strategy signed off by Local Strategic Partnership.	Mar-11	All partnership agencies will share the same aspiration for developing Safeguarding services.	J Webb
1	2	Multi-agency Safeguarding policies and procedures will be finalised.	2	Multi agency safeguarding procedures approved by Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board	Oct-10	Safeguarding services will be operated consistently across all partner agencies.	M Noone
1	2		3	Cross-agency audit evidences that procedures are in use across all agencies.	Jan-11		M Noone
1	2		4	Copies of policies and procedures are accessible in a range of formats and venues.	Jan-11		M Noone
1	2		5	Serious Case Reviews procedure reviewed and updated and aligned with 'whole system' arrangements.	Nov-10		M Noone

Page 70

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
1	3	The Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board will be chaired by an Independent Person	6	Independent Chair appointed.	Nov-10	Improved safeguarding arrangements resulting from routine external scrutiny and challenge.	J Webb
1	4	Lessons learned' from national serious case reviews and best practice will be regularly considered by the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.	7	Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board has 'Lessons Learned' as a standing Agenda item.	Mar-11	Local practices will be influenced by the wider national experience.	J Webb
1	4		8	Review Panel to consider the findings of serious case reviews and make recommendations accordingly	Mar-11		J Webb
1	5	The 'Dignity in Care' initiatives will be more widely promoted.	9	Shared Action Plan reviewed (including inputs from front-line staff).	Dec-10	People will feel more valued by services and those that care for them. LINKs annual report published. Dignity in care working group representatives from the Third Sector working with locality teams.	R O Brien
1	5		10	Charter Mark in place, which recognises the achievement of groups and organisations who work hard to safeguard adults at risk.	Dec-10	Organisations and groups who have achieved the Charter Mark show increase quality of service outcomes.	M Noone

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
1	6	Hate crime incidents for people with disability and people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities will be more clearly reviewed.	11	Reporting of hate crime incidents to the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board formalised.	Oct-10	There will be an increased awareness of hate crime and an increasingly earlier identification of related safeguarding issues.	M Noone
1	7	Public information about safeguarding which particularly targets, carers, self funders, people from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and people who misuse alcohol or drugs will be made more accessible.	12	People using services and partner agencies engaged in awareness raising and production of accessible information	Dec-10	Those who require support in relation to the misuse of alcohol or drugs will more readily know where to obtain it.	M Noone
1	7		13	Safeguarding information produced in culturally appropriate formats.	Dec-10		M Noone
1	7		14	Safeguarding information made available to relevant groups.	Dec-10		M Noone

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
1	8	Relevant partners will be given access to Department of Adult Social Services electronic case management system under information – sharing protocols	15	Information Sharing Protocols agreed with all partner agencies via SAPB.	Dec-10	The improved access to information will ensure co-ordinated activity and information sharing.	M Fowler
1	8		16	Technical Specification presented to Information Strategy Group.	Dec-10		M Fowler
1	8		17	Access solution implemented.	Feb-11		M Fowler
1	9	Strengthened arrangements for consent to treatment will be implemented to ensure effective support for people with complex needs on admission to, and discharge from hospital.	18	Consent to Treatment processes reviewed and revised to ensure appropriate support is provided on admission or discharge to hospital for people with complex needs	Mar-11.	Services will be clearer and more consistently delivered.	T Long
1	10	The initial Equality Impact Assessment of the Safeguarding Adults Improvement Project undertaken in 09/10 will be reviewed.	19	Review Completed.	Oct-10	The Safeguarding Adults Improvement Project will deliver services more equitably.	M Noone
1	11	Joint working arrangements on the prevention agenda across the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) will be further developed.	20	The membership of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board and action plan both reviewed to reflect the safeguarding prevention agenda	Nov-10	Partnership agencies will have a clear and shared understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to the prevention of abuse.	J Webb

Improvement Area 2 – Embed a shared approach to recognising and responding to allegations of abuse.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
2	1	Public information about safeguarding issues will be provided in a range of community venues	21	Leaflets and posters produced in consultation with those who use services are accessible and available in a range of venues.	Dec-10	There will be an increased awareness about abuse and a greater understanding of how to respond to concerns about it.	M Noone
2	2	Joint working arrangements across Children's and Adults Boards will be established.	22	Joint working arrangements agreed by Children and Young People and Adult Social Services Departments	Sep-10	Learning in the respective Departments and partner agencies such as Merseyside Police will be shared and procedures revised accordingly.	J Webb H Cooper
2	2		23	Joint protocol and training programme in place for recognising and working with parents with mental health difficulties.	Dec 10	Safeguarding Adults and Children's Safeguarding procedures provide a stronger focus on 'whole family' approach.	J Webb H Cooper
2	3	The Central Advice and Duty Team service level agreement with Department of Adult Social Services will be reviewed.	24	Service Level Agreement revised in respect of Central Advice and Duty Team's role and responsibilities in regard to safeguarding.	Oct-10	The Central Advice and Duty Team's role in responding to allegations of abuse will be clearer and improved.	R O Brien

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
2	4	A comprehensive analysis of areas of risks and incidents of abuse will be undertaken.	25	Establish sub-group of Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board to review activity information.	Oct-10	Identification of high incident areas or low referral rates (for example) will inform safeguarding strategy.	A M Nobes
2	4		26	Sub group reports into Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.	Nov-10		A M Nobes
2	5	A multi-agency Safeguarding Training Plan will be developed and implemented.	27	Draft multi-agency Training Plan available.	Oct-10	There will be an increased awareness and understanding of respective roles and responsibilities across partnership agencies in relation to Safeguarding.	G Foden
2	5		28	Draft multi-agency Training Plan presented to Partner Agencies.	Nov-10		G Foden
2	5		29	Draft multi-agency Training Plan presented to SAPB.	Dec-10		G Foden
2	5		30	Multi agency Training Plan implemented.	Jan-11		G Foden

Improvement Area 3 – Ensure that staff involved in safeguarding adults and supporting people with high or complex needs have the appropriate knowledge and competences.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
3	1	Develop multi-agency training plan	31	Joint learning groups established to promote consistent practice and good use of advocates	Jan-11	Staff and managers who have successfully demonstrated competencies within the framework will deliver services at a satisfactory standard.	G Foden and C Hyams
3	1		32	Draft multi-agency Training Plan presented to Partner Agencies.	Nov-10	Training available in case recording for DASS staff developed	G Foden
3	1		33	Effective multi-agency training sub-group in place, underpinned by a robust business plan.	Dec-10		G Foden
3	1		34	Draft multi-agency Training Plan presented to SAPB.	Dec-10	Training will be reviewed to ensure a joint approach is taken between partnership agencies to safeguarding and the delivery of outcomes	G Foden

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
3	1		35	Multi agency Training Plan implemented.	Jan-11		G Foden
3	2	A staff competency framework will be developed.	36	Framework developed	Nov-10	Staff and managers who have successfully demonstrated competencies within the framework to deliver services to a satisfactory standard.	R O Brien
3	3	The DASS supervision procedure will be revised to reflect a stronger focus on safeguarding, risk management and practice standards.	37	Revised supervision procedure implemented.	Jan-11	Practice reflects a stronger focus on safeguarding, risk management and practice standards evidenced via audit of case and supervision files.	R O'Brien and C Hyams
3	3		38	Staff receiving regular appropriate supervision based on audit of supervision files.	Feb-11	Clarity provided to staff about accountabilities and expectations with regard to quality of staff practice and evidenced in supervision files.	R O Brien
3	3		39	Training and support needs for all staff identified.	Nov-10	All staff will have access to appropriate supervision, mentoring and coaching and Key Issues Exchange process is undertaken by all staff as part of a rolling programme.	R O Brien

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
3	4	Appropriate training to staff involved in work to safeguard people with high or complex needs will be implemented.	40	All relevant staff will have attended training in Safeguarding Adults Policy and procedures.	Nov-10	Appropriate and consistent practice in safeguarding adults.	R O Brien
3	5	Poor workforce practices will be addressed and appropriate action taken.	41	All fieldwork managers and staff will have a formal appraisal of their professional competence and practice standards	Nov-10	Staff involved in safeguarding and supporting people with high or complex needs will be able to demonstrate the appropriate level of competence and knowledge.	R O Brien
3	5		42	Staff competency framework implemented resulting in raised professional standards and clear accountabilities between agencies	Mar-11	Case files will be routinely audited.	R O'Brien
3	5		43	Implementation of appropriate Human Resources procedures.	Dec-10	Raised professional standards and clear accountabilities between agencies	R O Brien and C Hyams

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
3	6	The revised safeguarding procedures will be appropriately implemented in DASS	44	Case recording procedure developed and implemented.	Dec-10	Rolling Case file audit in place providing evidence of appropriate protection planning, management of risk, advocacy support, co-ordinated responses to abuse and engagement of individuals subject to abuse	R O Brien
3	6		45	Systems are in place to quality assure practice through routine auditing of case files and supervision notes.	Dec-10		R O Brien
3	6		46	Case file audit conducted providing evidence that appropriate standards of recording has taken place	Dec-10		R O Brien
3	6		47	Case recording is discussed in supervision sessions and evidenced on supervision files or minutes from team meetings	Dec-10		R O Brien

Improvement Area 4 – Ensure that safeguarding activity at all levels is focused on the experience of people who require safeguarding and on the outcomes achieved.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
4	1	The experiences of people who have reported safeguarding issues in local communities will be routinely reported into the Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.	48	The experiences of people who have reported safeguarding issues are recorded in the minutes of Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.	Dec-10	Procedures and individual support will be influenced by the wider local experience.	M Noone
4	1		49	Community Safety Partnership plans develop an approach to the inclusion of older people and people with a disability.	Feb-11		M Noone
4	2	Individuals involved in safeguarding will be engaged in all stages of the safeguarding process	50	Action plans from safeguarding investigations reflect the views of people who have needed a safeguarding intervention.	Apr-11	Individual experiences of the safeguarding process are appropriately used to shape future interventions.	R O Brien
4	2		51	People with experience of safeguarding issues attend Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board	Nov-10		J Webb
4	3	The Mental Capacity Action Plan will be implemented.	52	Action Plan and procedures form part of the multi agency procedures	Dec-10	All relevant staff will deliver a consistent and high quality service.	A Swan (Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board)

Improvement Area 5 – Ensure that safeguarding is supported by robust quality assurance arrangements across the partnership.

Page 81

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
5	1	A Safeguarding quality assurance framework will be developed.	53	Quality Assurance framework agreed by Strategic Leadership Team and Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board	Dec-10	The Quality Assurance Framework will provide checks on key elements of the safeguarding process.	M Noone
5	1		54	A system is in place which alerts across the economy when multiple concerns about a provider are received	Oct-10		M Noone
5	1		55	Evidence via performance reporting that incidents of abuse have been dealt with in a timely manner	Mar-11		M Noone
5	2	A regular process for checking safeguarding cases where 'no further action' is recorded will be developed.	56	Complete a review of sample referrals which are recorded as no further action	Jan-11	Confirmation of appropriateness of decision to take no further action	M Noone
5	3	Performance reports which track trends will be made available to the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board on a regular basis.	57	Operational managers follow up outstanding cases and provide regular reports to Strategic Leadership Team for reporting into SAPB.	Oct-10	The safeguarding process will be more efficient due to the closer monitoring of performance.	R Hughes

Improvement Area 6 – Improve scrutiny of provider activity and risks across the sector.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
6	1	The contract monitoring of health and social care providers will be improved.	58	Proactive monitoring of contracts in place	Oct-10	The increased level of monitoring of providers and the resultant information gathered will enhance the management of risk in this area.	M Noone
6	1		59	Risk monitoring of service providers is strengthened	Oct-10		M Noone
6	1		60	Robust joint arrangement in place to monitor across agencies	Oct-10		M Noone
6	1		61	Share learning from positive work with supported living providers across the sector and put schedules in place across system to meet needs of new contract	Mar-11		M Noone
6	2	New contracts for personal support provided by the independent sector outlining safeguarding expectations will be developed.	62	Provider Workshops undertaken and completed.	Aug-10	New Contracts will be awarded that reflect personalisation, promote Dignity in Care and strengthen risk management associated with safeguarding concerns	M Fowler

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
6	2		63	Report to Cabinet	Sep-10		M Fowler
6	2		64	Invitation to tender	Oct-10		M Fowler
6	2		65	Award of Contracts	Jan-11		M Fowler
6	2		66	New Contracts commence	Apr-11		M Fowler
6	3	A quality assurance partnership with representative groups will be developed to quality assure providers.	67	Quality Assurance process based on that operated by Wirral's Local Safeguarding Children's Board is agreed	Dec-10	The quality assurance process will be strengthened by the engagement of key stakeholders.	M Noone
6	3		68	Process implemented and feedback regularly delivered to Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board, DASS Strategic Leadership Team and appropriate groups	Mar-11		M Noone

2. Making a positive contribution for adults with a learning disability

Improvement Area 7 – Improve its focus on people who have limited opportunities to engage in and contribute to their local communities.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
7	1	The Council's Comprehensive Engagement Strategy will be reviewed to ensure that the needs of people with limited opportunities for engagement are reflected in it.	69	Local communities will be engaged in understanding and working with people with Learning Disabilities	Mar-11	People with limited opportunities will more readily access universal services in their local communities.	C Curr
7	2	Issues raised in the Initial Equality Impact Assessment of the Three Year Strategic Commissioning Framework for People with Learning Disability will be addressed.	70	Initial Equality Impact Assessment is presented to Learning Disability Partnership Board	Sep-10	Minutes of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board reflect presentation and discussion of issues in the Equality Impact Assessment.	S Rowley
7	2		71	Actions identified in moving to a Full Equalities Impact Assessment, including any training and development needs of the Learning Disability Partnership Board are progressed.	Feb-11	Equalities Framework will explicitly address the needs of people with learning disabilities	S Rowley

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
7	2		72	Inclusion of people from a diverse range of backgrounds in the design and delivery, monitoring and reviewing of services.	Jan-11	Equalities Framework will include criteria are in place to ensure a more diverse range of people are involved with services to deliver future changes	S Rowley
7	3	The Volunteer Strategy will be implemented.	73	Recruit volunteers to engage with the wider community.	Dec-11	100 new volunteers recruited to engage in the wider community, in addition to the 600 currently reported	M Noone
7	4	Payments made to people who attend Day Services will be reviewed to ensure an equitable approach.	74	The Council's policy on 'incentive' payments is revised in the light of the Council's strategy to promote employment opportunities.	Dec-10	Those who attend Day Services and receive payments will have a clearer understanding about their wage in relation to the national minimum standard.	Paula Neate

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
7	5	The key priorities of the revised Commissioning Strategy will reflect access to local housing, employment, leisure opportunities and social networks in local communities	75	Relevant strategies, policies and procedures are agreed by the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board	Mar-11	Increased access to local housing, employment, leisure opportunities and social networks in local communities	S Rowley
7	5		76	Reviews of all people who have a Learning Disability and receive a service from Department of Adult Social Services will be completed as part of a rolling programme and support plans developed to support access to housing and employment.	Mar-11	Increase in the percentage of people known to the Department of Adults Social Services who are in settled accommodation and paid employment.	R O Brien
7	5		77	Reviews of all people who have a Learning Disability and receive a service from Department of Adult Social Services will be completed through a self directed assessment process and support plans will be developed based on these assessments.	Mar-11	An increase to 30% of the total population supported by the Department of Adult Social Services receiving self directed support	R O Brien
7	5		78		Mar-11	Options and support in place for individuals to pursue their interest in local community settings evidenced via case audits	R O Brien

Improvement Area 8 – Ensure wider representation, involvement and support for people using services and their carers in planning and managing change.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
8	1	The Learning Disability Partnership Board and its sub groups will continue to implement actions from the Learning Disability Commissioning Framework.	79	The Partnership Board will have reviewed its arrangements for communicating with wider group of people using services, their carers, service providers and partners so that they are kept informed about priorities and progress	Oct-10	People with Learning Disabilities and their families and carers will have their lives improved in accordance with the aims of Valuing People Now.	J Webb
8	1		80	The strategic direction will be agreed across the partnership with local community and voluntary sector organisations	Dec-10	Shared vision to be in place which promotes the involvement of adults with a Learning Disabilities in making a positive contribution to delivering Valuing People Now outcomes	J Webb
8	1		81	The 'Enabling Fulfilling Lives' sub group will widen its focus of service user and carer representation	Dec-10	Enabling Fulfilling Lives group will have a diverse range of members including people who don't use Day Services.	A Pollitt

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
8	2	People with learning disabilities and their carers will be supported to fully engage in shaping Council services	82	Develop involvement arrangements to ensure the inclusion of people with high or complex needs and people from a minority ethnic background.	Dec-10	Higher numbers of people with complex needs will be involved in shaping council services.	M Noone
8	2		83	Widen choice of advocacy and self advocacy services for customers	Mar-11	Increased choice and take up of advocacy services for people with a Learning Disability	M Noone
8	2		84	People with learning disabilities as experts through their own experience will set standards, design, develop, deliver and evaluate services in Wirral	Mar-11	More services designed, delivered and evaluated by people with a Learning Disability	M Noone
8	2		85	Capacity added to enable carers to maximise the ability to drive change	Dec-10	Greater involvement of carers in groups	M Noone
8	2		86	People with learning disabilities and carers are included in the Council's consultation – 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it'.	Dec-10	Evidence of people with a Learning Disability having a say in 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it'..	C Curr
8	3	The Learning Disability Partnership Board will be more closely supported to develop a more directive approach.		A half-day workshop for all Board members to determine the full extent of the revised Terms of Reference will be undertaken.	Nov-10	Increasing scrutiny and drive	

3. Increased choice and control for adults with a learning disability

Improvement Area 9 – Ensure that people with learning disabilities and their carers have access to appropriate advice, information and support.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
9	1	A Wirral wide Information, Advice and Advocacy Strategy which explicitly includes learning disability services will be produced.	87	Strategy is written and signed off by the Learning Disability Partnership Board and appropriate organisations	Dec-10	People with Learning Disabilities will be supported to have a greater 'voice' and access support through advocacy, information and advice.	M Noone
9	1		88	A shared approach to reviewing the production of information with local partners and people using services and families. Information to include; savings thresholds, implication of having a job, complaints and self directed support	Mar-11		M Noone
9	1		89	Arrangements established for monitoring and reporting usage of the website by and usefulness to people with learning disabilities	Mar-11	Learning Disability Partnership Board website is operational	M Noone

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
9	1		90	A 'readers panel' of people who use services and carers is set up to assess departmental information to award local 'kite marks'	Mar-11		M Noone
9	1		91	Expand the use of different formats, including Easy-Read in all relevant communications including access to advocacy leaflets and information in large print	Oct-10	People receive information such as self directed support information packs in formats which are diverse and easy to understand	M Noone
9	2	A sample of people who have been signposted to other services by the Central Advice and Duty Team will be audited.	92	Revised service level agreement in place reflecting the need to report information on people who have been signposted	Oct-10	People with Learning Disabilities who are not eligible for Department of Adult Social Services support receive appropriate support to their needs.	R O Brien and M Flanagan
9	2		93	Auditing process agreed and implemented	Dec-10	Learning from outcomes of signposting and accepting of referrals implemented in developing new services.	R O Brien and M Flanagan

Page 90

Improvement Area 10 – Ensure people’s needs are holistically assessed and supported by effective partnership working.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
10	1	A model for equitable access and delivery of health, housing, education and social care support will be developed and implemented.	94	Develop through the self directed support planning process an equitable set of choices for people with Learning Disabilities to access health, housing, education and social care support.	Nov-10	Local priorities for supported housing are agreed, a transparent allocation system in place and access to supported housing is better co-ordinated	R O Brien and I Platt
10	1		95	Agree on the basis of demand, a model for integrated delivery of services with people with Learning Disabilities	Nov-10	Improved commissioning processes alongside more robust support planning.	R O Brien and I Platt
10	1		96	The Learning Disability Partnership Board to consider a revised model for specialist LD service.	Nov-10	Agreed model for future model of integrated services for people with Learning Disabilities.	R O Brien
10	2	The updated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) will be used to identify the range of the social care needs of people with learning disabilities and their families and drive partnership working to support their resolution.	97	Relevant details from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment providing key information about people with learning disabilities and their carers (including for example, those carers facing difficulties through increasing infirmity) are reported into the LDPB.	Oct-10	The JSNA will inform identification of the issues facing older families and ensure these feature in local planning.	R Grant

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
10	2		97A	Report made to LDPB providing local data relevant to the 8 key questions outlined in Valuing Older People Now	Dec-10		R Grant
10	2		98	Adaptations to housing support people moving into supported housing.	Mar-11	Adaptations are provided in a timely way	I Platt (Learning Disability Partnership Board)
10	2		99	Access to education is improved and courses easy to understand	Mar-11	Greater numbers of people with a Learning Disabilities accessing local higher education.	P Edmondson (Learning Disability Partnership Board)
10	3	The training plan for personalisation will be further developed.	100	Training Plan addresses personalisation agenda including training on support planning, outcomes, personalisation awareness, process training etc	Nov-10	Greater awareness of personalisation by professionals and carers who work and care for people with Learning Disabilities	F Tomlin
10	3		101	Training available in case recording for DASS staff developed	Nov-10		F Tomlin

10	3		102	Support planning training will be reviewed to ensure it reflects a joint approach is taken between housing, health and social care and a shared approach to safeguarding and the delivery of outcomes	Dec-10		F Tomlin
10	3		102B	Training will be made available to carers and those who support people with learning disabilities.	Dec-10		F Tomlin
Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
10	3		103	Establishment of joint learning groups to promote consistent practice and good use of advocates	Jan-11		F Tomlin
10	4	Revised policy, procedure and practice guidance underpinning the Personalisation reforms will be implemented	104	Evidence from case files that needs are holistically assessed taking account of issues across agencies such as housing, health and social care	Mar-11	People with Learning Disabilities will receive a seamless service from agencies working in partnership with one another.	R O Brien
10	4		105	Evidence in case files of effective relationships between staff and individuals	Mar-11	Effective, auditable case file and supervision processes in operation.	R O Brien

10	4		106	Evidence from performance information which shows that needs are assessed in a timely way focussing on outcomes for individuals, with clear contingency plans around carer breakdown	Mar 11	Case files will be routinely audited.	R O Brien
----	---	--	-----	--	--------	---------------------------------------	-----------

Improvement Area 11 – Transform support planning to provide a clear focus on the future, on risks to individuals, on the promotion of their independence and outcomes.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
11	1	Implement policy, procedure and practice guidance and ensure staff attend mandatory training	107	All new support plans identify employment & housing aspirations	Dec-10	Outcomes for people will be of better quality and more efficient and will be evidenced in case files, identified through case file audits	R O Brien
11	1		108	Risk to individuals including 'stranger danger', risk of exploitation or harm and self-protection strategies are clearly identified through a sample audit and plans in place to mitigate risk or identify areas of positive risk taking	Mar-11	A sample audit of case files will reveal consistent and accurate collation of material useful for the support planning tasks.	R O Brien

11	1		109	All staff will have attended appropriate training which will ensure that staff are competent in delivering the personalisation agenda evidence in supervision notes	Mar-11	Evidence via case file audit that support planning is undertaken which focuses on the whole person's needs and those of their carers, future aspirations, risk to individual, promotion of independence, outcomes, sexuality, personal relationships etc	R O Brien
Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
11	2	The Phase 2 pilot of the Personal Budgets Project will be completed and Phase 3 will be initiated to roll the process out across the Department.	110	Policy Procedures and Practice document in place providing clear guidance on support planning that reflects the whole of the person's needs and those of their carers, people's futures, risks to individuals, promotion of independence, outcomes and people's wishes and aspirations.	Oct-10	Understanding from staff of their role in developing support planning that reflects the whole person's needs or those of their carers, people's futures, risks to individuals, promotion of independence, outcomes and people's wishes and aspirations	F Tomlin
11	3	Providers will be engaged in new contract arrangements and involved in the development and delivery of Support Planning.	111	Expectations for support planning to be made explicit to providers	Dec-10	Support Planning will be improved with Provider input.	M Fowler
11	3		112	Complete provider workshops	Aug-10	Providers will have been involved in support	M Fowler

						planning training	
11	3		113	Cabinet Report	Sep-10		M Fowler
11	3		114	Invitation to tender	Oct-10		M Fowler
11	3		115	Award of contracts	Feb-11		M Fowler
11	3		116	New contracts in place	Apr-11		M Fowler
11	4	See also Improvement area 3, Actions 1, 3 & 6.	N/A		N/A		Multiple Officers

Improvement Area 12 – Address gaps in awareness of the needs of and support to carers.							
Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
12	1	Carer's legislation and a revised local carer's strategy will continue to be implemented.	117	Carers Action Plan fully implemented and signed off by the Carers Development Committee	Dec-10	Increase in number of older and single carers who have carers assessments and support to carers with multiple caring responsibilities	M Noone
12	1		118	Carers emergency scheme in place	Dec-10	Carers supported appropriately in an emergency.	M Noone
12	1		119	Total Commissioning Plan for learning Disability considers a range of options for short-breaks.	Dec-10	Options for short breaks and use of adult placement schemes considered and agreed by Carers Development Committee	S Rowley.

12	2	Policy and procedures for carers will be implemented	120	Carers needs are identified through the assessment and review process	Feb-11	Evidence of carers needs being clearly recorded on files as evidenced through performance information and case file audits	R O Brien
12	2		121	Ensure contingency plans are in place for carer breakdown as part of carers' assessments evidenced in support plans	Feb-11	Case files will be routinely audited.	R O Brien
12	3	Information will be routinely circulated throughout the learning disability partnership	121B	The LDPB will identify information which Partners must cascade in their Agencies.	Feb-11		LDPB Chair
12	3	See also improvement area 3, Actions 1 & 3.	N/A		N/A		Multiple Officers

Improvement Area 13 – Ensure that reviews are appropriately timed and focused.							
Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
13	1	A schedule of reviews will be developed and Implemented to ensure they are delivered in a timely manner to all people with learning disabilities who receive support from the Council.	122	An action plan with clear targets for self directed reviews with people with Learning Disabilities is written and implemented.	Sep-11	People whose service requires reviewing will receive an efficient, personalised service.	R O Brien

13	1		123	Action plans and clear targets to ensure that support plans identify employment & housing aspirations and outcomes for people evidenced in case files	Mar-11	Case file audits reflect case work that identifies employment & housing aspirations and outcomes for people in case files	R O Brien
13	1		124	Risk to individuals including 'stranger danger', risk of exploitation or harm and self-protection strategies are clearly identified through a sample audit and plans in place to mitigate risk or identify areas of positive risk taking	Mar-11	The assessment of those risks undertaken by individuals will be based on more accurate information.	R O Brien
13	2	Also, see Improvement area 3, Actions 3, 4 & 5.	N/A		N/A		Multiple Officers

Improvement Area 14 – Strengthen arrangements for management and learning from complaints and compliments.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
14	1	A system for learning from complaints and compliments including root cause analysis will be developed and implemented.	125	System agreed by Strategic Leadership Team and implemented	Oct-10	The Learning Disabilities service will be continuously improved based on feedback and learning from its customers and stakeholders.	M Noone
14	2	A system for following up outcomes for people including informing them of improvements made as a result of the complaint will be further developed and implemented.	126	System agreed by Strategic Leadership Team and implemented	Oct-10	People who raise concerns know what actions have been taken as a result of their feedback.	M Noone
14	3	Learning from complaints will be embedded in working practices.	127	Improved working practices evidenced via minutes of Access and Assessment Branch Leadership Team and team meeting and subsequently checked through case file audits	Nov-10	Actions and service improvements identified through complaints will be acted upon and practice will improve and be developed based on feedback from customers.	R O Brien
14	4	The use of advocates and mediation will be further established in the complaints and quality assurance process.	128	Wirral Advocacy Partnership fully involved in the quality assurance process	Dec-10	People will be supported to have a voice and gain an effective resolution through the complaints process.	M Noone

4. Providing Leadership

Improvement Area 15 – Ensure the Safeguarding Adults Board and Learning Disability Partnership Board drive improved outcomes for local people.

Page 100

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
15	1	The Learning Disabilities Partnership Board and its subgroups will continue to implement actions from the Learning Disability Commissioning Framework.	129	Strategic Commissioning Framework Implementation 'Making It Happen' reports presented to every Learning Disabilities Partnership Board	Jul-10	Governance arrangements will be clearer across the economy.	J Webb
15	1		130	Presentations and reports to Learning Disabilities Partnership Board to ensure that strategic priorities are being met	Sep-10		J Webb
15	1		131	Annual Report on Progress on the Strategic Commissioning Framework presented to Learning Disabilities Partnership Board	Jan-11		J Webb
15	1	See also Improvement Area 8, Actions 1 & 2.	N/A		N/A		Multiple Officers
15	2	Clear performance-monitoring report processes for both Safeguarding Adults Partnership and Learning Disability Partnership Boards will be developed and implemented.	132	Review and test data collection procedures will be in place.	Sep-10	Performance against Local Indicators 8866 and 8867 will show improvement.	R Hughes

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
15	2		133	Produce Weekly performance statistics and exception reports and distribute to Locality Managers	Aug-10		R Hughes
15	2		134	Performance reports presented to SAPB and LDPB	Oct-10		R Hughes
15	3	See improvement area 1, improvement areas 1 and 2	N/A		Oct-10		J Webb & M Noone

Page 101
Improvement Area 16 – Promote stronger communication with and involvement of local people and service providers in shaping the vision and development of local services.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
16	1	People with learning disabilities will be supported to engage in the Council's 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation.	135	Communication about the consultation is provided in suitable format	Oct-10	People with learning disabilities will be more fundamentally engaged in the shaping of Council services.	C Curr
16	2	People with disabilities will be involved with the Localisation Commission	136	Funding distributed by the commission is specifically targeted	Nov-10	People with learning disabilities will have greater control over service developments.	C Curr

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
16	3	The Department of Adult Social Services communication strategy group will refresh and re-align communication plans for transforming adult social care, safeguarding adults and the transformation of adults with learning disability services.	137	Communication plan refreshed	Nov-10	Departmental Communications will be more focussed upon communicating with people with learning disabilities and delivering information in more appropriate formats.	M Noone
16	3		138	Process in place which ensures more people and service providers are involved	Dec-10	Recorded evidence that the vision has been shaped by people who use services, carers and service providers and looks at involvement in decision making over the last year, making recommendations for improvements	M Noone
16	3		139	The Enabling Fulfilling Lives group to present an independent annual report to the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board on involvement	Jan-11		A Pollitt
16	3		140	Plans for transforming adult social care are translated into format which are easy to understand	Dec-10		M Noone

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
16	3		141	Different methods of communicating messages are used	Sep-10		M Noone

Improvement Area 17 – Develop robust joint planning to address local needs secured by effective deployment of resources and management of risk.							
Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
17	1	The Managing the Market Project (commenced August 2009) will be completed.	142	Tender for Outcome Based Framework Agreement	Oct-10	People with learning disabilities will have a greater number of support options which will be of higher quality.	M Fowler
17	1		143	Outcome based framework agreement in place	Dec-10		M Fowler

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
17	1		144	New personal support services are available to people wherever they may live, including supported living to minimise the need for people to enter residential care or out of area placements.	Apr-11	The quality assurance framework contained within the personal support contracts evidences improvements in standards	M Fowler
17	2	Voluntary agency contracts will be reviewed.	145	Outcome-based framework agreement in place	Dec-10	The voluntary sector will be more stimulated to provide support.	M Noone
17	3	An analysis will be undertaken to determine levels of activity between teams and partners agencies (including the number of staff for safeguarding adults and learning disability services).	146	Benchmarking and performance reports to Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board and Learning Disability Partnership Board to inform decision making	Mar-11	Services will be more effectively managed and will deliver personalised care in an increasingly efficient manner.	R Hughes
17	3		147	Review and test data collection procedures.	Aug-10	Variable levels of activity will be minimised	R Hughes
17	3		148	Produce Weekly performance statistics and exception reports and distribute to Locality Managers	Aug-10		R Hughes
17	3		149	Performance reports presented to SAPB and LDPB	Oct-10		R Hughes

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
17	4	The Terms of Reference of the Joint Commissioning Group for people with learning disabilities will be revised.	150	Terms of Reference revised.	Sep-10	There will be a clearer focus on key priorities for joint planning person-centred, affordable and responsive services.	R O Brien
17	4		151	Joint Commissioning Group for people with learning disabilities review potential for single risk matrix	Feb-11	Key decisions are made from a wider availability of information.	R O Brien
17	5	Elected members will be involved in the safeguarding adults and learning disability agendas	152	Elected member Review Panel in place	Sep-10	The scope and understanding of safeguarding activities and supporting people with learning disabilities will be more consistent across the Council economy.	J Webb
17	5		153	Elected member safeguarding adults champions identified	Sep-10		J Webb
17	5		154	Elected members attend safeguarding adults training which started in April 2010	Sep-10		C Hyams

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
17	5		155	Elected members continue to be represented on Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board	Oct-10		J Webb
17	6	The role of the Safeguarding Adults Sub Groups will be further developed.	156	Actions from sub group plans delivered on time in a co-ordinated way	Mar-11	People with learning disabilities and their representatives will be more engaged in the direction of support service development.	J Webb
17	7	An agreed Resource Allocation System will be implemented.	157	Resource Allocation System implemented.	Oct-10	The deployment of resources will be more transparent and more efficient at providing support.	R O Brien

Improvement Area 18 – Expand its approach to prevention to deliver improved outcomes for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
18	1	The Early Intervention Strategy will be implemented.	158	Strategy is approved by Council and implementation commences	Sep-10	Services will be more focussed on delivering support 'upstream' - in advance of substantial and critical interventions.	M Noone
18	2	Specific support for people with learning disabilities and carers will be identified through the Early Intervention workstreams.	159	Workstream action plans in place and include measurable milestones and monitoring arrangements.	Dec-10	The Personalisation Agenda will be increasingly more apparent in early intervention services.	M Noone
18	3	The offer of Assistive Technology to people with a learning disability and/or their carers will be made clearer.	160	Procedure in place for people with a learning disability and their carers offered Assistive Technology.	Dec-10	The greater uptake of cost-effective technological support will enable more people to achieve independence and retain it for longer.	R O Brien
18	4		161		Mar-11	An increase in the number of Assistive Technology installations for people with a learning disability and/or their carers	R O Brien

Improvement Area 19 – Ensure the workforce across the sector has relevant knowledge, skills and experience to do their job well.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
19	1	The Competency Framework will be developed with learning plans.	162	Learning plans in place For key professional areas , using multi agency training, shadowing and coaching	Dec-10r	Improved confidence and performance of staff	C Hyams
19	2	Performance management and supervision policy will be integrated	163	The supervision policy and practices are linked to the Key Issues exchange for consistent performance management	Feb-11	Improved performance management with clarity provided to staff about accountabilities and expectations with regard to performance	C Hyams
19	3	HR Policies and their application will be reviewed (review will include trends and issues).	164	HR Policy update Issues identified and improvement plan	Nov-10	HR policy framework and practices enable managers to better manage performance	C Hyams
19	4	Managers will be trained in performance management for HR policy application	165	Training delivered.	Feb-10	Managers able to implement effective management practices	C Hyams
19	5	See Area 17 point 3	N/A		N/A		M Fowler
19	6	See Area 3 points 1 - 6 and Area 10 points 3+4	N/A		N/A		Multiple Officers.

5. Commissioning and Use of Resources

Improvement Area 20 – Robustly challenge and enable the local market to address gaps, raise standards and meet new personalisation requirements.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
20	1	See also improvement area 17, Actions 1 + 2	N/A		N/A		Multiple Officers
20	1	Advocacy and brokerage support processes involving the voluntary and community sector will be developed.	166	A Brokerage Scheme is in place	Oct-10	Communities will become more able and confident in supporting those who most need their support and advice.	M Noone
20	1		167	Communication with voluntary and community sector advocacy support services on new personalisation requirements and role in supporting self directed assessment and self directed support	Oct-10		M Noone
20	1		168	Develop and implement approved provider list for existing brokerage support	Dec-10		M Noone
20	1		169	Review and implementation of voluntary sector contracts	Mar-11		M Noone

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
20	2	The Emergency Duty Team arrangements will be reviewed	170	Review Completed	Oct-10	The revised business model will enable the Emergency Duty Team to provide a more efficient service, and one more tailored to the needs of those who require its support.	R O Brien
20	2		171	Revised arrangements implemented.	Mar-11	The revised business model for the Emergency Duty Team will enable planning for a future service model.	R O Brien

Improvement Area 21 – Ensure joined-up and efficient use of resources across the council, health and housing services.

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
21	1	The 'Total Commissioning' model will be agreed and implemented across the public sector in Wirral.	172	The concept of "Total Commissioning," as agreed by COMT in May 2010, will be developed within services for people with learning disabilities	Oct-10	Health and Social Care services will be more closely integrated and efficiently delivered.	S Rowley
21	1		173	Gaps in person centred planning identified through reviews to inform commissioning	Dec-10		S Rowley
21	2	The Department of Adult Social Services Business Plan 2011-14 will be refreshed.	174	Department of Adult Social Services Business Plan agreed by Council	May-11	The Department will be better placed to deliver effective support services which are responsive to local needs and legislative intentions.	J Webb
21	3	The Corporate Plan 2011-14 will be refreshed.	175	Corporate Plan agreed by Council	May-11	The Council will be better placed to deliver effective support services which are responsive to local needs and legislative intentions.	J Wilkie

Imp Area No.	Action No.	How is this to be achieved / action	Milestone Number	Milestone	Milestone End Date	OUTCOMES SOUGHT	Lead Responsible Officer
21	4	The Council will direct the use of in-house provider services. Cost efficiency will be driven within the Department and through the current 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation.	176	Value for money services provided following the council's consultation with the public via the Council's consultation programme - 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it'.	Dec-10	Services will more clearly influenced by considerations of community requirements and efficiency.	J Webb
21	5	The medium-term financial plan will be strengthened as a result of the current administration budget and resource allocation, and following feedback from the 'Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation.	177	Better value for money provided following the council's consultation with the public via Wirral's Future. Be a Part of it' consultation	Dec-10	A clearer understanding of the support the Council will deliver, and the resources it has to do it will enable more effective management.	J Webb
21	6	Robust contingency plans to manage decommissioning across the sector will be developed.	178	Following Wirral-wide consultation, if appropriate, services will be decommissioned in a safe way	Apr-11	The transformation agenda will not cause any individual or group of individuals to become further disadvantaged.	J Webb

END OF DOCUMENT.

APPENDIX 1

DEVELOPMENTS AND REVISIONS FOR SECOND PLAN.

1. System

- Column 7 re-labelled '*Outcomes Sought*', rather than '*Evidence of Achievement*' as the latter suggests that primary evidence may be available

2. Actions and Milestones

ACTIONS

Action 7/2 Changed from "Issues raised in the Equality Impact Assessment of the Learning Disability Commissioning Framework will be addressed" to Issues raised in the Initial Equality Impact Assessment of the Three Year Strategic Commissioning Framework for People with Learning Disability will be addressed.

Action 7/4 ("Payments made to people who attend Day Services will be reviewed to ensure an equitable approach") and linked *Milestone74* ("The Council's policy on 'incentive' payments is revised in the light of the Council's strategy to promote employment opportunities") is to transfer from Jenny Ricketts to Francesca Tomlin due to a revision of work areas.

NEW ACTION. Action 8/3 "The Learning Disability Partnership Board will be more closely supported to develop a more directive approach."

Action 10/2 Changed from "The revised joint Commissioning Strategy will reflect the totality of needs and how they will be met across the partnership" to "The updated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) will be used to identify the range of the social care needs of people with learning disabilities and their families and drive partnership working to support their resolution." to reflect the availability of better information and the manner in which it can be best used.

NEW ACTION. Action 12/3 "Information relevant to carers will be routinely circulated throughout the learning disability partnership"

MILESTONES

Milestone 67 – revised to read “Quality Assurance process based on that operated by Wirral’s Local Safeguarding Children’s Board is agreed”. This will avoid running two different models and enable information to be more readily shared.

Milestone 71 – Milestone expanded to include specific training and development elements – Milestone date reviewed to reflect this (from Jan-11 to Feb-11).

Milestone 72 – Milestone date revised to reflect the need for Equality impact training development which has to take place before service design is finalised (from Oct-10 to Jan-11) (from Oct-10 to Jan-11).

Milestone 75 – Milestone revised from “Implementation of relevant strategies, policies and procedures” to “Relevant strategies, policies and procedures are agreed by the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board” for clarity and further empowerment of the LDPB.

NEW MILESTONE – proposed under new Action 8/3 – “A half-day workshop for all Board members to determine the full extent of the revised Terms of Reference will be undertaken”. Milestone number 86B. Milestone date = Nov-10. Responsible Officer = R Grant

Milestone 97 – Changed to “Relevant details from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment providing key information about people with learning disabilities and their carers (including for example, those carers facing difficulties through increasing infirmity) are reported into the LDPB” to better reflect its changed Action (10/2). Milestone date revised to reflect this change (from Dec-10 to Oct-10).

NEW MILESTONE – proposed under Action 10/3 – “Training will be made available to carers and those who support people with learning disabilities” Milestone Number 103B. Milestone date = Dec 10 Responsible Officer = Francesca Tomlin.

NEW MILESTONE – proposed under new Action 12/3 – “The LDPB will identify information which Partners must cascade in their Agencies”. Milestone Number 121B. Milestone Date = Feb-11. Responsible Officer = (new) LDPB Chair.

Milestone 172 – Milestone date revised to reflect date at which it can be submitted to Cabinet (from Sept-10 to Oct-10).

NEW MILESTONE – proposed under Action 10/2 – “Report made to LDPB providing local data relevant to the 8 key questions outlined in Valuing Older People Now”. Milestone Number = 97A. Milestone date = Dec-10. Responsible Officer = Russell Grant.

3. This version pending;-

Final responses from; -

- **Safeguarding Adult Board Members;**
- **Learning Disability Partnership Board Members;**
- **All Residential Care Homes;**
- **All Domiciliary Care providers**
- **All Supported Living providers**
- **Outstanding Black and Minority Ethnic communities.**
- **Any outstanding partner agencies;**

A consideration of those Actions and Milestones within which Assistive Technology may be more highly profiled;

A consideration of all Actions and Milestones to ensure that all 'Valuing People Now' Outcomes are appropriately identified.

END OF REPORT

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14th OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

WIRRAL STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT UPDATE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING VIABILITY ASSESSMENT – KEY FINDINGS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR WIRRAL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to:-

- a) approve the key findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update and Affordable Housing Viability Assessment undertaken by Fordham for Wirral;
- b) approve the use of the findings to inform the preparation of the Council's Housing Strategy Statement and the Council's Local Development Framework
- c) recommend to Council that the findings of the Assessment and Viability Report are approved as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of planning applications.
- d) Approve the use of Fordham Research Dynamic Viability Model to test the viability of sites within the Borough on an annual basis.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 In order to respond to the needs of local communities and deliver its strategic housing function, Wirral must have a sound understanding and knowledge of local housing needs, local housing markets and their interaction with the wider sub region. This information is essential to effectively develop Wirral's Housing Strategy Statement, deliver our local strategic priorities and meet our objectives for transforming local housing markets in Wirral through targeted investment such as Housing Market Renewal. It is also an essential element of the evidence base for the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework.

2.2 The Council has a duty to undertake a local housing needs survey every five years to update and inform its Strategy Statement and strategic priorities. Wirral's Strategic Housing Market Assessment which was completed in September 2007 was reported to Members at Cabinet on 7th February 2008 and approved as a material consideration in negotiating with developers on affordable housing contributions through S106 agreements. The 2007 SHMA assessment has been used by the Council's Housing Strategy Team in determining priorities and in its justification for securing investment to deliver its affordable housing programme. It has also been used by both the Council's Development Control and Forward Planning teams to inform pre-application discussions with applicants, negotiate the provision of affordable housing within Section 106 legal agreements and as evidence in determining appropriate housing proposals within areas currently the subject of planning restrictions.

- 2.3 However, Members will be aware of the economic climate and its impact upon the need for affordable housing. It has become clear that the onset of the 'credit crunch' triggered a serious downturn in the housing market. People's inability to raise deposits, a severe reduction in the availability of mortgages, and reducing house prices has led both to an increase in demand for affordable housing and at the same time has impacted on purchaser confidence. This has resulted nationally in private developers being more cautious on developing houses for outright sale, which has caused concerns around viability and housing developments coming forward, something which has been reflected locally in Wirral.
- 2.4 In addition, during 2008 there were two specific cases (Blyth Valley Borough Council and Newcastle City Council) where the appeals to the High Court have set out serious flaws in relation to the application of affordable housing targets in Development Plans. In both instances it was upheld that the Councils did not have regard to recent Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Guidance which clearly states affordable housing targets '*should also reflect an assessment of the likely economic viability of land for housing within the area*'. Paragraph 29 of PPS3 places the requirement on local authorities to set a target for affordable housing provision to be delivered through Section 106 policies that take into account the need for development to be viable, once allowance is made for factors such as the availability of grant funding. These two cases have reinforced the requirement for local authorities to undertake a robust assessment of viability before seeking to apply any target that could impose too onerous a burden on development schemes.
- 2.5 A growing proportion of affordable housing is delivered via Section 106 agreements. However in light of the economic climate and the impact this is having on the housing market and the outcome of the Blyth Valley and Newcastle challenges it is essential that Wirral's housing policy is realistic and credible taking into account current circumstances. A housing viability study sits alongside and is informed by the work of a SHMA and forms the evidence base which informs the affordable housing target for the district.
- 2.6 Based on this information Cabinet members agreed on 19th March 2009 to the then Director of Regeneration re-engaging Fordham (without the need to obtain written quotes pursuant to Rule 5.2 of the Contract Procedure rules) to update their original SHMA work and undertake in tandem the viability assessment.

3.0 **STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT FINDINGS**

- 3.1 Members should be aware the work undertaken by Fordham was undertaken in two stages. Stage one involved undertaking an assessment of the local market and housing needs for the Borough with Stage two testing the viability of the suggested borough affordable housing target proposed by the SHMA. Therefore data used to inform the research undertaken by Fordham is that which was available at the point of the assessment.
- 3.2 Wirral's SHMA update reinforces that affordability continues to be a key issue across the Borough and that this, along with changes in recent years in the type and size of households means Wirral would require a change in the profile of its housing supply over the next twenty years to meet local needs, aspirations and balance the overall housing market in the long term. Some key findings from the SHMA include the following:-

Population and Household Data

- The overall population of Wirral has continued to decline from 312,293 at the 2001 Census point to 310,200 in 2007 (Office for National Statistics). The latest mid year estimate places the population at 308,500 (2009). Natural change (the balance between births and deaths) is negligible and the decline is therefore solely due to an excess in the number of people moving out of the borough over those people moving into the borough from other areas. In 2006-2007 migration flows between Wirral and other parts of the country resulted in a small net decrease in population and migration flows between Wirral and abroad, resulting in a large net decrease to the population. Overall the population in Wirral decreased by approximately 800 people between 2006 and 2007 as a result of migration flows. This is the continuation of a trend that has been recorded in Wirral since 2001-2002.
- The total number of households in Wirral is increasing at a faster rate than the population with household data indicating that between 2001 and 2007 the number of households increased by 2.6%. This implies that the average size of households in Wirral is declining, leading to a growth in the number and proportion of smaller one and two person households. Both existing supply and new affordable housing needs to take into account these households in terms of planning for future supply.

Local Housing Market, Unemployment and Affordability

- National house prices have seen an increase of 71% during 2001-2006, whilst in Wirral they rose by 98% over the same period, albeit from a lower base. Since 2006, average (mean) prices in Wirral have risen by 5.7%, despite falls on a national and regional level, but sales closely follow the national and regional trend, falling by 73.6%.
- Results from the 2009 SHMA Update estimate that mean annual gross household income (including non-housing benefits) in Wirral is £24,897. This is a decrease of 1.5% since the original SHMA report in 2007. Overall, some 25.6% of all households in Wirral are theoretically unable to afford market accommodation of an appropriate size currently. This compares to a figure of 23.6% for 2007. Clearly affordability remains a serious problem for many household groups in the Borough. Related to this, first time buyers, who would usually look to purchase properties at the lower end of the market, are being priced out and are restricted in accessing home ownership. 34.6% of would be first time buyers are unable to buy a suitable home.
- In addition, some 18.1% of households headed by someone employed in Wirral would be unable to afford market housing in the Borough (if they were to move now) compared to just 5.3% of households headed by someone employed outside of Wirral. This suggests that there is potential for households employed in Wirral to become marginalised in the market, which may impact on the local economy
- The significant increase in house prices across the Borough has raised a number of issues for potential buyers in all areas. Whilst Wirral continues to have the capacity to undergo continued economic growth, the level of unemployment amongst residents in the Borough increased by 47.6% between March 2008 and March 2009. From March 2009 - March 2010 the increase in unemployment levels has slowed with a 2% increase and since March 2010 levels have continued to fall with an 11% reduction to August 10. However overall from March 2008 to date there has been an increase in unemployment by 31%. Therefore, household's income and employment status has a significant impact on their housing choices and options.

Local Housing Needs

- The CLG affordable housing model outputs indicate a 58% increase in the net annual need for affordable housing (2,784) compared to the 2007 SHMA findings which indicated 1,767 units required. The findings indicate that this increase is due to the gross need rising because of reduced affordability as a consequence of changes to the local labour market. This is a CLG imposed assessment based on criteria that households should not be spending over 25% of their income on housing costs and therefore shows the latent demand for housing. It does not necessarily mean that this should be set as a target for affordable housing or even could be met. Both these figures are well in excess of previous or existing annual rates of house building in Wirral.
- The SHMA, therefore, in addition uses a Market Balanced Model (MBM) to provide estimates for the need for affordable housing across all tenures which is based on more realistic assumptions of the market i.e. households spend up to 50% of their income (wages/salaries plus savings/equity) on housing rather than the 25% stipulated by CLG Assumptions. This revised analysis reduces the annual average requirement to 570 additional dwellings over a twenty year period to 2029.
- Using this Model the findings have identified that affordability is not limited to the more affluent areas where property prices are higher than the borough average, it is also prevalent in a wide range of neighbourhoods which fall within the eastern side of the Borough where resources are being targeted to restructure local housing markets.
- The scale of the affordable housing need identified indicates that the current 40% borough wide affordable housing target should continue to be required, consisting of 30% social rented and 10% intermediate (i.e. shared ownership)
- Whilst evidence has suggested there has been an increase in the number of smaller households and that this is likely to continue in the future there is still a requirement to meet the current and backlog of housing needs which the borough has alongside meeting people's aspirations for housing. Therefore around 47% of the requirement for new housing is for market accommodation, of which over 80% should have two or three bedrooms. About 19% should have one bedroom but mostly of types designed to provide for older people which must be of the right quality and standard. The majority (87%) of new intermediate housing should have two or three bedrooms. Nearly half of new social rented accommodation (47%) should have three or four bedrooms.
- The sub area analysis within the SHMA Update uses the three geographical areas identified in the former Regional Spatial Strategy to illustrate the likely pattern and location of local housing needs across the Borough.
- The headline findings based on the CLG model indicate that 44% of local affordable housing need arises from the Newheartlands Pathfinder (equivalent to the RSS Inner Area), 44% from the remaining areas to the east of the M53 Motorway (the RSS

Outer Area) and 12% from the areas to the west of the M53 Motorway (the RSS Rural Area).

- Fordham have also run a number of scenarios that examine the likely implications of the Market Balanced Model in further detail. This approach has limitations as it produces results within the Newheartlands Pathfinder (the RSS Inner Area) which could not realistically be translated into a local target without reinforcing existing social and economic divisions and impacting on established regeneration efforts.
- For example, in the absence of any further policy intervention, the Market Balanced Model would indicate that only 9% of new housing should be provided within the RSS Inner Area (of which 98% would be social rented), with 40% within the RSS Outer Area and 51% within the RSS Rural Area. Increasing the proportion of market housing within the RSS Inner Area to 60% could change this to 29% of new housing within the Inner Area, 54% within the Outer Area and 17% within the Rural Area. Only by markedly increasing provision within the Inner Area, could figures in other areas be significantly reduced.

Delivery of Affordable Housing in the Planning Policy Context

- The findings of the SHMA are significant considerations with regards to the level and location of future house building that should be permitted within Wirral. The consideration of this issue is, however currently subject to considerable uncertainty.
- The rate of new house building in Wirral has dropped markedly since the onset of the recession and the level and pace of any future recovery is as yet unclear. The Homes and Community Agency (HCA) who provide public subsidy to help deliver affordable housing has been the subject of reductions in line with Government spending cuts. The impact on the future levels of HCA grant will not be known until the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review however indications are that the budget could be reduced by 40%. This will have a significant impact on the ability to deliver affordable housing and in the absence of public grant the delivery of affordable housing will effectively be tied to the provision of new market housing
- The annual housing requirement for net additional homes in Wirral was previously set by the Secretary of State in the former Regional Spatial Strategy issued in September 2008 at 500 dwellings, lower than the need now identified in the SHMA. The Regional Spatial Strategy has now been revoked to remove “top down” targets to allow greater local choice and the Secretary of State has confirmed that decisions on housing supply will rest with local councils without the framework of regional numbers and plans. The basis for making these decisions in the absence of the Regional Spatial Strategy has, however, not yet been clarified.
- The Council will be consulting on a new housing requirement figure for Wirral as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. A range of figures will be suggested on which stakeholders will be invited to comment, including the annual rate of 570 net additional dwellings implied by the results of the SHMA Update. Matters to be addressed will include the location and capacity of available land, wider development aspirations and the pace of market recovery. It will not be possible to comment further on the potential future housing numbers for Wirral until that consultation process has been completed.

- In the interim, until a final figure can be determined, Cabinet has already resolved that an annual figure of 250 net additional dwellings should be applied (Cabinet, 22 July 2010, Minute 89 refers).

3.3 The SHMA sets out a range of supporting evidence for the continued need to deliver affordable housing to meet the local needs of the borough. This represents a significant challenge for Wirral, now and in the future and policies such as the Core Strategy will be fundamental in setting the policy context to maximise the opportunities for affordable housing to be delivered through the planning system.

3.4 However, whilst the SHMA indicates that any requirement below an annual rate of 570 net additional dwellings would be unlikely to meet the housing needs of the existing population, the annual requirement of the SHMA is based at a single point in time, on a number of factors including the provision that all emerging households will need a property and does not account for empty properties which could and may be made available. There are some 2,700 long term empty private homes in the borough and whilst this may not be appropriate or possible for these to meet all of the SHMA identified need it would strongly support the need to maximise opportunities to increase the local housing supply by other means than new build alone, for example, by bringing empty properties back into use and developing potential incentives for people who are under-occupying social housing to move to smaller units, thereby releasing larger accommodation.

4.0 AFFORDABLE HOUSING VIABILITY ASSESSMENT

4.1 National policy in Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing 2006 (PPS3) requires Councils to set a borough-wide target for the proportion of affordable housing to be delivered through new developments. The recently updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides guidance on the target levels for affordable housing that could be justified and sought through new development based on the analysis and evidence of Wirral's housing requirements. However the SHMA gives an assessment of the balance between the need for market housing and the need for affordable housing. It does not consider or test the commercial elements that affect and drive developers nor consider what level of affordable housing it is realistic to ask developers to provide.

4.2 The updated SHMA indicates a target of 40% is required if Wirral wishes to balance the overall housing market in the borough over the long term. In order for this to meet the requirements of PPS3 and to test whether this is a realistic target for the borough which will not stifle developments from coming forward, Fordham, in consultation with Council housing and planning officers, selected 15 representative sites across the borough to examine and test the SHMA 40% affordable housing target. The sites ranged in size from 18-150 dwellings each, were distributed across the whole of the borough, were at various stages in the development process and all but four had been subject to a planning application.

4.3 The selected sites were then tested under a range of assumptions based on key factors affecting viability including:-

- Affordable housing target levels of 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, and 40%;
- A base assumption of 'zero grant' but Fordham also included analysis using typical historic levels of grant on affordable housing schemes;

- An Affordable housing split of 80% social rented and 20% intermediate;
- Land values for alternative uses for each of the sites, as the value of a site for housing cannot plausibly fall below the level of an alternative use, if there is another use which would give a better financial outcome for the landowner;
- Consideration of the levels of developer contributions likely to be required to address other planning issues consistent with current local policies;
- An assumption that all new housing would be built to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH);
- Abnormal costs were assessed and the figures taken into account where information collected for the assessed sites indicated abnormal conditions were likely.

4.4 The appraisals considered viability for two variant scenarios with regard to future changes in price and cost levels. The first reflected a short-term decline (prices falling 10% relative to build) and the second a return to conditions equivalent to the autumn 2007 market peak (prices rising 18 - 19% and costs falling by 6 - 7%). Consideration of the impact of different assumptions for tenure split were also assessed.

4.5 After undertaking the Viability Assessment and based upon the findings, Fordham highlighted the following issues and recommendations for the Council's consideration:-

- Although PPS3 asks for a 'Plan-wide' target, it is not realistic to expect a single target to work across Wirral, as part of the Council's area is essentially outside the normal market by the definition of the regeneration programmes carried out in the housing renewal areas.
- Due to the sharp contrast between the Newheartlands Pathfinder (the RSS Inner Area) and the rest of the Borough, Fordham suggest two targets as feasible for use in planning negotiations now, as broad brush targets. For the Rural and Outer parts of Wirral, a target of 20% is currently feasible without any grant subsidy, For the Inner/housing renewal area a target of 10% is currently feasible without any grant. However Members should note detailed viability evidence may come forward on particular sites which may mean that higher or lower targets may be delivered in individual cases.
- The national minimum site-size threshold to which affordable targets apply is 15 dwellings (PPS3), but provision is made for lower thresholds where appropriate. None of the 15 sites in the main appraisals undertaken by Fordham were under 15 dwellings and in order to provide guidance on this issue Fordham modelled a suite of notional sites (potential developments) ranging in size from four to 15 dwellings, with characteristics based on one of the larger actual sites. The results of the appraisals suggested that there is scope for reducing site size threshold in Wirral. It is being proposed that a 20% target, in line with the Borough-wide target, could be sustained down to sites of five dwellings.
- As viability is likely to change over time, particularly as the housing market recovers and to address the fact that some grant is still likely to be available, Fordham are suggesting retaining the 40% target as an aspiration for the longer-term, to be introduced incrementally, to continue to take account of the targets generated by the housing needs analysis in the original SHMA and the SHMA Update.

- e) The viability assessment has indicated the percentage target for affordable housing requirements in an informed way. Given the pattern of housing market conditions since late 2007, and more particularly a general expectation that house prices may continue to fall for some time to come, or may rise, it will be necessary for any proposed target to be reviewed regularly so to reflect the resulting changes in the profitability of development. Fordham have developed a dynamic viability model which will allow the Council to continue to test the viability of sites within the Borough on an annual basis and update policy responses accordingly, however the upper limit for any target in Wirral is given by the SHMA of 40% and would therefore not be exceeded.
- f) Whilst there are a series of recommendation for Members consideration, attention is drawn to the fact that these are indeed targets and the actual amount of affordable housing required on any particular site must be assessed for that actual site and take into account the peculiar factors of developing that site at that point in the economic cycle.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

- 5.1 The SHMA has identified a number of key areas and challenges facing the Local Authority and has recommended a policy response which could be adopted and taken forward to help respond to local demand for housing and changing demographics. With national CLG household projections estimating an increase in the number of households in Wirral up to 2029 and with the needs survey confirming Wirral has an ageing population there is a significant requirement to ensure Wirral's local policies respond appropriately to both local housing need whilst balance with the regeneration priorities for the Borough.
- 5.2 Affordability has emerged as a problem locally across the borough and is a key strategic priority which is highlighted within Wirral's Housing Strategy Statement 2005-2010. Significant work has been undertaken by officers to deliver and respond to local housing needs and since the implementation of the Housing Strategy in 2005 Wirral's Affordable Housing Development Programme has delivered over 1,400 homes within the Borough. However, whilst there has been an increase in the number of affordable housing, there is still a need to increase the current supply to provide a comprehensive and quality housing offer which meets local people's needs and aspirations.
- 5.4 Council Officers will continue to work in partnership with a range of agencies and local providers such as RSL's and private landlords to both increase the supply of accommodation and make better use of the unused existing accommodation available. Through opportunities including the Governments National Affordable Housing Programme and Housing Market Renewal and through effectively utilising its land assets the Council has been able to respond to local demand for housing. However in order for the Council to be able to maximise opportunities to deliver affordable housing through private developers the following issues must be addressed:
 - a) In order for Technical Services officers to better justify the requirement for private developers to provide a level of affordable housing units on eligible sites on which they are seeking planning approval, the findings from the SHMA will have to be endorsed by the Council as a material consideration.
 - b) The existing Affordable Housing Policy contained within the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) currently provides the policy context to enable officers to clearly set out the Borough's affordable housing target of 40% on all eligible sites, as

recommended in the SHMA findings. However members should note that UDP Policy HSG2 and UDP Policy HS6 will eventually be replaced by the Core Strategy.

- c) Consultation on the options for a new policy for affordable and specialist housing has already show support for the application of a Borough-wide target on the basis that this was likely to result in a more even distribution of affordable housing and would be easier to implement. Any policy to be included in the final Core Strategy will, however, have to be tested through a public examination conducted by an independent planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.
- d) Preferred Option 9 – Affordable and Specialist Housing, which subject to Council approval will be published for consultation in November as part the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report (Cabinet 23 September 2010, Item 8 refers), proposes to include the following provisions, in line with the findings of the SHMA Update and the Viability Assessment:
- a third of the future housing land supply should be set aside for the development of specialist housing
 - the long-term aspiration will be to move incrementally towards a Borough wide target of up to 40% affordable housing as part of new market housing developments, subject to site specific viability
 - to begin with, a Borough-wide target of 20% affordable housing will be applied alongside a target of 10% within the Newheartlands Pathfinder , to reflect current market conditions
 - 85% of any affordable housing provided should be secured for social renting with the remaining 15% secured as intermediate housing delivering a mix of house types consistent with the latest local housing needs assessment
 - use by the Council of Fordham Research' Dynamic Viability Model which officers will update on an annual basis using national published data for house prices, building costs and alternative use values. This will enable targets to be re-considered regularly to reflect future changes in the strength of the housing market
 - targets will be applied to any site that will provide five or more dwellings, subject to site specific viability. A commuted sum will be sought where it has been agreed that affordable housing is not to be provided on-site
 - the housing needs assessment and viability assessment will be periodically updated to ensure that the most appropriate type and proportion of affordable and specialist housing is being secured.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An appraisal of developer costs may be necessary to test the financial viability of land values to deliver affordable housing targets to support negotiations on individual sites. Any viability appraisal would be commissioned by the Council, however the developer would be required to paid these costs as part of the planning process. Developers who have planning applications refused may also appeal the Council's decision on individual planning applications. Both of these situations may have additional resource implications and it may also be necessary to obtain the advice of Fordham Research, who conducted the SHMA, to provide support to Planning Officers at appeal hearings and at the public examination into the Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

7.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Negotiating with developers on the delivery of the targets for affordable housing would be the initial responsibility of officers within the Technical Services Department (Development Control), supported by officers in the Corporate Services Department.
- 7.2 The negotiation and implementation of the Councils affordable housing targets through Section 106 agreements may require further staffing dependent upon the number of applicable development sites and the need for additional legal and financial support. Financial provision for these staffing resources could, however, be generated as part of the Section 106 benefits to the Council.
- 7.3 The annual update of affordable housing targets using Fordham Research Dynamic Viability Model will be carried out within existing staffing resources.
- 7.4 The preparation of policies for affordable housing within the emerging Core Strategy can be delivered within existing staff resources.

8.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT

- 8.1 The research details local housing needs and gives broad findings of specialist needs of vulnerable communities such as older people, homeless people, and young people. The findings will be used by both the Council and related partners to inform and shape future strategies and policies, reduce social exclusion and ensure appropriate housing and related services are available and accessible to all citizens in Wirral.
- 8.2 The provision of affordable housing will help to promote greater choice and increase housing for local people. These issues have been recognised within the Equality Impact Assessments carried out for both the Housing Strategy and the Enabling Role, under which affordable housing is placed and which identified potential positive impacts

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None

11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The results of the SHMA Update and Viability Assessment will need to be applied as a material consideration for decisions on individual planning applications and incorporated in local Development Plan policies to provide a robust framework for negotiations with developers over individual developments and land allocations.
- 11.2 The results of the SHMA Update and Viability Assessment will, subject to Council approval, be used to inform the preparation of the emerging Core Strategy Development Plan Document, subject to the results of further statutory public consultation.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The delivery of affordable housing within the borough will ensure that quality housing will be delivered and will be available for local citizens who do not have the financial means to purchase market housing.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The delivery of affordable housing within the borough will have a positive effect on the promotion of social inclusion. Affordable housing includes accommodation for vulnerable people who have the potential to be excluded from society.

14.0 **LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 The updated SHMA findings and results of the viability assessment will have an impact on the whole of the Wirral area, affecting all Wards.

15.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

15.1 Wirral Affordable Housing Viability Study September 2010, Fordham

Wirral Strategic Housing Market Assessment September 2010, Fordham

Cabinet Report 2009 Re-engagement of consultants for Wirral Housing Needs and Market Assessment and Strategic Viability Assessment

16.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That:-

a) the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report and the Affordable Housing Viability Study are approved

b) the initial policy implications identified under section 5 of this report are noted

c) the findings are used to inform the preparation of the Council's Housing Strategy Statement

d) Members note the findings are being used as part of the consultation process for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document which Cabinet approved on 23rd September 2010

e) Cabinet recommends to Council that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report and the Affordable Housing Viability Study are approved as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of planning applications.

f) Members approve the use of Fordham Research Dynamic Viability Model to test the viability of sites within the Borough on an annual basis.

Kevin Adderley

Interim Director of Corporate Services

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14th October 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to

(1) provide Members with an overview of the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 and

(2) to seek approval for the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 to be published for public consultation.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Wirral Council's existing Housing Strategy 2005 – 2010 was developed in line with the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 'fit for purpose' standard and supporting strategy guidance. It had also been aligned to the former Regional Housing Strategy and former Regional Spatial Strategy to ensure Wirral's local needs have been considered within the wider context of national and regional priorities. Members approved the Strategy on 3rd August 2005 (Cabinet, 3 August 2005, minute 126 refers).

2.2 The strategy was supported by a clear Action Plan which is updated and monitored every six months by the Housing Strategy Team, enabling it to respond to needs identified and local, sub-regional or national policy changes. This Action Plan is reported to both the Strategic Housing Partnership and to Members via Virtual Committee.

2.3 As the current Housing Strategy is approaching the end of its lifespan, officers are now in the process of preparing a new 15 year Strategy which will run from 2011 and will identify a more long term vision for housing in the Borough. The final Housing Strategy will need to align with the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy and will also need to respond to the outcome of the wider Wirral consultation exercise regarding the future of Council services in Wirral.

2.4 Over recent months, a number of significant changes have occurred impacting on the development of a new Housing Strategy including the change to the new Coalition government who have revoked the Regional Spatial Strategy and regional housing targets.

2.5 Whilst these changes, along with the immediate changes to Government spending programmes and priorities will affect the future direction of the Housing Strategy, officers are moving forward with the development of the new Housing Strategy to set the strategic framework for future policy and investment requirements.

3.0 THE CURRENT HOUSING STRATEGY 2005 - 2010

3.1 The vision for the current Housing Strategy is a simple one, 'to create sustainable communities across the whole of the Borough in which people choose to live and stay'. It is supported by four key strategic priorities, each with detailed solutions and action targets designed to achieve them:

- Delivering Urban Renaissance
 - Providing Affordable Homes to Maintain Balanced Communities
 - Delivering Decent Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods
 - Meeting the Needs of Communities and Providing Support for those who need it.
- 3.2 To ensure the Strategy and in particular the Action Plan remains relevant and responsive to the changing environment, a review was undertaken half way through the term of the Strategy. An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken with key stakeholders, including the community of Wirral to 'reality check' the Strategy priorities and to identify any emerging local housing related issues.
- 3.3 The majority of those consulted, agreed with both the vision and the strategic priorities and felt that it addressed all of their housing and related issues. In particular residents identified improving the housing offer, increasing the supply of homes and building more affordable housing as the key housing issues for Wirral which needed to be addressed. All of these priorities are currently included in the existing Strategy and Action Plan. Some additional suggestions to respond to these issues were also put forward and have, where appropriate, been included within the existing Action Plan for by example building more homes and bringing empty properties back into use.
- 3.4 The 2005 – 2010 Strategy originally contained 117 action targets developed to meet its four strategic priorities. A further 84 actions have been added over the life span of the Strategy to respond to needs identified and local, sub-regional or national policy changes. As of April 2010 89% of all these actions have been fully completed with 7% not yet fully achieved. Work is continuing to ensure that all appropriate targets are fully completed, including:
- the Beechwood redevelopment scheme, where only 78% of the units had been completed due to the economic impact on the housing market, however a number of Homes and Communities (HCA) initiatives targeted at the housing market have been secured to deliver the remainder of the scheme;
 - four action targets have not been achieved due to the ongoing development of the Merseyside Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme. The Merseyside scheme is anticipated to be fully implemented by 2011.
 - The target to decrease Wirral's household energy consumption by 30% has achieved a level of 24% and a further update on this measure is currently taking place.
- 3.5 As a result of changes to either service delivery or funding availability 4% of the action targets have ended as they are no longer relevant. Where required, new action targets have been introduced to respond to changes to services.

Key Achievements as at April 2010

- 3.6 The current Housing Strategy has successfully enabled a significant number of achievements to be delivered, meeting the borough strategic housing priorities and vision. These include:
- In partnership with RSL's, private developer partners and other key agencies, clearance of over 580 older, obsolete and poor standard homes undertaken to make way for new, decent standard and affordable homes that better meet the current and future needs of Wirral residents.

- Improving our street scene and neighbourhoods for local communities through other initiatives such as the provision of 2060 alley gates and the installation of 108 CCTV cameras to help reduce crime.
- Increasing the decent homes standard levels of private sector homes through over 7000 improvements made to existing owner occupied and private rented homes across Wirral, complimenting the work being undertaken by RSL's in the social rented sector to bring all social housing stock up to the decent homes standard by 2010.
- Delivering over 1400 affordable homes for rent, homebuy or discounted market sale to offer greater choice for residents with differing income levels.
- Delivering over 280 new homes specifically to meet the identified needs of vulnerable residents in the Borough such as extra care housing for older people and those with cognitive problems, adults with learning or physical disabilities, teenage parents or care leavers.
- Ongoing delivery of home energy initiatives to promote and improve energy efficiency of dwellings and reduce energy consumption has resulted in over 45,000 households receiving advice (exceeding the target by 354%) and 5982 interventions to improve thermal comfort of homes (Cosyhomes 4203, Health through Warmth 1279, Heating Grants 182, insulation grants 226 and Warm Streets 92)
- Introduction of the Wirral wide free insulation initiative.
- Homelessness decisions have reduced by 87% between 2005/06 and 2009/10 as a result of refocusing the Housing Options Team towards homeless prevention and interventions.

4.0 THE HOUSING STRATEGY 2011 – 2026

- 4.1 Following a review of the achievements of the current Housing Strategy and in response to the issues identified in 2.3 – 2.5 of this report officers have drafted a new long term Housing Strategy for Wirral, which will run up to 2026.
- 4.2 The focus of this strategy will be achieved through the delivery of a housing investment plan which is measurable, realistic and achievable, enabling the Council to deliver its key priorities, respond to changes in market conditions, new opportunities and also introduce new perspective as changes happen. This approach will also ensure that shared outcomes around health, social care, education, community safety and the economy are addressed and developed.
- 4.3 It is proposed the investment plan will be monitored every six months and reviewed every three years in line with the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review process. This means the work undertaken to deliver the strategy whilst flexible enough to be responsive to new challenges and policy direction as they arise, will also be aligned with future investment opportunities.
- 4.4 An exercise has been undertaken to identify and capture all of the key evidence to identify those key issues which we know will affect housing policies and initiatives both now and in the future. These issues have been focused into seven broad areas and are supported by robust evidence:

Responding to changes in the long term population make up of Wirral, in particular its increasing ageing population

- 4.5 The Office of National Statistics indicates Wirral's overall projected population is predicted to continue to decline over the next 25 years, the opposite of what is predicted to happen to the UK as a whole. Wirral's decrease is projected to be 1.6% over the period 2008 to 2033, with more people leaving the Borough than moving in, while the projected UK increase in population is 16.6% over the same period.
- 4.6 Overall population change is not, however, the biggest issue for housing policy in Wirral. Wirral's Strategic Housing Market Assessment has identified that the make up of households is changing with household sizes becoming smaller, most notably in non-pensioner households without children, leading to a predicted 8.3% increase in the number of households by 2029.
- 4.7 There is therefore a need to consider the type and size of homes we currently have in Wirral. We need to ensure we not only make better use of existing homes and support people to move to properties which better suit their needs, but we also need to ensure the challenging targets set to deliver new homes are appropriate and support the predicted rise in household numbers.

Increasing the availability of new homes including affordable homes

- 4.8 In Wirral, being able to afford a home is still a major issue, which is worsening particularly for first time buyers who increasingly have to purchase at the lower end of the housing market. Typically this is further exacerbated by larger deposits required for a mortgage, often in the region of 25%. In Wirral this can equate to £25,000.
- 4.9 An increasing number of newly forming households (63.4%) are unable to afford general open market homes for sale. Around 47% of the requirement for new housing is for market accommodation, of which over 80% should have two or three bedrooms. About 19% should have one bedroom but mostly of types designed to cater to older people which must be of the right quality and standard. The majority (87%) of new intermediate housing should have two or three bedrooms. Nearly half of new social rented accommodation (47%) should have three or four bedrooms.
- 4.10 With the number of applicants registering on the Wirralhomes database for social housing increasing over the last year and the number of those people in urgent need of rehousing also increasing, we need to work with our partners to both make best use of existing homes as well as identifying opportunities to increase the provision of suitable housing to meet needs.

Making better use of existing stock to meet housing needs

- 4.11 Tackling long term empty homes in Wirral is important and will help to improve the quality and desirability of our neighbourhoods. It is estimated that a run-down empty home can reduce neighboring house prices by 18% and is a wasted asset for the owner. The number of empty homes within the borough has increased by 20% since 1995 with a total of 6099 homes empty in April 2010.
- 4.12 It is important to recognise that the problem exists across the whole of the borough, not just in areas of deprivation and affects newly built and existing housing stock which could be better used to help to meet the housing needs of the Borough.

- 4.13 Wirral's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified that 2,185 households currently live in unsuitable homes due to overcrowding, as well as 57,167 households who appear to be under-occupying their homes irrespective of whether they live in a home they own or rent. We need to focus on linking housing need and demand more strategically to existing homes and develop innovative solutions to bring these issues together. This work needs to focus in the future on looking at our changing population and household make up and linking this with the potential to target work to re-shape the existing housing stock in Wirral to meet the needs arising from this.

Improving homes and making areas more attractive to live

- 4.14 Wirral's housing stock consists of 73% of homes being owner occupied, 15% social rented and 12% rented from a private landlord. Although the tenure breakdown is broadly similar, the social rented sector is slightly lower than both the North West (19%) and National (18%) average.
- 4.15 In the social rented sector, homes continue to benefit from major improvement works ensuring that they meet the 2010 decent homes standard, with 94% of these homes classed as decent as of April 2010.
- 4.16 The biggest challenge in Wirral is to improve housing conditions in the private sector (owner occupied and private rented) and to balance the housing market offering greater choice. The overall number of vulnerable households (those people on a means tested benefit) living in this sector has increased from 26,200 in 2003 to 28,000 in 2008 with the percentage of vulnerable households living in a decent home increasing from 55% to just over 60%. It is estimated that of those 28,000 vulnerable households living in the private sector, 11,200 (40%) do not meet the decent homes standard. Although we have worked hard to improve some of the existing poor quality homes in the borough, particularly in our Housing Market Renewal Area, there is still more to do. High levels of unemployment, poor health and poor quality homes still exist and we need to be innovative in the future about how we address these issues, given the likely reduction in future funding available to do this.

Reducing fuel poverty in the borough, particularly focussing on the health and financial inequalities in those areas with higher than borough average rates of fuel poverty

- 4.17 Although excess winter deaths have decreased by 15% in 2009, excess cold remains a big issue in Wirral, particularly with fuel poverty levels rising due to increasing energy prices. Over Private Sector Stock Condition Survey indicates in particular, 39% of private sector stock fails the decent homes standard of which 23.4% fail due to a poor degree of thermal comfort and 16.1% of homes fail due to having Category 1 hazards in the home, the main reason being excess cold. Whilst considerable work has been done to tackle affordable warmth with over 5900 measures installed since 2005, there is still much work to be done to ensure those most vulnerable households live in a warm home.

Responding to the housing and support needs of vulnerable people

- 4.18 Our Strategic Housing Market Assessment which is carried out at a point in time estimates 29,741 (21.7%) households in Wirral with one or more members identified as being vulnerable or having a special need, exceeding the national average of 14% however the predominant vulnerable groups are households with a physical/learning/sensory disability, frail older people and a high number of people with a mental health illness.

- 4.19 Socially excluded groups including homeless people continue to need appropriate support and accommodation to meet their needs. In 2009/10, of those homeless applicants who were eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, the highest percentage of applicants (63%) fell within the 25 – 44 age group and 24% in the 16 – 24 age group.
- 4.20 The housing strategy recognises that there is a need to continue to support those who can be most vulnerable in society and ensure that everyone where appropriate has the opportunity to live independently.

Supporting the economy through housing programmes

- 4.20 Whilst Wirral continues to have the capacity to undergo continued economic growth, the level of unemployment amongst residents in the Borough increased by 47.6% between March 2008 and March 2009. From March 2009- March 2010 the increase in unemployment levels has slowed with a 2% increase and since March 2010 levels have continued to fall with an 11% reduction to August 2010. However overall from March 2008 to date there has been an increase in unemployment by 31%. Inevitably, household income and employment status have an impact on housing choices and options.
- 4.21 Since 2006 Wirral and its partners have secured over £53 million in funding to develop over 720 new affordable homes, helping to create employment and training opportunities for local businesses and people.
- 4.22 The housing strategy recognises that there is a need to continue to develop new initiatives that respond to the housing needs of the borough alongside employment opportunities.

5.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 5.1 It is proposed that a two stage consultation programme is undertaken, with stage one specifically testing the draft strategy and gaining views on all of the key issues which will inform housing policies and initiatives for the future, which have been set out. This part of the consultation process will take place with a wide range of key stakeholders and members of the public, through a range of existing engagement mechanisms over a six week period.
- 5.2 Following this consultation period and once the responses received have been collated, officers will during November and December 2010, start to develop and consult on stage two of the process. This will involve a more detailed consultation on the formulation of a Housing Investment Plan which will then be used and monitored to respond to annual budgets and funding regimes such as the Comprehensive Spending Review, highlighted in 4.3. It is anticipated any issues or actions arising from the Comprehensive Spending Review due to be announced on 20th October 2010, will then be able to inform this part of the process.
- 5.3 It is anticipated the final draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 and supporting Housing Investment Plan, will be reported back to Members for approval early 2011, ready for implementation from 1st April 2011.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications at this stage in respect of the draft housing strategy. Any future requirements and actions arising from the new housing strategy that have any financial implications would be subject to further consideration by Members prior to implementation.

7.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

8.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT

8.1 The draft housing strategy recognises the needs of vulnerable people as one of its seven key areas of focus.

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report, but the Housing Strategy will need to be closely aligned with the Council's emerging Local Development Framework to lend further support to the delivery of the Borough's housing priorities.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

14.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The draft Housing Strategy will have an impact on the whole of the Wirral area, affecting all Wards.

15.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 Cabinet 3rd August 2005 - Wirral's Housing Strategy Statement 2005 - 2010

15.2 Cabinet 14th October 2010 – Wirral Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update and Affordable Housing Viability Assessment – Key Findings and Policy Implications for Wirral.

16.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 That Members approve the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 for public consultation.

Kevin Adderley
Interim Director of Corporate Services

Housing Strategy 2011-2026 Draft Consultation Document

This document is the first of a two stage consultation process for the preparation of a new Housing Strategy for 2011-2026. The Council is seeking to establish the views of local stakeholders and communities on the key issues which we have identified in the Strategy.

We want to make sure we have captured the key housing issues which affect our borough so that this can be used in the future as a planning tool to help direct our resources and the work we do with our partners, including local communities to make Wirral a better place to live.

Following on from this initial stage of consultation and the comments we receive we will then be consulting on the Housing Investment Plan which will set out the immediate issues to be addressed and how we plan to respond. These will be focussed around the resources which are available to the Council and its key partners and will set out the short, medium and long term work to be done.

We look forward to receiving your comments and would ask that in responding if you could please complete our questionnaire and return it by no later than (TBC – once minutes of Cabinet meeting have been published) and call in period ended) in the freepost envelope to the following address:-

**Housing Strategy Team
Wallasey Town Hall
Brighton Street
Wirral
CH44 8ED**

Thank you for your time to read and respond to this consultation document, your views are very much appreciated

Wirral's Housing Strategy 2011-2026

Wirral Council is developing a new long-term Housing Strategy for the Borough. We would like to gain your views on housing issues to help shape our final Housing Strategy.

We would appreciate your time and comments to complete the following questions.

1. This is the suggested long term vision for the Borough: *'make sure all areas in Wirral are attractive places where people can access a home that meets their needs'*

What are your views on this? Do you:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you disagree or strongly disagree with the vision then tell us what you think it should be.....

2. The following are key housing issues identified for Wirral. How important do you think they to you?

- Responding to changes in the long term population makeup of Wirral, in particular older people

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

- Increasing the availability of new homes including affordable homes

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

- Making better use of existing stock to meet housing need

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

- **Making areas more attractive as places to live through improving homes and providing greater choice**

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

- **Reducing fuel poverty in the borough particularly reducing the gap between the borough average and those areas with higher rates of fuel poverty**

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

- **Meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people**

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

- **Supporting the economy through housing programmes**

Not very important 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely important

3. Are there any important housing issues we haven't included? If yes, please use the space below to tell us more:

Thank you for taking the time to submit your views

Mr/ Mrs/ Miss/ Ms.....

Address:.....Post code.....

Telephone number: Email:

Organisation (if applicable):

- Age:
- Under 18 years
 - 18- 25 years
 - 26-35 years
 - 36-59 years
 - Over 60 years



If you would like to receive feedback from this survey, or be involved in Stage 2 of the Housing Strategy consultation then please tick here

Contents

Section	Page
A Vision for Wirral	1
Introduction	2
Key Housing Issues in Wirral	4
Responding to changes in the long term population makeup of Wirral, in particular an increase in the number of older people	5
Increasing the availability of new homes including affordable homes	8
Making better use of existing stock to meet housing need	11
Making areas more attractive as places to live through improving homes and providing greater choice	13
Reducing fuel poverty in the borough particularly reducing the gap between the borough average and those areas with higher rates of fuel poverty	15
Meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people	18
Supporting the economy through housing programmes	21

A Vision for Wirral

The vision for housing in Wirral by 2026 is to ***'make sure all areas in Wirral are attractive places where people can access a home that meets their needs'***.

We will achieve this vision through the delivery of a Housing Investment Plan which is measurable, realistic and achievable, enabling us to deliver our key priorities, respond to changes in market conditions, new opportunities and also introduce new perspective. This approach will also ensure that shared outcomes around health, social care, education, community safety and the economy are addressed and developed.

We will monitor the investment plan every six months and review it every three years in line with the Governments Comprehensive Spending Review. This means the work we are doing whilst flexible enough to be responsive to new challenges and policy direction as they arise, will also be aligned with future investment opportunities.

Introduction

This strategy is informed by a robust evidence base supporting the case for housing as a priority for Wirral. In particular, our 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and subsequent 2009 update is a major piece of evidence providing essential information in terms of our housing market. It includes detailed information regarding local needs and demand across the borough, all of which enables the Council and its partners to consider and respond to housing issues and how they impact on other areas such as health, education and the economy. This approach underpins the key housing issues identified in the Councils Corporate Plan, Core Strategy, and the Sustainable Communities Strategy where housing is a key priority.

Narrowing the inequalities gap in Wirral for housing both within and between communities is a real challenge and to address this, three clear housing targets have been set in our Local Area Agreement up to 2012. One target specifically focuses on addressing and improving the energy efficiency of existing homes, with two further targets focusing on delivering 925 additional homes in the borough of which 503 should be affordable homes. Although these targets will go some way to addressing Wirral's housing needs, they by no means are going to fully solve the problem, an issue which is reflected nationally.

In order to achieve these targets and respond to changes in the future, it is clear that one of the key challenges will be to continue to deliver affordable housing for people who need it whilst at the same time regenerating those priority neighbourhoods where markets are failing. Nationally, it has become clear that the onset of the 'credit crunch' has triggered a serious downturn in the housing market. Individual's inability to raise deposits, a severe reduction in the availability of mortgages and reducing house prices have led to an increase in demand for affordable housing and at the same time has impacted on purchaser confidence.

Analysis of house prices and sales for Wirral between 2007/08 and 2008/09 identified a significant reduction (5.7%) of median house price, with sales reducing by 54%, reflecting the trend nationally as a result of the economic downturn.

Although more recently it has been reported that the country is officially out of recession and there has been over the last year some improvement to the economic climate indicated in Wirral by a 2.27% increase in median house price and a 1.32% increase in sales, the housing market has not fully recovered and demand for affordable housing is still strong.

Generally, the majority of homes sold in Wirral tend to be in and around the Housing Market Renewal Areas (Birkenhead, Seacombe, Liscard and parts of Tranmere and Rock Ferry) indicating its affordability compared to areas to the West of the borough which tend to be less affordable, with less availability.

This combined with analysis of demand for affordable homes from people registered on the Wirralhomes Choice Based Lettings database which has seen an increase in applicants registering between April 2006 and April 2009, indicates a clear need for the Council and its partners to do more. A clearer picture of the need for affordable housing is the 1,100 applicants currently registered who have an urgent need for rehousing resulting in their current accommodation being unsuitable.

Whilst it is a key challenge to continue to deliver affordable housing, this needs to be placed into context. Not all people are in this position and the reality is that many Wirral residents have access to a decent home and enjoy an excellent quality of life and life expectancy, however there remains a stark gap between the most affluent and most deprived areas, particularly in life expectancy which housing has a significant impact on.

The Future

Throughout the life of this strategy, the economy will continue to change and therefore we need to ensure the housing market is supported to help respond to these changes. We need to ensure we meet both the local housing needs for the borough and balance out the housing market to achieve our long term vision, where although the population is anticipated to decrease slightly by 1.6%¹ by 2033, the fastest rate of increase in terms of age groups will be those aged 65 and above.

Therefore whilst we place significant importance on delivering sufficient new housing, we also have to be realistic in what can be achieved and delivered to meet local needs. The changing economic climate and the uncertainty in the longer term of the availability of resources means we also need to concentrate on the homes we already have in Wirral focusing on:

- **maximising the existing use of homes** through regeneration of areas;
- **improving poorer quality homes** to make properties and areas more attractive, where some 10.9% of residents living in private sector homes are fuel poor
- **Tackling and bringing back into use** those homes which are empty and could be used to meet the backlog of housing needs, particularly when the number of private sector homes which have been empty for more than six months has increased by 4.4% between 2009 and 2010.
- **Providing technology and services to vulnerable households** who need support to help them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible
- Helping those who can't remain in their current home through **providing specialist accommodation to meet their long term needs.**

In order to bring all of this together to deliver our vision, the council and its partners have a critical role to play in ensuring that new and existing high quality homes are provided, aligned with opportunities for training and employment, with the council seeing the strategic housing role at the heart of achieving this. We need to provide clear leadership to ensure the right conditions are created to increase the supply of all types of homes in Wirral, complimenting ambitious targets for housing growth with future changes in economic prosperity.

To achieve this we will continue to ensure housing and planning policies are closely aligned enabling opportunities for new housing development to be realised and delivered in the future.

¹ ONS population projections

KEY HOUSING ISSUES IN WIRRAL

To reflect the need to be responsive to new challenges for housing and to ensure we recognise the links between a persons increased health and general life opportunities such as education and employment, we have reviewed our approach to how we address housing issues, with our strategy focusing on the following key areas:

1. Responding to changes in the long term population makeup of Wirral, in particular an increase in the number of older people
2. Increasing the availability of new homes including affordable homes
3. Making better use of existing stock to meet housing need
4. Making areas more attractive as places to live through improving homes and providing greater choice
5. Reducing fuel poverty in the borough particularly focussing on the health and financial inequalities in those areas with higher than borough average rates
6. Meeting the housing and support needs of vulnerable people
7. Supporting the economy through housing programme

The core theme running through each of these areas is the need to ensure we respond to the different needs and aspirations of individuals and communities, enabling Wirral residents to thrive and achieve their full potential by working to narrow the inequalities gap and supporting a diverse population in the future.

Responding to changes in the long term population make-up of Wirral, in particular an increase in the number of older people.

The Evidence and Challenge

- A decrease in the overall population over a 25 year period (2008-2033) of 1.6% (4,800)
- The biggest decrease is in those of working age (-14.6%)
- The fastest rate of increase at 36.0% (24,600) being for older people with the largest increase being 122% (9,700) for those aged 85 and above.
- It is estimated by 2029 the number of households is projected to increase by 8.3% (11,400).
- It is estimated that by 2029, all household groups except pensioner households are projected to decrease in size, with non pensioner households without children expected to show the biggest decrease.
- It has been estimated that around 5% of people over the age of 65 live in some form of sheltered housing with a further 5% living in residential / nursing homes.
- In 2010 Supporting People services provide support for up to 3,678 older people through initiatives such as Extra Care Housing, Sheltered Housing and mobile wardens.
- In 2009/10 there were 7,035 people over the age of 65 in receipt of formal community care services arranged via the Department of Adult Social Services.
- There are 13,000 current claimants of Attendance Allowance in Wirral (non means tested benefit for which a person must be over 65 years of age and in need of frequent care and attention throughout the day or night, or need continual supervision).
- It is evident though consultation, that the existing levels and type of provision for older people no longer meet all of their aspirations and needs
- Overall in 2009 25.6% of all households in Wirral are unable to afford general market homes of an appropriate size, which is an increase of 2% since 2007.
- It has been predicted there will be an increase in the UK households of non-white British origin from 8% in 2001 to 20% in 2051

Evidence: Office for National Statistics 2010, Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Supporting People Programme, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The monitoring of population changes, forecasts and projections and relating them to housing is essential if we are to be well prepared to meet the Borough's future needs. Not only do we need to look at overall population change projections, we need to look at the predicted make-up of that population, for example people's age and ethnicity. The changes in our population make-up in recent years have already impacted upon and altered the way services are being delivered, such as the increase in the requirement for adapting older and disabled people's homes due to the increased need.

Population and household size

Wirral's overall projected population is predicted to decrease over the next 25 years, the opposite of what is predicted to happen to the UK as a whole. Wirral's decrease is predicted to be 1.6% over the period 2008 to 2033 with more people leaving the Borough than moving in, while the projected UK increase in population is 16.6% over the same period.

Overall population change whilst important is not the biggest issue for housing policy in Wirral. More importantly the make up of households is changing with household sizes becoming smaller. Our recent assessment of the local market estimates the biggest decrease expected will be in non-pensioner households without children, leading to a predicted 8.3% increase in the number of households by 2029. However, whilst households are expected to decrease there is still a major need to address the current housing requirements of the borough which is for a wide range of households including families, single people and couples. There is therefore a need to consider the type and size of homes we currently have in Wirral. We need to ensure we not only make better use of existing homes and support people to move to properties which better suit their needs, but we also need to ensure the challenging targets set to deliver new homes are appropriate and support this predicted rise in household numbers across all types of property.

Older People

The biggest issue arising from the predicted demographic changes for Wirral, is how our population will be made up in the future, in particular the highest estimated increase in the number of older people aged 65 and over. As well as impacting on housing, the increase is also an issue for support agencies and health and social care organisations.

Older people are one of the key 'super groups' identified as a target priority for the Council and its partners to address particularly in relation to housing, health and other support needs. This is of particular importance as the number of older people who have a physical and / or mental frailty is increasing although life expectancy is increasing. In effect as we are living longer, we have more years in poor health.

In responding to an older population, Wirral Council and its partners need to consider the following:

Types of homes

Of the additional homes needed for the Borough until 2029, it is estimated some 34.4% (3922) will need to be "specialist" housing², i.e. sheltered or supported.

Whilst we have gone some way to addressing this need, with 250 new homes developed specifically for older people since 2006 at a cost of over £24.68 million (£11 million of which has been provided through government grant funding), we still have work to do, but equally we have to be realistic about what can be done. Given the costs so far to develop this specialist accommodation, we need to be realistic about what we can do in the future, with a significant amount of investment required to deliver further accommodation. Clearly with the impact of reduced availability of resources and the changing economic climate, we need to consider the housing needs of all groups across the borough and balance out these requirements and what can realistically be achieved. We will need to work with our partners to develop innovative solutions which will help us deliver new provision where appropriate to address these needs.

House size

It is expected by 2029 that about half of all one and two bed homes (excluding "specialist" housing) will be occupied by older person households, up from an average of 39% in 2009³. Along with the need for greater provision of two bedroom homes in the Borough

² Wirral's SHMA 2010, page 71.

³ Wirral's SHMA 2010, page 82.

across all age groups, there will also be a need for some increase in numbers of this property size to accommodate older people who may wish to move into smaller homes.

Support in the home and quality housing

Most older people want to stay in their own home where possible and as the population continues to age, we need to recognise that a greater number of support services will be needed in the future to achieve this. We will need to invest in a range of innovative solutions and services including aids and physical adaptations and general home maintenance to ensure by 2026 that older people can live in a home which is of a good standard, safe, efficient to run and warm.

Where homes are being built, regardless of whether or not they are to be occupied immediately by older people, they must be “future-proofed” so when an older person moves in, or when the occupiers become older themselves, the home will already meet their needs or can easily be adapted. This will help to ensure that we can focus on helping people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible and ensure those who can't, have access to a suitable home to meet their needs.

Ethnicity

The current ethnic mix in Wirral consists mainly of white British (96.5%) and numbers of those of other ethnic origins is lower than the English average⁴. It has been predicted there will be an increase from 8% in 2001 to 20% in 2051 in UK households of non-white British origin⁵. Households with a European, US and Australasian ethnic background will grow fastest but those of a south Asian background will grow also. Wirral responds currently to the diverse needs of our communities directly for housing through the Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Support Team and will continue to be flexible enough to adapt its housing services to assist more households with different cultures, religions and languages accordingly.

⁴ Non White British in Wirral consist of 5% of the population and in England 13% - 2001 Census, ONS.

⁵ Ethnic population projections for the UK and local areas, 2001 – 2051, University of Leeds, July 2010.

A need to increase new housing and deliver affordable homes

The Evidence and Challenge

- Since the economic downturn, new housing development has been significantly below the higher annual regional requirement of 500 net additional homes.
- Wirral's Local Area Agreement targets for 2009/10 and 2010/11 have subsequently been re-negotiated to 265 and 160 to take into account the national economic downturn.
- The median house price in Wirral between 2007/08 and 2008/09 fell by 5.7% and sales reduced by 54%, however there has been some improvement in 2009/10 with a 2.27% increase in median house price and a 1.32% increase in sales.
- The median house price for Wirral increased from £132,000 in 2008/09 to £135,000 in 2009/10 which is an increase of 2.27% indicating early signs of improvement in the market.
- First time buyers are struggling to buy homes, as larger deposits are required to obtain a mortgage. In Wirral, on average a 25% deposit for a mortgage is in the region of £25,000.
- Wirral's 2008 Place Survey confirmed that people in Wirral see 'affordable decent housing' of key importance.
- Demand for affordable housing in 2009/10 has increased with the number of applicants registering on the Wirralhomes database for social housing increasing compared to previous years. Whilst this is not a true indication of need and is subject to allocations, this does support the continued priority for affordable housing to be delivered locally.
- The number of applicants registered on the database in 2009/10 with urgent need status for rehousing has also increased compared previous years, indicating that more people are in immediate need for affordable housing to meet their specific needs.
- A recent introduction in 2011/12 of absolute caps that Local Housing Allowance (benefits to help pay towards private rented accommodation costs) rates cannot exceed.
- Those on Job Seekers Allowance for more than 12 months will have their Local Housing Allowance cut to 90%.
- An implied requirement to deliver 570 new homes per year up to 2029 in order to balance out our housing market and make areas in the east of the borough more attractive to live.
- A requirement for 40% of this to be for affordable housing as 25.6% of all households in Wirral are unable to afford market accommodation of an appropriate size which is an increase of 2% since 2007.
- Without the Wirral Waters development, the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment shows a reducing land supply over time within the regeneration priority areas primarily in the east of the borough, with a gross capacity of up to 2,900 units available within the first five years and up to 700 units in year's six to ten on previously developed sites. An additional 965 units had planning permission outside the regeneration priority areas.

Evidence: Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Future Supply of Accommodation

Key to any new housing provision will be the availability of enough land to build new homes where they are needed. We are currently in the process of developing our Core Strategy which will be supported by a robust evidence base and assessment of land supply for Wirral and will ensure that appropriate future housing supply will be considered when developing housing targets .

The findings of the SHMA are significant considerations with regarding to level and location of future house building that should be permitted within Wirral, if identified local housing needs are to be met. The consideration of this issue is, however is currently subject to considerable uncertainty.

The rate of new house building in Wirral has dropped markedly since the onset of the recession and the level and pace of any future recovery is as yet unclear.

The annual housing requirement for net additional homes in Wirral was previously set by the Secretary of State in the former Regional Spatial Strategy issued in September 2008 at 500 dwellings, lower than the need now identified in the SHMA. The Regional Spatial Strategy has now been revoked to remove “top down” targets to allow greater local choice and the Secretary of State has confirmed that decisions on housing supply will rest with local councils without the framework of regional numbers and plans. The basis for making these decisions in the absence of the Regional Spatial Strategy has, however, not yet been clarified.

The Council will be consulting on a new housing requirement figure for Wirral as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document. A range of figures will be suggested on which stakeholders will be invited to comment, including the annual rate of 570 net additional dwellings implied by the results of the SHMA Update, which is based at a single point in time on a number of factors including the provision that all emerging households need a property and does not account for empty properties which could and may be made available. Matters to be addressed will include the location and capacity of available land, wider development aspirations and the pace of market recovery. It will not be possible to comment further on the potential future housing numbers for Wirral until that consultation process has been completed, this will form part of the process of the review of the Housing Investment Plan for the future.

However, in the interim, until a final figure can be determined, Cabinet has already resolved that an annual figure of 250 net additional dwellings should be applied and underpinning our future direction in terms of new and existing homes will be the need to narrow the inequalities gap between our communities and ensuring that future housing provision meets needs and is sustainable over the long term.

Accessing Home Ownership

The economic downturn and the problems first time buyers are facing have impacted on Wirral’s housing market. Although house prices in the Housing Market Renewal area are still lower than the west of the Borough, evidence indicates there is still a 44.4%⁶

⁶ Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009 Update – P60 para 6.48 – RSS Inner Area equivalent to HMRA

affordable housing need in that area. There is therefore still a need to make areas in the east of the Borough more attractive to live and narrow the housing and inequalities gap.

In Wirral, being able to afford a home is still a major issue, which is worsening particularly for first time buyers who are increasingly having to purchase at the lower end of the housing market. This is further exacerbated by the increased emphasis on larger deposits for mortgages as a result of the change in the availability of credit.

Nationally in 2010, first time buyers accounted for the lowest proportion (35%⁷) of home purchase loans since September 07, raising concerns about the future housing market particularly as this will impact on existing home owners ability to trade up and move on to more suitable homes. As the overall health of a housing market relies on a steady flow of first time buyers, particularly as the market is largely based on a system of trading up in the value, type and size of a home, we need to ensure new purchasers are encouraged and supported through new initiatives to access a first home.

It is important to stress that changes in the economy and housing market affect all home owners irrespective of their circumstances, however this is of more concern where people have little or negative equity in their home. Often this is compounded by the fact that peoples incomes may have reduced, they may have lost their job and have little or no savings to support them to move.

The Private Rented Sector

The private rented sector is an increasingly important provider of easily accessible, flexible accommodation, and more households are recognising the advantages of the sector as a tenure of choice. This ease of access, coupled with supporting tenants to sustain existing tenancies, is something Wirral continues to use as an aid to homelessness prevention and meeting housing need. This is being achieved and will continue to be delivered through linking housing advisors, information leaflets, multi tenure choice based lettings, landlord accreditation, Bond/Deposit Scheme, and tenancy support officers that work in partnership with landlords and tenants, all of which helps to improve access and ensure tenancies are sustained over the longer term.

A challenge for the future which will impact on people's ability to afford a home is the Government changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011/12. It is estimated that in the North West, 49% of people claiming Local Housing Allowance will have their allowance cut, with the average loss being £11⁸ per week. There are concerns that nationally 202,000 people are at risk from becoming homeless as a result of this benefit cut. To respond to this we will need to work with our partners to minimise the impact of this on reducing peoples income by looking at a range of initiative including new ways of lettings such as shared tenancies and financial inclusion initiatives such as working with organisations such as Wirral Moneyline to provide financial advice, particularly if this means people are at risk of being made homeless and unable to afford to maintain their home.

⁷ Council of Mortgage Lenders ([press release 15 June 10](#))

⁸ [DWP Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12](#)

The Social Sector

In Wirral an increasing number of newly forming households (63.4%⁹) are unable to afford general open market homes for sale. It is estimated that the number of smaller one and two person households is increasing, contributing to Wirral's increased need for additional affordable housing for a range of households but in particular older and single people and households with no children.

With the number of applicants registering on the Wirralhomes database for social housing increasing over the last year and the number of those people in urgent need of rehousing also increasing, we need to work with our partners to both make best use of existing homes as well as identifying opportunities to increase the provision of suitable housing to meet needs.

We want to respond to the feedback we have had from consultation events with young people, where work needs to be done to raise the profile of social housing. It is essential social housing is seen as a tenure of choice for local people, this will need to be delivered through improving the quality, type and choice of social rented sector accommodation in the borough.

⁹ Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2009 Update – P47 para ii

A need to make better use of the existing stock across all sectors to meet the backlog of housing need and those for the future.

The Evidence and Challenge

- Wirral recorded an increase in the number of all empty properties from 5086 in 2009 to 6099 in 2010.
- The North West has the second highest number of empty homes in the country representing a significant challenge for Wirral in terms of addressing this and where appropriate making use of these properties to meet the housing needs of the borough.
- Homes in the private sector which have been empty for more than 6 months has also increased by 4.4% from 2623 in 2009 to 2739 in 2010.
- Whilst Wirral has a significant problem with empty properties on the eastern side of the borough, it is by no means contained there. Across the 207 Lower Super Output Areas's (LSOA) within the borough, 25% (52) have long term vacancy rates above the Wirral average of 2.3%. Of the 31 LSOA's in the Housing Market Renewal Area 67%, (21) of those also have vacancy rates above the Wirral average.
- In 2007/08 177 empty homes were brought back into use, rising to 207 in 08/09 and in the region of 280 in 2009/10. The majority of these homes were in the private sector.
- As at April 2010 the overall number of empty social rented homes was 916, or 4% of social stock which is an increase of 104 over the 812 in 2009. Although empty properties at 4% remain higher than the national average of 2.5%, it is important to recognise that this increase is due to an increase in the long term empty homes many of which are a result of programmed clearance in preparation for demolition. The number of short term empty properties remain almost the same at 381 empty social rented homes in April 2010, an increase of just 2 from April 2009 figure of 379.
- Wirral's 2009 SHMA identified that 2185 households currently live in unsuitable properties due to overcrowding, irrespective of whether they live in a home they own or rent.
- Recent analysis of Wirralhomes data shows no direct relationship between postcode areas in terms of overcrowded and under occupied homes, however Wirral's 2007 SHMA has identified that 41.6% (57,167) of households across the borough irrespective of tenure under-occupy their homes, although indications are this is more common in households who own their own home.

Evidence: Empty Property Strategy, Wirral Homes data, Private Sector Stock Condition and Home Energy Survey 2008, Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007

Tackling long term empty properties in Wirral is important and will help to improve the quality and desirability of our neighbourhoods. It is estimated that a run-down empty home can reduce neighbouring house prices by 18%¹⁰ and is a wasted asset for the owner. Irrespective of whether an empty property is newly built or an existing one, it could if brought back into use, help to meet the housing needs of the Borough.

¹⁰ The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors estimate

Whilst it is acknowledged there will always be an element of some vacant homes in the borough, by 2026 we want to reduce the number of empty homes both in the borough and more importantly in the areas where long term vacancy rates are above the Wirral average and are impacting on neighbourhoods.

We will need to focus on linking housing need and demand more strategically to existing homes and develop innovative solutions to bring these issues together. We will need to focus in the future on looking at our changing population and household make up and link this with the potential to target work which both looks to help owners who want to bring empty properties back into use and utilises a range of enforcement powers where needed. This will make a significant contribution to Wirral's local economy through increased income generation for the Council and the increased use of local labour and supplies through improvement works.

Tackling empty properties and the use of enforcement powers is a key challenge for the Council which will need to be sufficiently resourced in the future if it is to make a significant impact and a real difference is to be made in local neighbourhoods.

Whilst tackling empty properties across all sectors is important, the biggest challenge for the Council is to concentrate its resources towards the private sector. Responding to empty properties in the social sector continues to be important and we are working closely with our RSL partners to both understand the reasons why there are still a number of long term empty properties in this sector and address these properties through targeted programmes including clearance of high rise flats.

A need to make areas more attractive as places to live and encourage people to stay in the borough through improving stock and providing greater housing choice.

The Evidence and Challenge

- Wirral's housing stock consists¹¹ of 73% owner occupied, 15% social rented and 12% rented from a private landlord. Although the tenure breakdown is broadly similar, the social rented sector is slightly lower than both the NW region (19%¹²) and national picture (18%)
- 74% of all housing¹³ (both social and private sector) in Wirral meets the decent homes standard
- 94% of homes in the social rented sector are classed as decent as of April 2010. This is anticipated to rise to 95% at the end of 2010 with 100% decency being achieved by 2012¹⁴.
- The biggest challenge to improving conditions is in the private sector (owner occupied and private rented). Of those 28,000 vulnerable households (people on means tested benefits) living in the private sector, 11,200 (40%) live in homes that do not meet the decent home standard.
- 16.1% (19,900) of homes are classified as having category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System associated with the property and this is significantly higher at 26% (4,394) inside the housing market renewal area.
- There has been a 3.57% reduction in house prices for the Borough between 2007/08 and 2009/10, however in the last year there has been an increase of 2.27%. However for the same period the housing market renewal priority areas have seen a 11.7% reduction with the last year alone seeing a 6% reduction demonstrating a need to target investment for the future into helping regenerate local areas and balance the market.
- Indications suggest that although housing renewal areas have improved in terms of perception and desirability, focus needs to remain on these areas as there is still a gap between these areas and rest of borough
- Since 2007 the number of properties within Wirral with Council tax bands A – C have increased by 1.29% compared to 0.88% for those in bands D – F and 3.42% for bands G – U. There is a gap in the % of properties in band C-H for the borough (38.43%) to that in the priority area; housing market renewal (2.34%)

Evidence Private Stock Condition Survey (2008); LCRH Vulnerable Markets paper (2009); Newheartlands Sustainability Index; Liverpool City Region Multi Area Agreements housing platform paper (2009); Merseyside LAS feasibility study (2009)

A key role of the Council in respect of private sector renewal is to improve the quality of life for residents by ensuring the provision of decent housing which meets the needs of

¹¹ PSSC&HES (2008) pg11

¹² HCA- Pete Bailey – tenure patterns & aspirations (2009) (original data 2007)

¹³ Private sector of 61% decent derived from 2009 PSSCS, and Social sector of 94.6% derived from 2010 WAMP data. All tenure % calculation made using dwelling count.

¹⁴ The delay in 100% decency being achieved due to WPH and extension agreed with HC (now TSA)

local people and supports both economic and social regeneration. This role exists to ensure that communities remain at the heart of the decision making process affecting their areas.

The responsibility for maintaining private property rests first and foremost with the homeowner. However the Council recognises that intervention and assistance is necessary where areas are in decline, owners are in financial hardship (a problem which is increasing as the impact of the economic recession continues) or landlords refuse to undertake essential repairs or improvements.

Wirral has already embarked on a bold programme to radically address housing market decline in the priority inner areas of Tranmere, Birkenhead, Seacombe and parts of Liscard and Rock Ferry. Over £103 million has been spent since 2003 transforming Wirral's eastern housing markets. It has levered in £17 million private sector funding with a further £64 million committed from Lovell. Activity since 2003 has included focussing on pockets of high market stress and encompassing selective clearance and site assembly for re development of high quality, well designed multi tenure housing and commercial units. In the more sustainable neighbourhoods Wirral has delivered improvements to the existing housing stock through group repair and improvement grants, environmental improvements and a range of environmental and neighbourhood initiatives.

Much of the work has focused so far on the priority areas of Rock Ferry and Tranmere where significant changes have been seen to the local areas. Residents satisfaction with the area has increased and in the Tranmere area alone, just before the economic downturn, house prices rose by 90% compared to the Borough average which during the same time rose by 50%.

Restructuring the housing market of the priority areas is still a major challenge and although we have worked hard to improve some of the exiting poorer quality homes in the borough, particularly in the inner areas there is still more to do. Wirral is well equipped to meet this challenge with dedicated staff in place with the necessary skills and expertise to deliver. Over the coming years the focus of delivery will be to move forward with the plans for the redevelopment of Birkenhead and Wallasey where resources will need to be targeted to make an impact on the same scale as has been seen in Rock Ferry and Tranmere where a neighbourhood has been transformed by market renewal.

We will need to be more innovative in how we address these issues and look at new delivery models such as Community Housing Trusts, given the reduction on future funding anticipated available to do this. Increasingly with changes to the economy we will see people moving in and out of Wirral in the future to access employment and education opportunities. To respond to this we need to make sure that what we have to offer people in terms of a home and neighbourhood to live is desirable and affordable as well as flexible enough to allow people to move.

Our homes in the social rented sector continue to be well regulated and improved to ensure they meet specific quality standards and we continue to work with Registered Providers who own these homes to make sure that these standards continue to be maintained in the future. We will use evidence such as our Strategic Housing Market Assessment to help inform the type and location of new homes needed for the sector to ensure the right types of homes are available and sustainable to meet the housing needs of the borough.

As is the case regionally and nationally in respect of the level of the private rented sector this continues to slowly increase due to a number of factors including less availability of social rented homes, lack of affordable homes to buy, increased demand for a flexible tenure that is easy to access, and a previously thriving buy to let market which has risen as a result of the 'housing boom' over recent years.

Although the private rented sector has many advantages such as flexibility and ease of access, evidence has highlighted that it contains more vulnerable households, has the least security of tenure and housing conditions on average are three times worse than owner occupied homes. By 2026 Wirral wants to see a healthy private rented sector with good quality properties and management standards supported through Wirral's accreditation scheme, a view which is supported by local communities. In order to meet the challenge of increase choice, Wirral recognises that the private rented sector in particular will need to be considered as a key partner in this process. Our limited land availability, pressure on the availability of social rented sector homes and the impact of the economic recession means that supporting people to consider all available housing options together is essential.

Subject to sufficient continued investment, by 2026 it is anticipated the gap between the boroughs house prices, proportion of council tax bands and tenure breakdown against those priority areas to the east of the borough are narrowed. The aspiration in the long term is one of a borough with a variety of accommodation which is balanced to ensure communities can have a greater choice in where they live and if applicable move up the housing market rather than move out.

A need to reduce fuel poverty across the borough, particularly focussing on the health and financial inequalities in those areas with higher than borough average rates

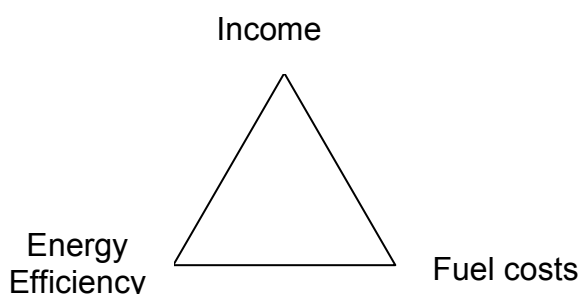
The Evidence and Challenge

- 11% of households living in the private sector are estimated to be fuel poor (spending more than 10% of their household income on energy bills) this is a decrease from 21.1% in 2002. However fuel poverty is rising due to increasing energy prices, which will continue to increase significantly until at least 2020, and therefore there is importance on addressing fuel poverty at a local level
- 39% of private sector stock fails the decent homes standard of which 23.4% fail due to a poor degree of thermal comfort and 16.1% of homes fail due to having Category 1 hazards in the home, the main reason being excess cold.
- The cost to remedy thermal comfort is £34m and the cost to remedy Category 1 hazards is £127m. The cost of energy efficiency improvements to dwellings in fuel poverty in the owner occupied sector is just over £10.9m.
- Costs of illness arising from cold and damp housing conditions to the National Health Service are estimated at over £1billion per year. Investing £2.3m addressing housing conditions for excess cold and falls has the potential to address health inequalities and save Wirral National Health Service £9.36m
- Areas which are suffering from higher than borough average levels of fuel poverty and Category 1 failures include parts of Wallasey and Birkenhead.
- By investing £7.34m in loft and cavity wall insulation to insulate 80% of properties in need of it, a lifetime CO₂ saving of 870,340 tonnes would be achieved, saving each household receiving both cavity wall and full loft insulation around £265 a year.

Evidence: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Affordable Warmth Strategy

Fuel poverty is officially defined by the Government as when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its disposable income to adequately heat the home¹⁵. It can be better described as “affordable warmth”. 15.3% of Wirral households are currently in fuel poverty¹⁶, which is above the average for Merseyside (14.5%) and the North West (14.2%).

Fuel poverty is caused by any one of three factors, with a household in fuel poverty being affected by just one or all three, as shown by the “fuel poverty triangle” below:



¹⁵ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, 2001, DEFRA and DTI, Page 6.

¹⁶ Fuel poverty sub-regional statistics, 2009, DECC,

http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/fuelpov_stats/regional/regional.aspx

- If household income is low, fuel bills will account for a higher proportion of that household's spend.
- If the property has poor energy efficiency levels due to, for example, no loft insulation or an old central heating system, fuel bills will be higher.
- The energy companies control fuel costs, however households have the opportunity to change suppliers to benefit from cheaper tariffs.

The majority of fuel poor households tend to be living in areas where income is low and property standards are poor. As with other inequalities across Wirral, there are marked differences in the rates of fuel poverty between areas, with Wallasey and Birkenhead having the highest levels¹⁷. There is also an overlap with health inequalities in particular where homes are cold and damp. This can exacerbate or be one of the causes of respiratory and cardio-vascular diseases, impacting significantly on peoples health.

The three causes of fuel poverty need to be analysed and addressed individually but where action is taken to reduce fuel poverty they need to be dealt with together.

Income

From 1996 until 2004, fuel poverty levels had been reducing every year¹⁸. The main reason for this fall was increasing household income¹⁹. The introduction of Pension Credit and Tax Credits and the continuation of Winter Fuel Payments have played an important part in this increase.

There is however a large number of unclaimed benefits. Up to £10.5bn in means-tested benefits and up to £6.2bn in tax credits currently goes unclaimed every year²⁰. If take-up could be improved, there is no doubt more households could be lifted out of fuel poverty. Benefit entitlement checks for households are therefore a key part of any fuel poverty initiative.

Energy Efficiency

Improvements to the energy efficiency of homes, occupied by fuel poor households in Wirral is essential as a long term and sustainable solution for dealing with fuel poverty. The average energy efficiency rating for homes in Wirral has increased over the last decade, most significantly in the social sector as a result of national schemes such as the Decent Homes Programme, Warm Front and more locally CosyHomes²¹. The introduction of the Council's free insulation programme accessible to all Wirral households will also assist greatly in improving energy efficiency levels in homes and reducing CO₂ emissions.

One of our biggest challenges is tackling the "hard to treat" homes in the borough which generally tend to be occupied by owner occupiers and private rented fuel poor households. These homes generally have solid walls which are not able to be insulated through the current large-scale energy efficiency grant schemes. It is estimated that the cost to insulate all of Wirral's solid walled homes would be in the region of £650m²² and therefore we need to look at how we can work with our partners to target these homes

¹⁷ Wirral Private Sector Stock Condition and Home Energy Survey 2008

¹⁸ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy – 7th Annual Progress Report – 2009, DECC, page 7.

¹⁹ Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2009, DECC, page 11.

²⁰ Fuel Poverty Advisory Group Eighth Annual Report, 2009, published July 2010 by DECC, page 17.

²¹ RSL SAP data provided from HECA annual progress reports and WAMP returns; private sector SAP data provided from Wirral Private Sector Stock Condition Surveys 2003 and 2008.

²² Wirral Private Sector Stock Condition & Home Energy Survey 2008, page 74, using an average of £10k / property.

Future funding from the energy companies' energy efficiency obligation is likely to be based on the current pilot Community Energy Saving Programme. It is likely to provide funding for hard to treat homes in areas of deprivation. It is estimated the Council would need to identify funding of £54m for all solid wall and loft insulation measures for private sector homes in these areas over a period of 10 years. This would direct energy efficiency improvements to communities which experience the greatest level of failure of thermal comfort and the highest number of Category 1 hazards.

Fuel costs

From a low point in 2003, in real terms gas prices have risen by 77% and electricity prices by 60% to 2009²³. This has led to an increase in English fuel poverty levels from 1.2 million households in 2003 to 2.8 million in 2007 (latest figure) and a forecast rise to 4.6m in 2009²⁴. Looking forward to 2020, the long term trend for energy prices continues to be upward with households paying between £100 and £600 each year more for their energy bills²⁵.

As energy price increases are outside of our control, local fuel poverty initiatives will need to strengthen their role in ensuring households are on the cheapest tariff available and to publicise the energy companies' "Social Price Support" which provides discounts or rebates for some fuel poor households. There will also need to be greater local support and advice service for those households in "fuel debt", which is likely to increase not only due to price increases but also due to a decrease in incomes through greater unemployment. It is estimated that the cost of providing a dedicated fuel debt advice service for Wirral would be in the region of £50,000 per year.

Starting in 2011 the energy companies will be introducing smart meters into all homes consuming gas or electricity. It is anticipated that this will be fully introduced to all homes by 2020. Smart meters allow the energy company to remotely access consumption data, removing the need for estimated bills. They will also provide information for the householder on their real-time and total energy use. There are concerns that some vulnerable customers may become concerned about energy costs and could under-heat their home which will subsequently impact on their health and the condition of their homes. To assist, local authorities have been identified as having a key role in protecting vulnerable residents by ensuring they understand fuel consumption without risking their health and well-being from under-heating their homes.

Joined-up approach

We address income, energy efficiency and fuel costs together under our "Warmer Wirral" banner. Warmer Wirral, as well as delivering grants for energy efficiency, is designed to increase awareness of fuel poverty and assistance available to households, charities, Council staff and local organisations to ease this. A key aspect to this is our area-based approach to tackling fuel poverty with a team of assessors speaking to households on the doorstep and signposting to the assistance available and at the same time engaging the public through events, advice surgeries and talks and training on fuel poverty for front-line workers. This approach is vital in tackling fuel poverty in the Borough and must continue. It is integrated with the free insulation scheme until 2014 but funding will need to be identified in the region of £100,000 each year from 2014-15 onwards to ensure this continues.

²³ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy – 7th Annual Progress Report – 2009, DECC, page 19.

²⁴ UK Fuel Poverty Strategy – 7th Annual Progress Report – 2009, DECC, pages 7 to 8.

²⁵ Fuel Poverty Advisory Group Eighth Annual Report, 2009, published July 2010 by DECC, page 8.

Supporting vulnerable people.

The Evidence and Challenge

- Wirral has an estimated 19,300 households (15.9%) where there is a resident with a disability. Where a need for an adaptation has been indicated, the cost of these adaptations, after allowing for means testing, is estimated to be just under £3.7 million
- Wirral has a range of programmes targeted at supporting and enabling vulnerable people to maintain their independence in the home such as the Supporting People Programme and Disabled Facilities Grants.
- The Supporting People Programme when at full capacity is able to provide services for to up to 5,000 vulnerable people. As of August 2010 this is broken down as follows: 3632 older people; 453 people with mental health problems and 779 people from socially excluded groups, with capacity for some movement.
- In 2009/10 Wirral's Home Improvement Agency processed over 3,500 jobs to support vulnerable people consisting of 600 Disabled Facilities Grants, 620 Home Improvement Agency jobs, 553 fast track minor adaptations and 1,768 Handy person Service jobs.
- There has been a significant growth in the number of adults with learning disabilities in Wirral and the number of younger adults with complex needs moving through the education system. The Department of Adult Social Services estimates that caring for these young adults with complex needs will cost an additional £0.8 million per year.
- Since the introduction of a Homeless Prevention and Housing Options approach to homelessness was adopted 2008, the number of statutory homelessness cases has decreased significantly by 89% to 51 cases in 2009/10.
- On average the Housing Options Team are able to prevent 120 homeless cases per quarter, with one third of cases assisted to remain in the home and two thirds of cases assisted to find alternative accommodation.
- In 2009/10, of those homeless applicants who were eligible, unintentional and in priority need, the highest percentage of applicants (63%) fell within the 25-44 age group, and 24% in the 16-24 age group
- Of the cases where homelessness could not be prevented in the time available and who were accepted as unintentionally homeless, the majority (65%) were considered to be priority need because the household included dependent children. An increased proportion (10%), were vulnerable because of mental illness.
- Similarly, an increased percentage (9%), were considered to be vulnerable because of physical disability.
- Although overall homeless acceptances have fallen, the three main reasons for homelessness in Wirral in 2009/10 were, the Termination of assured short hold tenancy (22%), Mortgage Arrears (18%) Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate (12%).
- There is still an underlying low level incidence of rough sleeping, mostly by single people who do not meet the statutory thresholds for assistance

Evidence: Supporting People Programme, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2010, Supported and Special Needs Housing Commissioning Strategy 2008 – 11, Office of National Statistics 2010, Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007, Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008, WirralHomes Steering Group Reports 2007-2010. Housing Advice and Housing Options team Statistics

Many Wirral residents enjoy an excellent quality of life, however some people require additional support to be able to live independently with help to access and maintain employment, a home and a healthy lifestyle.

Vulnerable people exist in a variety of groups ranging from older people, people with learning or physical disabilities, to people who are homeless or teenage parents.

Overall there are an estimated 29,741 (20%)²⁶ households in Wirral with one or more members identified as being vulnerable or having a special need, exceeding the national average of 14%. The predominant vulnerable groups are households with a physical/learning/sensory disability, frail older people and a high number of people with a mental health illness.

The majority of vulnerable households (65%) live in homes owned by them or their families, with 25% living in social rented housing and the remaining 10% living in privately rented homes.

The housing needs of vulnerable people do have to be balanced against our other priorities however we want to support people to remain in or work towards independent living, helping them to participate in mainstream society and make a contribution to the local economy. We have achieved this by looking at a range of opportunities to help improve access to different types of housing, delivering services to peoples homes and where appropriate developing purpose built specialist accommodation to meet needs. Services provided such as the Supporting People Programme has enabled low level housing support to be delivered for clients such as older people which is supporting a high number of clients in relation to the expenditure committed to this group, therefore people are being supported to live independently in their own home.

For the future we will focus our work on three key 'super groups' which are:

- People living independently with support, which includes **older people**
- People in receipt of care with support, which includes **people with physical or sensory disabilities and people with learning disabilities**
- **People experiencing or at risk of social exclusion**, which includes single homeless people with support needs, homeless families with support needs, rough sleepers, people with mental health problems, refugees, travellers and teenage parents.

As we have already considered older people earlier in this strategy (Section 1), this section will focus on the remaining two super groups. It is important to recognise however that over the lifetime of this strategy these 'super groups' may change and therefore we will continue via our investment plan, to monitor needs and refocus services towards groups most in need.

People with Learning/ Physical/Sensory Disability

In Wirral there are approximately 26,179 households with a learning, physical or sensory disability with this group representing 88% of all vulnerable households.

The challenge for the future is to meet the needs of individuals by providing more housing and support choices, meeting the needs of those not eligible for statutory services. To do this our focus will be on both developing new homes when we can but primarily making

²⁶ Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007

best use of the existing homes available. We will utilise a number of options to support this approach ranging from carrying out home adaptations to providing low level support to people to help them maintain independent living. Our budget for adaptations has been increasing to respond to this need, however there is still more to do but this needs to be considered in the context of what future funding will enable us to do, particularly given the fact that 32% of applicants accepted on the Disabled Persons Housing register between 2007 and 2010 were successfully rehoused however only 147 were able to access an existing adapted property. In addition, 15.9%²⁷ of people who own their home have indicated a need for some form of adaptation to meet their needs.

People experiencing or at risk of social exclusion

There are a number of people living in Wirral that are at risk of or excluded from opportunities such as a home, employment, education, and social networks. They are at risk because of issues such as homelessness, being at risk of offending or are an ex-offender, having health and well-being issues, or being a young person at risk to name a few.

It is clear that single homeless people with support needs, people with drug/ alcohol problems and young people at risk are the largest users of supported housing services so we need to focus on how we can work with our partners to help these people.

Homelessness

In 2007 Wirral Council commissioned a comprehensive independent review of its existing homeless services, to gain a clear understanding of both the effectiveness of the homeless services provided and as well as identifying future priorities to inform its 2008 – 2010 Homeless Strategy.

Key to this was the need to strengthen the existing Homeless and Housing Advice Service through significant investment and refocusing of services towards homeless prevention, by making best use of housing advice and mediation services.

This approach has resulted in the number of statutory homeless cases accepted by the Council decreasing by 89.08%²⁷ to 51 cases in 2009/10, with the main reasons for homeless being the termination of a short term tenancy, particularly in the private rented sector. It is important therefore that we continue to look at innovative ways to try and address these particular issues.

Whilst this approach is having a significant impact on homelessness, we must acknowledge there is still work to do to. It is clear that the significant investment in Wirral's Homeless and Housing Advice Services, focusing particularly on preventing homelessness, is working. Despite this success, we cannot be complacent. Analysis of footfall to the Homeless and Housing Advice Service during July 2010 has indicated a 20% increase over the same period in 2009 and for August 2010 this has increased by 40% more than the same period in 2009. The reality is that we need to recognise the impact of issues such as the changing economic situation, peoples changing housing needs and pressure on the housing market, will continue to be major influences on homelessness in Wirral. To respond to this we need to continue to ensure the investment in these services is maintained in the longer term.

²⁷ Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2008

Other socially excluded groups

We assist socially excluded groups through a range of measures from providing specialist housing to support services delivered to people in their own homes. Clients from socially-excluded groups continue to experience difficulties in accessing appropriate permanent homes despite a range of initiatives developed to support them ranging from help with a rent deposit for a home in the private sector to increasing people's ability to access a home in the social sector.

As we recognise these services help to reduce tenancy breakdown, drug/alcohol use, cyclical homelessness, and reductions in hospital admissions (for people with mental health problems), we are committed to working with representatives from the social rented and private rented sectors to ensure wider access to housing for those who may have previously led an unsettled way of life.

Realising Housing's role in supporting the economy

The Evidence and Challenge

- Wirral still has the capacity to undergo continued economic growth, with only 0.68 jobs per working age person
- The level of unemployment amongst residents in Wirral has increased by 47.6% between March 2008 and March 2009, reflecting the current economic downturn. From March 2009 - March 2010 the increase in unemployment levels has slowed with a 2% increase and since March 2010 levels have continued to fall with an 11% reduction to August 2010. However overall from March 2008 to date there has been an increase in unemployment by 31%. Therefore, household's income and employment status has a significant impact on their housing choices and options.
- The percentage of people in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance in Wirral (expressed as a proportion of the resident working age population) is 5.7% compared to 4.9% for the North West and 4.3% for Great Britain. Locally the rates are particularly high in the wards of Birkenhead (13.6%), Bidston (10.7%), Tranmere (10.5%), Seacombe (9.4%), Liscard (6.9%), Leasowe (6.9%) and Egerton (7.7%)
- An average of 9.2% of young people in Wirral are not in education, employment or training with 9 of the 22 wards in the borough being above this average. Bidston and St James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Rock Ferry and Seacombe all have a rate of above 15%.
- Work continues to support business to continue to operate and grow through a changing economic climate in order to safeguard and create jobs in Wirral
- Despite prevailing economic conditions, Wirral continues to see a steady stream of investment in development activity including the development of new housing within the Borough.
- Over £53 million has been spent on developing over 720 new affordable homes in Wirral, of which over £20 million public sector funding has been secured to support the costs involved with developing these homes, helping to creating employment and training opportunities for local businesses and people.
- The HMRI programme has invested £103,206,113 since 2003 and has facilitated a range of initiatives including the provision of Neighbourhood and Environmental Wardens, revitalising green spaces, home improvements, and the provision of new homes to improve local communities.
- Wirral was also successful in securing £1.4 million funding through the Local Authority New Build Programme as part of a £2.8 million scheme, to develop 23 units new affordable homes. This scheme will provide opportunities for local employment and support the appointment of 2 apprentices with the build contractor.
- Wirral has supported 2 private developers to secure £1,843,536 funding to 'Kickstart' private housing developments that have been unable to complete
- 53 new homes tenure has been changed over the last 12 months period to social rent from shared ownership, where specific housing needs have been identified, ensuring new housing continues to be delivered within the borough
- WirralWaters – NorthBank East will see £200 million investment and create around 1,000 jobs in construction and proposed office and retail uses
- 2009 – Treasury mapping identified Wirral as a 'red alert' area with more than 40% of all wards having a mismatch between supply of and demand for affordable credit.
- Some doorstep credit lending agencies charging up to 399.7% APR on loans.
- Wirral Moneyline launched in October 2009 in response to this and to provide a form of affordable credit for those on low incomes. Since its launch a total of 917 loans have been provided amounting to over £322,500 with the average loan being for just over £350. The top 4 areas were people lived who were provided with a loan

through this route are Birkenhead, Tranmere and Rock Ferry, Seacombe and Egremont and Prenton.

- By August 2010, 31 cases have been considered through the Governments Mortgage Rescue scheme which was introduced in 2009, with 11 cases actually successfully utilising the scheme to enable them to remain in their homes. The rest of the applicants who were not eligible have received advice and support.

Evidence: Wirral's Economic Recovery Plan, Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Stock Transfer Promises report.

Although Wirrals housing market is showing signs of improvement indicated by a slight increase in median house price and sales, there is still a long way to go in terms of our overall economic recovery. We recognise that Wirral still has the potential to undergo economic growth and there are significant investment and employment opportunities currently being developed which will support this, which include a number of housing and regeneration initiatives and developments.

It is important to stress that over recent years Wirral has benefited from an influx of investment targeted at a range of initiatives designed to help reduce the inequalities gap for the borough. Housing investment has been key to this with a significant amount of investment focused on both influencing housing markets through improving standards of homes and neighbourhoods as well as increasing housing provision to meet the changing needs of the borough.

Complimenting the funding for new affordable homes being developed in the borough, significant resources have been invested into existing social rented homes by our RSL partners as part of the 2010 Decent Homes Programme. In particular as part of the Council housing stock transfer, investment of over £97m has been secured and invested in improving over 13,000 ex council houses between 2005 and April 2010. A further £82 million is programmed to be invested as part of this process over the next three years.

This investment is delivered through the stock transfer organisations who appoint contractors to undertake improvement works. Each organisation is committed to as part of the stock transfer promise offer document, the use of local labour and suppliers and providing training opportunities including recruiting apprentices, with these commitments embedded into their procurement processes.

By improving quality, availability and accessibility of homes we are helping people to achieve their own social and economic well being, providing them with a starting point to develop their potential. We need to recognise however that peoples circumstances change over time and so we need to make sure we are flexible enough in what we do to respond to these changes.

To ensure this process continues to develop and adapt, we need to ensure that we build on and maximise the opportunities available to us through housing investment. Key to this will be encouraging our developer partners and contractors as part of any new housing developments, improvement schemes and initiatives, to build on the existing success of utilising local labour and work with us to provide training and apprenticeship schemes for people in Wirral.

Despite our success so far, working to develop opportunities to ensure people can access, afford, maintain and ultimately sustain their homes is and will continue to be a challenge for us. To respond to this, we need to ensure opportunities for people to be

able to access affordable credit, mortgages, education, employment and where appropriate support continue to be developed, working with our partners to ensure that our goals are the same, particularly in terms of the need to maximise opportunities to link housing led initiatives such as building and improving homes to supporting education, employment and health.

Whilst we recognise the future will present even more challenges to us and our partners, particularly as the economy continues to change, we will make sure that we continue to refocus the work we do to respond to these changes and continue to encourage Wirral's economic growth.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET –14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

WIRRAL'S HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2010-11

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval to:

- (1) Wirral's Housing Investment Programme for 2010-11
- (2) Officers exploring the potential that a Community Housing Trust may offer Wirral.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 A report was brought to Cabinet on 27th May 2010 detailing the proposed Wirral Housing Investment Programme for 2010/11. Government had recently announced a £50 million reduction to the National Housing Market Renewal Programme and it was not known how this reduction would be made and the implications for Wirral's Housing Investment Programme. Therefore, members requested a further report based on final known allocations.

2.2 The original and revised allocations to NewHeartlands (the Merseyside Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder) for 2010-11 are shown in the following table alongside Wirral's allocation.

	2010-11 Original	2010-11 Revised
HMRI Allocation to NewHeartlands	£47 million	£38.874million
Allocation to Wirral	£9.11 million	£7.437 million

2.3 The reduced funding for 2010-11 will still allow Wirral to continue its successful Housing Investment Programme and achieve its principal objectives:

- completion of further new homes on the Sevenoaks Scheme in Rock Ferry
- commencement of new retail development in Church Road, Tranmere
- completion of new homes at Whitford Road, Tranmere
- completion of new homes at Holt Hill, Tranmere
- completion of new homes at Woodhall/Royston Avenues, Wallasey
- completion of Extra Care housing scheme at Gorsey Lane, Wallasey
- progression of large scale refurbishment projects in Birkenhead.
- progression of large scale clearance projects in Birkenhead including assembly of sites for new build and development of major new build proposals.
- a Living Through Change Programme supporting communities through services such as the Live Wirral Wardens.

2.4 Cabinet is advised that the total allocation to NewHeartlands will be paid as a single sum to Liverpool City Council as the accountable body. Liverpool City Council will then have to transfer Wirral's allocation to the Council. Housing Market Renewal funds will be unringfenced and output targets will not be specified as part of the Pathfinder's budget

allocation, nor will the Pathfinder's performance be judged on the revised output figures based on the reduced budget. However, Pathfinders will still have to report quarterly to Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) on progress with outputs for the remainder of 2010/11.

3.0 THE HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2010-11

3.1 The Housing Investment Programme 2010-11 which builds upon priorities and initiatives in previous reports consists of the following initiatives, for which Cabinet's approval is sought:

- Birkenhead Clearance
- Rock Ferry (Fiveways) Clearance
- Tranmere (Church Road) Clearance
- Tranmere (Borough Road) Clearance
- Wallasey (Royston/Woodhall Avenues) Clearance
- Strategic site assembly
- Facelift Improvements
- Private Sector Home Improvements
- Private Rented Sector Home Improvements
- Living Through Change
- New Build

3.2 The Group Repair scheme listed on the May Cabinet report has been delayed until 2011/12.

3.3 Appendix 1 contains a spreadsheet showing the Housing Investment Programme for Wirral for 2010-11, including the funding sources and the outputs which will be achieved.

3.4 The following sections of the report set out the revised funding for each of the above initiatives and any changes to the original programme. Original funding allocations are shown in italics.

4.0 BIRKENHEAD CLEARANCE

4.1 HMRI funds of £2,638,979 (£2,275,000), Regional Housing Pot Funds of £1,351,935 (£825,368), Growth Point funding of £1,200,000 and recycled capital receipts of £955,765 (£534,000) will allow for acquisitions and demolition in two declared clearance areas at Milner/Carrington Streets and in the Bray/Brassey/Laird Street area. and other strategic areas. Increased funding for this area has been necessary to meet the demand from residents in strategic acquisition areas.

5.0 ROCK FERRY (FIVEWAYS) CLEARANCE

5.1 HMRI funding of £430,000 remains allocated to complete a programme of acquisition and clearance of 300 properties spanning five years. 45 homes for rent and 15 for shared ownership being developed for Riverside Housing Association, in Phase 1, have been completed. 12 units for outright sale have been completed by end of September 2010. A further 42 open market units will be built in Phase 1 but the rate of completion is dependent on market conditions. The completion of the clearance scheme as part of the 2010-11 programme makes land available for a further 169 units to be developed.

6.0 TRANMERE (CHURCH ROAD) CLEARANCE.

6.1 It is planned to spend HMRI funding of £800,000 (£1,600,000), in 2010-11 to progress the acquisition and clearance of retail, commercial and residential units in Tranmere, in line with the Church Road Masterplan. This will enable the acquisition of 3 commercial properties identified for clearance and provide gap funding to facilitate the commencement of new build retail development.

7.0 TRANMERE (BOROUGH ROAD) CLEARANCE

7.1 No funding will be spent in 2010/11 on this area. HMRI funding of £300,000 was allocated in the original programme.

8.0 WALLASEY (ROYSTON/WOODHALL) CLEARANCE

8.1 HMRI funding of £100,000 will fund acquisition costs of the remaining property in the Royston/Woodhall Avenue (Wallasey) Statutory Clearance Area to enable final demolition to take place and allow Phase 2 of the redevelopment of the site to take place. New Build development began on the first phase site in March 2009.

9.0 STRATEGIC SITE ASSEMBLY

9.1 The sum of £1,200,00 (£925,000) of Regional Housing Pot funding is allocated for strategic acquisitions, in the Wallasey neighbourhood.

10.0 GROUP REPAIR IMPROVEMENTS

10.1 Phase 4 of the scheme will complete the Triangles Group Repair Scheme and encompasses retail units on Laird Street and Mallaby Street There will be minimal spend on Phase 4 in 2010/11. The scheme has yet to go to tender and will be funded from recycled contributions from Phase 1 of the Craven Street Facelift Scheme..

11.0 PRIVATE SECTOR HOME IMPROVEMENTS

11.1 It is intended to allocate a total of £1,726,034 (£3,201,034) of HMRI and Regional Housing Pot funding, in 2010-11, plus £905,000 of recycled contributions and Capital Receipts to enable improvements to sustainable private sector housing stock. This will be supplemented by £500,000 Government funding from the Warm Front initiative, bringing the total funding to £3,131,034.

11.2 HMRI funding of £520,000 (£1,150,000) and £880,000 of recycled contributions has been allocated to the Craven/Paterson Streets, Neighbourhood Facelift Scheme, Birkenhead. Total funding £1,400,000. The scheme involves renovation of the external fabric of the houses over two phases. It offers a 75% grant with a means tested household contribution of up to 25%, supported by a reducing 3 year financial charge on the property. Phase 1 of the scheme is complete and Phase 2 will start on site in November.

11.3 £280,000 of Regional Housing Pot Funding will be used for Equity Renewal Loans across Wirral. These enable low income homeowners, with sufficient equity in their property, to fund improvements/repairs which otherwise may not be possible due to financial constraints.

- 11.4 Implementation of a course of action to deal with the major disrepair and dereliction in the terrace 11-41 Trafalgar Road, in Wallasey, will be in 2011-12 and no allocation will be made in 2010-11.
- 11.5 £25,000 (£250,000) of recycled capital receipts from HOUSED (Home Ownership Using Sustainable Empty Dwellings) sales will be used to fund HOUSED in the HMRI area during 2010/11. The scheme purchases long term empty properties, improves them and sells them to support owner occupation. The properties are refurbished to Secured by Design standards and a 10% discount is offered to help first time buyers.
- 11.6 £100,000 Regional Housing Pot Funding will be used for Empty Property Loans of up to £10,000 to bring back into use long term empty properties.
- 11.7 Empty Property Grants of up to £2,000 will be piloted in 2010-11. These will be available to support the renovation of strategically located long term vacant properties. Assistance is conditional upon the property being brought back into use. £20,000 Regional Housing Pot Funding will be used for this scheme.
- 11.8 £33,000 of Regional Housing Pot funding will be used for the First Homes scheme. First Homes encourages and supports primarily first time buyers (subject to eligibility criteria) into home ownership in the Housing Market Renewal area. The scheme provides support and guidance, a financial incentive up to £2,000 towards purchasing and moving costs, and referral to an Independent Financial Adviser for mortgage advice and access to other support services.
- 11.9 The Energy Efficiency Scheme will receive HMRI funding of £165,000, Regional Housing Pot funding of £150,000 and Warm Front funding of £500,000 to provide for private sector properties.
- Central heating and heating improvements to vulnerable households so they reach the thermal comfort criterion of Decent Homes Standard
 - Free loft and cavity wall insulation
 - Solid wall insulation to properties being renovated by the Empty Property Team
 - Interest free loans for replacement boilers, solar water heating and for facilitating the installation of loft and cavity wall insulation
- 11.10 Capital receipts of £187,000 have been set aside for energy efficiency work on Quarry Bank, Tranmere. However, the use of this is subject to the outcome of a bid to Homes and Communities Agency for funding for redevelopment.
- 11.11 Regional Housing Pot funding of £300,000 (£400,000) has been allocated for Home Repair Assistance. This is discretionary assistance in the form of a loan designed to provide help with small scale emergency works of repair.
- 11.12 Regional Housing Pot funding of £158,034 has been allocated for additional Disabled Facilities Grants in the HMRI area carried forward from 2009/10.

12.0 PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR IMPROVEMENTS

- 12.1 Regional Housing Pot funding of £100,000 will be used for Fire Safety Loans up to the value of £10,000 each and works in default as required, as part of the Healthy Homes Initiative. Healthy Homes is a new project focusing on improvements in the private rented sector and initially targeting a small area in New Brighton which has the highest concentration of HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation) in the Borough.

12.2 Recycled income of £20,000 has been allocated to HMO Licensing to support licensing and enforcement activity.

13.0 **LIVING THROUGH CHANGE**

13.1 It is planned to use a total of £888,000 (£1,190,000) for the initiatives that make up the Living Through Change Programme allocated as follows:

- Live Wirral Wardens £275,000 (£375,000)
- HMR Anti-Social Behaviour £50,000 (£60,000)
- Handyperson Scheme £60,000
- Landlord Accreditation £150,000 (£200,000)
- Community Schemes £3,000 (£15,000)
- Build Wirral Employment Project £60,000 (£85,000)
- Homemovers Service £260,000
- Environmental Improvements £30,000 (£135,000)

13.2 The programme of initiatives is a continuation of the successful schemes implemented in 2004-10.

14.0 **RELOCATION SUPPORT**

14.1 Relocation loans and support (subject to eligibility criteria) will be made available to both householders and businesses. £400,000 (£200,000) of HMRI funding and £120,000 of Regional Housing Pot funding will be used for this purpose. The allocation has been increased to meet the demand from residents in strategic acquisition areas.

15.0 **NEW BUILD**

15.1 The new build programme is most advanced in Sevenoaks, Rock Ferry where 72 homes have been completed in Phase 1 to date. The retail development in Church Road, Tranmere is now on site. Work started on the site in Whitford Road, Tranmere in January, following a successful bid under the Government's Kickstart programme. 55 homes will be completed by end of March 2011. The remaining residential new build for Sevenoaks and Church Road will be brought forward when the housing market recovers. Overall, there are 257 new dwellings under construction throughout the HMRI area. The key supported new build schemes are on site at:

- Royston/Woodhall, Wallasey (36 units)
- Gorse Lane (Extra Care), Wallasey (70 units)
- Holt Hill, Tranmere (9 units)
- Falkland Road, Wallasey (6 units)

15.2 The scheme at Fox Street, Birkenhead (14 units) was completed in May 2010.

15.3 Discussions are continuing with Keepmoat Homes, the Council's private sector developer partner for Birkenhead, and local residents about plans for the future redevelopment of the declared clearance areas.

15.4 Work is underway on the proposed structure for engagement of a Registered Social Landlord partner for redevelopment of cleared sites in Birkenhead and will be the subject of a further report for Members' consideration

- 15.5 Future new build will be determined by site availability, market conditions and access to funds to increase the attractiveness of new build homes. These will be reported to Cabinet as required.
- 16.0 **COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUSTS**
- 16.1 The Coalition Government's housing priorities are aligned with its commitment to localism and placing communities at the centre of decision making. It is keen to see the concept of Community Housing Trusts developed as a vehicle for increasing housing supply. Community Housing Trusts, also known as Local Housing Trusts, have been used successfully in rural areas to create affordable new housing and offer a model that could be transferred to urban development in viable markets. Their primary focus is on increasing affordable housing supply but can take a role in market renewal. As a property owner, a Community Housing Trust is able to offer homes for rent or shared equity and is able to derive income from its housing role to fund initiatives sought by communities, such as empty homes investment or worklessness prevention.
- 16.2 A viable Community Housing Trust (CHT) requires a partnership involving organisations such as the Council (as provider of land at nil cost), the Homes and Communities Agency (as provider of funding to acquire sites and subsidise affordable housing), a private developer (as provider of homes for sale and source of revenue generation) and Registered Social Landlords (as providers of land, development expertise, neighbourhood management and possible "incubator" for a fledgling CHT). A CHT also requires an accountable community role, which could build on existing arrangements such as Community Development Trusts, along with a route for wider involvement and membership from individuals.
- 16.3 Negotiations with Keepmoat Homes (see 15.2 above) have led to indicative designs being drawn up and shared with residents. However, alongside this process, the concept of Community Housing Trusts has become a government ambition. Land assets and partnerships exist that could be adapted to suit a new model. These exist primarily in Birkenhead, but it is envisaged that a Community Housing Trust could have a wider geographical focus, particularly in Wallasey, where land for development is being assembled using HMRI funding.
- 16.4 A principal test for a CHT is the viability of housing development to sustain an organisation and provide an income stream to fund locally agreed priorities. A larger scale of development may be required than can be made available currently using HMRI assembled sites. Therefore, a good case exists for sustaining HMRI investment to assist the viability of a CHT and the inclusion of other council land assets would help create a land base to sustain long term development to allow a CHT to prosper.
- 16.5 In the medium term, Communities and Local Government guidance advises that Community Housing Trusts can take a role in planning matters. They will have to show support from the local community for planned housing developments and meet some basic planning criteria, but would not need to lodge specific planning applications.
- 16.6 Cabinet approval is sought for officers to explore the potential that a Community Housing Trust may offer for Wirral. Wirral would be at the forefront of implementing government housing policy if a Community Housing Trust can be made to work in an urban housing market. Through embarking on a development programme such as this Wirral may benefit from a further government initiative – "New homes bonus".

17.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17.1 Homes and Communities Agency funding, RSL investment and private sector funding will contribute over £20 million into the overall programme for regenerating the housing market of Wirral. This is in addition to HMRI, Regional Housing Pot, Growth Point funding and Capital Receipts shown in the programme budget.

18.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

18.1 The programme will be delivered using the existing staffing structure which has been reduced recently through early voluntary retirement.

19.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/EQUALITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

19.1 Equality Impact assessments have been completed and reviewed for the Housing Market Renewal Programme, the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy, the Housing Strategy Statement, Private Sector Housing Strategy and Affordable Warmth Strategy. The issues and actions within these are addressed in the initiatives and projects within the Housing Investment Programme. The programme will have a positive impact on some of the most socially and economically deprived areas of Wirral. Improvement and Living Through Change projects will improve quality of housing and access to help and support for all residents. Redevelopment of sites for new build housing will help promote greater choice, increase quality and choice of housing for all local people.

20.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

20.1 HMRI will result in some clearance of poorly designed, unsafe or obsolescent areas and the creation of safer, more secure living environments.

21.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

21.1 Housing Market Renewal will improve the quality of living environments and environmental standards throughout many parts of Wirral. New high quality, decent homes with enhanced energy efficiency standards and better use of renewable building materials will contribute towards Local Agenda 21 priorities.

22.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

22.1 HMRI aims to bring about a fundamental change in the character of some of the most deprived areas of the Borough. Proposals for new development will be brought forward with the assistance of the preferred private developer and Registered Social Landlords and will be integrated with the Council's Local Development Framework, as either Supplementary Planning Documents or Development Plan Documents. Residential redevelopment is in conformity with Policy HS4 of the Unitary Development Plan, while mixed use development incorporating retail use will be considered against retail policy including Policy SH4 of the Unitary Development Plan. Other uses will be considered against UDP Policy HS15.

23.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

23.1 Build Wirral is seeking to help disadvantaged groups access training and employment opportunities.

24.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

24.1 Build Wirral is seeking to help disadvantaged groups access training and employment opportunities.

25.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

25.1 The HMRI areas are within the following Wards: Bidston and St James, Birkenhead and Tranmere, Rock Ferry, Seacombe, Liscard, Claughton, Oxtan and Bromborough. Regional Housing Pot funding which is not matched funding for the HMRI programme can be used in all Wards.

26.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

26.1 Wirral's Housing Investment Programme 2010/11 reported to Cabinet 27th May 2010.

27.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

27.1 That:

- (1) the Housing Investment Programme 2010-11 for Wirral, which is summarised in the table below and in Appendix 1, is agreed.

<u>Funding be allocated</u>	<u>£,000</u>
Birkenhead Clearance	6,147
Rock Ferry Clearance	430
Tranmere Clearance	800
Wallasey Clearance	1,300
Private Sector Home Improvements	3,251
Living Through Change	888
Staffing and Resources	1,727
Relocation Loans	520

- (2) Approval is given for officers to explore the potential that a Community Housing Trust may offer for Wirral.

Kevin Adderley
Interim Director Corporate Services

This report was prepared by Lynn Ireland, HMRI Policy and Performance Manager who can be contacted on 691 8102.

	A10 HMRI	A41 RHP	A41 Growth Point	A41 Warm Front	Capital Receipts & recycled contributions	Total	Number of Units
Clearance						8,676,679	
Birkenhead	2,638,979	1,351,935	1,200,000		955,765	6,146,679	30 B50a (2 RSL) 35 B50c acq 23 B40b 52 B40c dem
Rock Ferry	430,000	-				430,000	3 B50a private acq 77 B40b demolitions
Tranmere	800,000	-				800,000	4 B50a acq 10 B40b demolitions
Wallasey	100,000	1,200,000				1,300,000	1 B50a 7 B50c acq 6 B40b demolitions
Improvements to Retained Stock						3,251,034	
Group Repair Phase 4					-	-	n/a
Private Sector (Craven Street)	400,000					400,000	41 B30a private 17 B30b RSL
Private Sector (Paterson Street)	120,000				880,000	1,000,000	20 B30a private 15 B30b RSL
Equity Renewal Loans HMRI		80,000				80,000	4 B30b private
Equity Renewal Loans non HMRI		200,000				200,000	n/a
Empty Property Work		120,000			25,000	145,000	10 B30b Private
First Homes		33,000				33,000	n/a
Energy Efficiency	165,000	150,000		500,000		815,000	135 B30a private 442 B30b private
Home Repair Assistance		300,000				300,000	
DFGs		158,034				158,034	28 B30a private
Healthy Homes (Fire Safety Loans)		100,000				100,000	n/a
HMO Licensing					20,000	20,000	n/a
Living through Change						888,000	
Environmental Wardens	150,000					150,000	n/a
Neighbourhood Wardens	125,000					125,000	n/a
Respect agenda	50,000					50,000	n/a
Handyperson Scheme	60,000					60,000	n/a
Landlord Accreditation	150,000					150,000	n/a
Community Schemes	3,000					3,000	n/a
Construct Wirral	60,000					60,000	n/a
Homemovers Service	260,000					260,000	n/a
Environmental Improvements	30,000					30,000	
HMRI Relocation Loans	400,000					400,000	n/a
Business Relocation		120,000				120,000	n/a
Resources	1,495,000	232,000				1,727,000	n/a
Total	7,436,979	4,044,969	1,200,000	500,000	1,880,765	15,062,713	

Notes

Capital receipts and recycled contributions are available from reserves accumulated over the last three years. A further £187,000 may be used for additional energy efficiency measures at Quarry Bank dependent on a successful bid for funding its redevelopment.

This page is intentionally left blank

HCA CORE OUTPUTS	
Reference	Description
B30	The total number of homes refurbished, repaired or otherwise improved by tenure
B30 A)	A) The Programme Target - financed by HMRI grant
B30 B)	B) The Scheme Target - direct result of HMRI activity but not funded

B40	The total number of homes demolished, by tenure, during the period.
B40 B)	B) The Programme Target - financed by HMRI grant
B40 C)	C) The Scheme Target - direct result of HMRI activity but not funded

B50	The total number of properties acquired, by tenure
B50 A+B)	A + B) Properties (including homes and other properties) financed by HMRI Grant - The Programme Target
B50 C)	C) Properties (including homes and other properties) without HMRI grant - the Scheme Target

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 14th October 2010

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

MERSEY HEARTLANDS GROWTH FUND

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Funding of £920,243 has now been received by Wirral Council from the New Growth Point fund for 2010/11. Cabinet is asked to agree revisions to the agreed Programme of Development projects for 2010/11.
- 1.2 The funding is to be used to support the housing market in Inner Wirral and help to deliver additional homes before 2016/17. Members will be aware that the Council's Planning Committee has resolved to grant planning permission for over 15,000 new homes in Wirral Waters but progress has been hindered by the current lack of strength in the housing market.
- 1.3 The Mersey Heartlands Growth Fund is overseen by a Member-level Executive Group, jointly with Liverpool City Council, which endorses recommendations to Wirral's Cabinet. Cabinet is asked to nominate three Members to the Executive Group.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 New Growth Point funding was awarded to a partnership of Wirral Council, Liverpool City Council and Peel Holdings in July 2008, with the intention of stimulating the housing market in Inner Wirral and achieving accelerated rates of housing delivery across the partnership area. A joint Programme of Development was submitted in October 2008 and agreed by Communities and Local Government in December 2008.
- 2.2 Initial funding of £200,000 for 2008/09 was used for joint transport modelling and the preparation of a joint Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment with Liverpool City Council (study results reported to Cabinet 2nd September 2010, Minute 121 refers). A total of £2,466,176 was allocated to the partnership for 2009/10, of which Wirral Council received £926,470 (agreed as 40% of the total sum).
- 2.3 Cabinet received a report on 4th February 2010, setting out the Government's proposals for allocating funding in 2010/11. The Growth Point funding had been reduced nationally and following consultation, the Government announced that the Mersey Heartlands partnership would receive £259,208 in revenue funding and £2,041,401 capital funding for 2010/11 (a total of £2,300,609, to be divided 60:40 between Liverpool City Council and Wirral Council).
- 2.4 Following the election of the coalition Government in May 2010, Government began a review of spending priorities, including regeneration funding, to address the impact on funding as a result of the recession. Although the Government has reduced funding for Housing Market Renewal, the 2010/11 Growth Point funding has now been received, at the levels announced in July 2009. Wirral has therefore received

£103,683 in revenue funding for 2010/11 and £816,560 in capital funding. A commitment to support Peel Holdings evidence base preparation has reduced the amount of revenue allocated for spending by Wirral Council to £13,683 for 2010/11.

3. Programme of Development

3.1 The partnership agreed a Programme of Development with Government in December 2008 (reported to Cabinet 16th October 2008, Minute 234 refers), which included a schedule of schemes in both Liverpool and Wirral. Due to delays in the drawing down of funding from Communities and Local Government, the order in which projects could be brought forward may have to be varied. This report therefore seeks Cabinet's agreement to variations on the Programme of Development before those projects are implemented. The proposed revisions to the Programme of Development projects for Wirral are at Appendix 1 to this report.

3.2 Funding for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11 has been divided as follows (in accordance with the 60:40 split agreed between Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council:

District	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Total
TOTAL				
Capital		£2,271,770	£2,041,401	£4,313,171
Revenue		£194,406	£259,208	£453,614
Total	£200,000	£2,466,176	£2,300,609	£4,966,785
Liverpool				
Capital		£1,363,062	£1,224,841	£2,587,903
Revenue		£116,644	£155,525	£272,169
Total	-	£1,479,706	£1,380,366	£2,860,072
Wirral				
Capital		£908,708	£816,560	£1,725,268
Revenue		£77,762	£103,683	£181,445
Total	-	£986,470	£920,243	£1,906,713

Note: 2008/09 funding of £200,000 for set up projects.

Note 2: Revenue funding for 2009/10-2010/11 - £150,000 to Peel Holdings

Capital funding for 2009/10-2010/11 - £150,000 to Peel Holdings

4. Progress on projects

2008/09

4.1 The initial funding of £200,000 for 2009/10 has been expended on two joint projects, which are now both complete:

- Transport modelling - £95,000 on joint model development with Liverpool City Council;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - £95,000 on joint assessment with Liverpool City Council (reported to Cabinet 2nd September 2010, Minute 121 refers)

4.2 The remaining £10,000 was agreed to be retained by the City Council to administer the joint elements of the programme.

2009/10

4.3 Capital funding of £908,708 assigned to Wirral for 2009/10 has been expended on one major project:

- Transport modelling - £158,078 development of a transport model for North Wirral

4.4 The original Programme of Development for 2009/10 showed a sum of £600,000 towards new build shared equity support in the HMRI area. Due to difficulties in setting up this project, there has been no funding released to homebuyers under this heading. However, Growth Fund conditions do not ring-fence and allow for the carry forward of funding. The outstanding balance of £750,630 capital has therefore been carried forward to 2010/11.

4.5 Revenue funding of £77,762 assigned to Wirral for 2009/10 was allocated to:

- Transport modelling - £5,000;
- Economic viability assessment - £10,000;
- Support to Peel Holdings for evidence base and project submission - £60,000

4.6 As the transport modelling and economic viability elements were not completed in 2009/10, the outstanding balance of £17,762 has been carried forward into 2010/11 in accordance with the Growth Point funding conditions.

2010/11

4.7 Capital funding for 2010/11 has been assigned to:

- Housing Market Renewal Initiative, site acquisitions for new build development in north Birkenhead - £1,200,000 (this includes £600,000 carried forward from 2009/10 originally allocated to shared equity schemes);
- Transport modelling – carry forward of £111,922 from 2009/10;
- Transport infrastructure – contribution towards capital dock bridge works - £250,000

4.8 This identified capital funding allows the completion of the Transport modelling for North Wirral, which assesses the wider implications of Wirral Waters and the transport implications of investment in Central Birkenhead and the broader HMRI

area. It is a condition of the Growth Point funding that partnerships assess the impact of new development on the transport network. Capital bridge works will supplement the contributions to be made by Peel Holdings towards bridge works around Wirral Waters.

- 4.9 Further site acquisitions in the HMRI area, will allow that programme to maintain forward momentum, delivering sites for new housebuilding. Growth Point funding will reduce the impact of the cut of £1.67 million in HMRI funding for 2010/11. This is a critical area, as the Growth Point is intended to demonstrate an increased rate of housebuilding, over and above previously planned rates. Members will be aware that in response to the recession, the Government agreed a lower Local Area Agreement rate of housing delivery for Wirral and that a lower figure than originally proposed for the Growth Point is being consulted upon as part of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options.
- 4.10 However, significant progress is being made on housing supply, with the granting of planning permission (subject to section 106 agreement and the views of the Secretary of State on the East Float application) for 15,193 new dwellings at Wirral Waters. Although significant housing delivery from Wirral Waters is not likely before 2017, Growth Point funding is being used to put in place the studies and infrastructure required to restructure the housing market in Inner Wirral. Funding HMRI acquisition will allow the HMRI redevelopment programme in North Birkenhead to continue, delivering new homes within some of the Borough's most deprived areas. These areas are also in the 'partnership areas' for Wirral Waters, providing new development to complement that to come forward in later years in the Wirral Waters 'core' development sites.
- 4.11 Revenue funding for 2010/11 of £25,000 has been assigned to completing the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Affordable Housing Economic Viability Assessment (Fordham Associates, reported separately to this Cabinet). A further tranche of £90,000 has been assigned to Peel Holdings, as agreed by Cabinet 25th June 2009 (Minute 39 refers).
- 4.12 Growth Point conditions require the preparation of a Water Cycle Study and Green Infrastructure Strategy. Both of these studies are to be prepared in 2010/11 (this Cabinet includes a report on the commissioning of a joint Water Cycle Study and the need to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy was reported to Cabinet on 22nd July (Minute 89 refers)). However, Growth Point fund revenue resources are very limited and it is proposed to use Investment Strategy resources to fund these two studies, which overlap with the Local Development Framework, Growth Point, HMRI and Wirral Waters delivery.

5. Governance

- 5.1 A senior officers' Steering Group oversees the Mersey Heartlands programme, reporting to an Executive Group comprising 3 senior Members (including the Leader and Deputy Leader) from each of Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council. This Executive Group endorses recommendations to Wirral's Cabinet and Liverpool's Executive.
- 5.2 Following changes in the administration of Wirral and Liverpool Councils, Cabinet is asked to nominate three new Members to the Executive Group. Wirral's

representative on the senior officers' Steering Group will continue to be the (Acting) Director of Corporate Services.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The financial implications are as set out in the report. New Growth Point funds of £986,470 (2009/10) and £920,243 (2010/11), totalling £1,906,713 have been received by the Council. Cabinet has previously agreed a funding contribution to Peel Holdings of £150,000, leaving a residual for Wirral projects of £1,756,713. Due to difficulties in programming spending during 2009/10, £768,392 has been carried forward in accordance with CLG guidelines and has been assigned to a number of projects, to a total sum of £1,750,020.
- 6.2 Revenue expenditure over and above that programmed from Growth Point funding (Water Cycle Study and Green Infrastructure Study), will be funded from identified Investment Strategy resources.
- 6.3 Many of the Wirral projects support and augment funding available through the Housing Market Renewal Initiative and will result in improved housing choice for existing Wirral residents. These projects will be audited through the arrangements already in place for HMRI.
- 6.4 All projects must be subject to the payment, audit and management processes of Liverpool City Council and no expenditure has been incurred before adequate resources have been released by the City Council to Wirral Council.
- 6.5 Project re-prioritisation may be required within the revenue or capital funding streams. Any such re-prioritisation will be reported to Cabinet in accordance with the governance arrangements put in place for the Growth Fund (agreed by Cabinet 16th October 2008, Minute 234 refers).

7. Staffing implications

- 7.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

8. Equal Opportunities/Equality Impact Assessment

- 8.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

9. Community Safety implications

- 9.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

10. Local Agenda 21 implications

- 10.1 The acquisition of sites within the HMRI area and their development with new sustainable homes will reduce energy consumption.

11. Planning implications

- 11.1 Whilst the joint Growth Point bid has been approved by CLG, it has little status as a material consideration in development plan terms. However, the increase in housing development focused on and around Wirral Waters is in a sustainable location, using previously developed land in the Council's priority area.
- 11.2 The spatial strategy and infrastructure requirements of the New Growth Point bid are being incorporated within Wirral's Local Development Framework Core Strategy.
- 11.3 Individual infrastructure proposals identified in the Programme of Development may require planning permission.

12. Anti-poverty implications

- 12.1 The redevelopment of HMRI sites acquired with Growth Point funds will provide new affordable homes, regenerating some of the Borough's poorest communities.

13. Human Rights implications

- 13.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

14. Social Inclusion implications

- 14.1 The Growth Point bid is intended to regenerate the core of the HMRI area. This is consistent with the Council's objectives for Wirral Waters and the Council's Corporate Objectives 'To create more jobs, achieve a prosperous economy and regenerate Wirral' and 'To create a clean, pleasant, safe and secure environment'.

15. Local Member Support implications

- 15.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

16. Background Papers

- 16.1 No background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Cabinet agrees to the variations in the Programme of Development project schedule, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report, subject to variation due to re-prioritisation within Liverpool or Wirral being considered by the Steering Group and that re-prioritisation is reported to the next available meeting of the Executive Group for their endorsement and recommendation to Wirral's Cabinet.
- (2) That Cabinet agrees that the revised Wirral projects will be incorporated within the relevant Council revenue or capital programmes.
- (3) That Cabinet nominates three Members to serve on the joint Growth Point Executive Group with Liverpool City Council.

K. ADDERLEY

Interim Director of Corporate Services

This report was written by Richard Lewis in the Strategic Development Division of Corporate Services, who can be contacted on 0151 691 8222.

This page is intentionally left blank

Mersey Heartlands Growth Point Bid

Project Prioritisation Oct 2010 (October 2008 POD)
CLG Growth Fund Requirements

Project	Project Description	2009/2010			2010/2011			2009/10-2010/11		
		Revenue £	Capital £	TOTAL £	Revenue £	Capital £	TOTAL £	Revenue £	Capital £	TOTAL
CLG Allocation		194,406	2,271,770	2,466,176	259,208	2,041,401	2,300,609	453,614	4,313,171	4,766,785
A. INITIAL NGP ALLOCATION LIVERPOOL:WIRRAL 60:40										
LIVERPOOL		116,644	1,363,062	1,479,706	155,525	1,224,841	1,380,366	272,168	2,587,903	2,860,071
WIRRAL		77,762	908,708	986,470	103,683	816,560	920,244	181,446	1,725,268	1,906,714
B. JOINT FUNDING										
	1 Bid preparation by Peel									
	2 Wirral NGP Evidence Base									
	3 Peel Transport modelling (Wirral)									
	4 Liverpool Key infrastructure									
sub-total joint funding		100,000	150,000	250,000	50,000	0	50,000	150,000	150,000	300,000
C. LIVERPOOL PROJECTS										
L1	HMRI - Land acquisition									
L2	HMRI - Land remediation									
L3	Key infrastructure									
L4	Transport Modelling									
L5	Key Transport Infrastructure									
L6	Affordable Housing - Mortgage Loans									
L7	SHMA									
L8	Green Infrastructure									
L9	Water Cycle									
L10										
Sub-total Liverpool funding		116,644	1,363,062	1,479,706	155,525	1,224,841	1,380,366	272,169	2,587,903	2,860,072
Less contribution to Peel		0	150,000	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	150,000
residual after Peel funding		116,644	1,213,062	1,329,706	155,525	1,224,841	1,380,366	272,169	2,437,903	2,710,072

D. WIRRAL PROJECTS

First priority projects

W1	Wirral Transport Modelling	158,078	158,078	5,000	111,942	116,942	5,000	270,020	275,020
W2	Economic Viability Assessment		0	25,000		25,000	25,000	0	25,000
W3	New build shared equity in HMRI	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
W4	Strategic acquisitions HMRI	0	0		1,200,000	1,200,000	0	1,200,000	1,200,000
W7	Key transport infrastructure	0	0		250,000	250,000	0	250,000	250,000
W8	Green infrastructure study	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
W9	Water cycle study	0	0	0		0	0	0	0

Slippage projects'

W5	Strategic acquisitions HMRI		0		75,000	75,000	0	75,000	75,000
W6	Northbank infrastructure		0		1,370,000	1,370,000	0	1,370,000	1,370,000
W7	Key transport infrastructure		0		1,250,000	1,250,000	0	1,250,000	1,250,000
W8	Green infrastructure (capital schemes)		0	200,000	1,800,000	2,000,000	200,000	1,800,000	2,000,000
W9						0	0	0	0

Sub-total Wirral priority projects		0	158,078	158,078	30,000	1,561,942	1,591,942	30,000	1,720,020	1,750,020
Sub-total Wirral funding	77,762	908,708	986,470	103,683	816,560	920,243	181,445	1,725,268	1,906,713	
Less contribution to Peel	60,000	0	60,000	90,000		90,000	150,000	0	150,000	
residual after Peel funding	17,762	908,708	926,470	13,683	816,560	830,243	31,445	1,725,268	1,756,713	
balance (+/- of residual)	17,762	750,630	768,392	-16,317	-745,382	-761,699	1,445	5,248	6,693	
carry forward 2009/10 to 2010/11	17,762	750,630	768,392	17,762	750,630	768,392				
available for 2010/11				15,128	821,809	836,937				

Note: 2010/2011 Capital funding has been confirmed at £2,041,401 (Liverpool:Wirral capital proportions on agreed 60:40 basis)

Note 2: W8 Green infrastructure study and W9 Water cycle study to be funded from Investment Strategy funding and therefore figures not shown in this schedule

Note 3: 'slippage projects' only to come forward if other First priority projects do not come forward. Figures represent those in original Programme of Development

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 14th OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY AND GUIDELINES IN RELATION TO WIRRAL'S PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION ASSISTANCE POLICY

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks to update Members on the progress being made towards a new policy and guidance on environmental responsibility linked to support provided under the Council's *Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy* (referred to as "the Assistance Policy"). The draft policy seeks to encourage environmental responsibility amongst both beneficiaries of assistance and contractors implementing associated works. Beneficiaries will be encouraged to participate in the *CRed Wirral* initiative, and contractors asked to demonstrate their commitment to environmental good practice. Members are requested to agree the draft policy as detailed in this report and note that work will continue on the associated guidelines. Both the policy and the guidelines will be introduced following the next review of the Assistance Policy, due to take place early in 2011.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The *Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002* (referred to as "the RRO" in this report) gives Local Authorities the power to provide assistance to improve living conditions in their area. This assistance can be provided in any form and can include such things as advice about property improvements and financial assistance in the form of grants and/or loans. This power cannot be used unless a policy for the provision of such assistance has been adopted. In addition to the RRO, Part 1 of the *Local Government Act 2000* allows Local Authorities to give financial assistance to any person in order to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of an area. This power supports the use of products aimed at non-residential interests involved in regeneration activity connected with housing schemes. Related products involving non-housing interests are also included in Wirral's policy. Since 2002, annual reports have been presented to Cabinet to update the Assistance Policy. Consideration has been given to the environmental impact of successive Policies, largely focussing on the provision of certain financial assistance targeted at improving houses. The last review resulted in a number of changes being made to the standard 'schedule of works' used in connection with both the *Equity Renewal Loan* and the *Home Repair Assistance Loan*. The changes introduced flexibility for service users to opt to use more environmentally friendly methods of renovation and/or materials. In relation to both Group Repair and Neighbourhood Facelift Schemes a commitment was given to introduce measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the houses involved, building on the introduction of insulation measures, solar thermal water heating as an option and the use of recycled plastic rear yard gates and frames.
- 2.2 On 27th May 2010, Cabinet agreed to adopt the current Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy. In addition, at the same Cabinet meeting, Members also resolved that:

- the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services be requested to provide a report for consideration at a future meeting of the cabinet outlining how an environmental responsibility policy and guidelines can be incorporated into the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Policy as a future specific condition of all grant assistance where relevant
- 2.3 On 16th October 2008, Cabinet agreed to adopt a *Preferred Builder Protocol* in connection with both *Equity Renewal Loans* and *Home Repair Assistance*. This protocol restricts the use of contractors to those registered with the Council's *Wirral Traders Scheme* and was implemented on the 1st September 2009. The protocol was designed to give service users assurance about the quality of work, integrity and customer service. Members of the *Wirral Traders Scheme* have to agree to adhere to a strict Code of Practice.
- 2.4 On the 20th June 2007, Cabinet approved a *Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan* for implementation across the Council. This Strategy seeks to achieve a year on year reduction in Wirral Council's carbon emissions as well as reductions in carbon emissions from residents and local businesses. Raising awareness about everyone's impact on climate change and decreasing dependency on fossil fuels feature amongst the aims of the Strategy. In support of the Climate Change Strategy, the Council, and its partners, launched the *CRed Wirral* initiative in December 2009. CRed Wirral (short for *Carbon Reduction Wirral*) is designed to help people living or working in the Wirral to cut carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and to play a part in wider efforts to build a cleaner, greener, low carbon Wirral. CRed Wirral offers a simple free-to-use online tool that allows people to choose from a range of carbon reducing pledges to suit different lifestyles. Once pledges are made, progress against these pledges can be tracked online. The online tool shows users the impact of pledges made in kilograms/tonnes of CO₂ saved. CRed Wirral also gives access to news, events and links for further information and support. CRed Wirral is part of a wider CRed initiative with an ambition to create visible community of individuals, whose energy saving actions would lead to a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2025, providing a road map for others to follow.

3.0 **POLICY AND GUIDELINES ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- 3.1 In preparing a policy on environmental responsibility (referred to as 'the policy'), consideration has been given to how the policy should be applied. It is suggested that this policy should apply to both the recipients of the assistance themselves and any contractors employed by both the recipients, to undertake renovation/improvements works through the Preferred Builders Protocol and directly by the Council.
- 3.2 The draft policy comprises a policy statement, policy aims, identification of the forms of assistance where the policy applies and an overview of how the policy should be implemented, including monitoring arrangements. Details can be found in Appendix 1. The policy is to be supported in more detail by guidance and work continues on preparing this guidance.
- 3.3 Subject to Members being happy with the draft policy, as detailed in Appendix 1, it is suggested that the guidance to support this policy is finalised and be reported back to members for consideration as part of the annual review of the Assistance Policy which is due to take place early in the New Year. Should Members find the guidance to be acceptable then implementation of both the policy and guidance could coincide with the adoption of the revised Assistance Policy.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The suggested policy aim of maximising the opportunity for service users to incorporate sustainable micro renewable energy generation, where applicable, is likely to increase the overall costs of either a grant funded scheme or loan, whichever financial product is used. These costs will vary and be dependant on the type of technology selected. In the case of loan assistance the maximum loan limits will determine the ability of this technology to be installed. In the case of grant funded projects the budget available at the outset of the scheme will dictate whether or not this technology can be incorporated within the scheme. In either case the resources made available by the Council will determine both whether this technology and what type of technology can be installed. The provision of financial products is managed within the resources made available by the Council in any one financial year.

5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is anticipated that the introduction and operation of a policy and guidelines on environmental responsibility can be undertaken using existing staffing resources.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/EQUALITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The introduction of a policy and guidelines on environmental responsibility will apply to all service users and contractors equally. Service users will have the option not to take part in the CRed Wirral scheme, should they wish to do so.

6.2 The existing HMRI Clearance and Improvement Programmes Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed in light of the proposals in this report and no changes are considered necessary.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None

8.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The introduction of a policy and guidelines on environmental responsibility will support Wirral Council's commitment to reduce Wirral's carbon footprint, which is a Corporate Priority in the Council's Corporate Plan 2010/11, and supports National Indicator 186, one of Wirral's LAA Targets.

9.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Retrofitting existing properties with renewable energy generation technology may qualify as permitted development which will not require planning permission, subject to S.I. 2008/675 (The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2008). Larger scale proposals, however, will require planning permission.

10.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Raising awareness on environmental impact and encouraging residents to adopt behavioural changes to reduce their energy use is likely to result in financial savings for individual residents. Where beneficiaries are on low incomes, this may help alleviate fuel poverty.

11.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Assistance Policy helps those members of society least able to afford to undertake improvements or move to alternative accommodation. The introduction of a policy and guidance on environmental responsibility will help reduce any adverse environmental impact and empower service users to make a contribution towards reducing their carbon emissions.

12.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 This report has implications for all wards

13.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Cabinet 20th June 2007 – ‘Nottingham Declaration’ Group – Update Report No 2

Cabinet 16th October 2008 – Adoption of a Preferred Builder Protocol in Connection with the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy

Cabinet 27th May 2010 – Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 Members agree a new policy on environmental responsibility in relation to the support provided through the *Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy*, as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 14.2 Members agree that supporting guidance for the Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy can be approved in due course by delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Housing.
- 14.3 Members are advised that they will be presented with the full policy with amendments in early 2011.

Kevin Adderley
Interim Director of Corporate Services

This report was prepared by Alan Lipscombe who can be contacted on 691 8122

Appendix 1

Environmental Responsibility Policy in connection with Wirral's Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy

Policy Statement

The Council is committed to environmental sustainability and a reduction in Wirral's carbon footprint. Beneficiaries of the *Private Sector Housing and Regeneration Assistance Policy* (referred to as "*the Assistance Policy*") are expected to demonstrate environmental responsibility in accordance with the Council's commitments. Service users and associated contractors are thus expected to adhere to this policy and associated guidance.

Policy Aims:

- **AWARENESS**
To raise awareness about environmental impact and climate change amongst service users and contractors, to inspire actions which contribute to environmental improvement and reductions in Wirral's carbon footprint.
- **COMMITMENT**
Ensure that contractors engaged in renovation works are aware of the environmental implications of their activities and have committed to continually review their operations to ensure good environmental practices.
- **LIMITING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**
To limit potential adverse environmental impacts arising through property renovation works.
- **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**
Minimise waste and encourage the use of recycled and sustainable materials in property renovations.
- **ENERGY**
Maximise the opportunity for service users to adopt energy efficiency measures and behaviours including the installation of micro renewable energy generation, where applicable.

Forms of assistance where this policy applies:

Property renovation/improvement including

- Group Repair
- Neighbourhood Facelift Scheme
- Equity Loans for Renewal

- Home Repair Assistance
- Wirral Business Renewal Loan
- Empty Property Assistance
- HOUSED
- Empty Property Grant
- Cosy Loans
- Cosy Homes

Property relocation:

- Equity Relocation Loan
- Wirral Business Relocation Loan
- Homemovers Service
- Relocation Grants

Policy Implementation

Assistance provided to support property renovation/improvement

Service users in receipt of assistance will:

- Be encouraged to enrol in the CRed Wirral scheme.
- Be made aware of any appropriate opportunity to install energy efficiency measures and micro renewable energy generation.
- Be presented with an information guide on how to reduce their environmental impact following the completion of renovation works (to be developed)

Contractors both engaged by service users through the *Preferred Builders Protocol* and through standard Council procurement processes will:

- Be encouraged to take advantage of relevant business environmental support programmes and initiatives
- Be required to provide an environmental policy relating to their activities as part of the *Wirral Traders Code of Conduct*. This policy must include a commitment to achieving ongoing environmental improvements
- Maintain suitable records to prove adherence to their environmental policy and provide access to these records for Council officers for audit purposes. This will normally take place at the annual review
- Be required to minimise waste and use both sustainable and recycled materials and fittings where appropriate

Contractors engaged specifically in relation to Empty Property Loans and Grants will:

- Be encouraged to take advantage of relevant business environmental support programmes and initiatives
- Be required to provide an environmental policy relating to their activities. This policy must include a commitment to achieving ongoing environmental improvements

- Maintain suitable records to prove adherence to their environmental policy and provide access to these records for Council officers for audit purposes.
- Be required to minimise waste and use both sustainable and recycled materials and fittings where appropriate

Assistance provided to support property relocation:

Service users in receipt of assistance will:

- Be encouraged to enrol in the CRed Wirral scheme.
- Be presented with an information guide on how to reduce their environmental impact following the completion of their move (to be developed)

General

The Policy and Guidance on Environmental Responsibility does not replace any statutory requirements

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL – EVIDENCE BASE – APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A WATER CYCLE STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval to commission external consultants to carry out a Scoping and Outline Stage Water Cycle Study for Wirral and Liverpool. Cabinet is asked to agree that Wirral will be the commissioning authority and the study will be jointly funded to a maximum cost of £50,000, to be divided between Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council on a 50:50 split basis.

The study is necessary to provide an up-to-date evidence base for the preparation of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, future site-specific land allocations and to comply with the conditions of the designation of the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point. External consultants are required because of the specialist nature of the commission. A joint approach with Liverpool City Council is proposed to achieve economies through joint commissioning and because the City Council is a partner in the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point. The Study will assess the available physical and environmental capacity in water supply and wastewater infrastructure. It will also identify wider impacts relating to flooding and wildlife habitats, together with recommendations to resolve any constraints and an evaluation of the implications for future growth.

1 Background

- 1.1 In July 2008, Liverpool City Council and Wirral Council were successful in achieving New Growth Point Status, securing £200,000 grant funding for 2008/09, £2,466,176 for 2009/10 and £2,300,609 for 2010/11. This funding has been used to support housing delivery and to restructure failing housing markets in the Housing Market Renewal Area, in accordance with a joint Programme of Development agreed with Government in December 2008.
- 1.2 When designating Mersey Heartlands as a Growth Point, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) attached a number of conditions that the partnership must fulfil. These are aimed at ensuring that the additional development is brought forward sustainably and is realistic in terms of infrastructure.
- 1.3 The following Growth Point condition sets out the requirements for a Water Cycle Study:

“Complete a holistic Water Cycle Study for the Growth Point area to include determining whether any infrastructure or capacity upgrades will be necessary, that there are no detrimental impacts on designated bathing waters and also to ensure that the cumulative impacts of growth do not push the United Utilities integrated Water Resource Zone into deficit. Wirral Borough Council must work closely with the Environment Agency and water companies on the investment implications arising from the study’s findings, and ensure the study’s findings inform Local Development Documents.”

- 1.4 The Water Cycle Study will not only be used in support of the Growth Point Programme but also to support the Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy. A robust evidence base is essential to the Core Strategy to demonstrate that the Council has determined the capacity of the area to accommodate new development and that all the strategy and development options available to the Council have been fully assessed. This is a key part of the test of soundness that will be considered by an Independent Planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State before the Core Strategy for Wirral can be adopted.
- 1.5 The Water Cycle Study will inform and guide the Council's delivery of the emerging Investment Strategy, the Growth Point Programme of Development and the consideration of major planning applications. The proposed Water Cycle Study will also form an essential part of the evidence base for future site-specific land allocations.
- 1.6 The Council is also preparing a Strategic Local Flood Risk Management Plan and Surface Water Management Plan, which will address flooding and drainage issues, including flooding from the sea, rivers, sewers, groundwater and other watercourses. The Water Cycle Study will be used to inform the Strategic Local Flood Risk Management Plan and Surface Water Management Plan, both of which are statutory requirements under the Flood and Water Act 2010.

2 Water Cycle Study

- 2.1 A Water Cycle Study is a study of the available physical and environmental capacity in water supply, wastewater infrastructure and the wider water environment. It is undertaken to ensure that new development can be supplied with the required water services in the most sustainable way, and that disposal of waste water can be achieved without a detrimental impact on the environment.
- 2.2 It would also provide a water-based comparative assessment of development locations to feed into the Core Strategy.
- 2.3 A Water Cycle Study will, for example, consider when and where new water provision and treatment infrastructure would be required to facilitate new development; and assess the likely environmental and ecological impacts of future growth, to ensure that new development will comply with current and future legislative requirements.
- 2.4 Generally, Water Cycle Studies are carried out in three stages:
 - **Scoping Study** – Determines the study area; gathers all existing relevant data and studies; identifies the key issues with respect to the water environment and infrastructure and determines key stakeholders.
 - **Outline Study** – Determines the environmental capacity for changes to the natural water cycle; determines capacity in water infrastructure; considers outline options for new infrastructure.
 - **Detailed Study** – Assesses requirements for new infrastructure, including where and when it is needed and how much it will cost to provide; provides guidance on funding and developer contributions and provides evidence for any water-related policy requirements.
- 2.5 A detailed study may not be necessary, if the Scoping Study and Outline Study have not identified any significant environmental risks or major infrastructure needs. Therefore, it is proposed initially to commission the Scoping and Outline stages only, with an option to proceed to a Detailed Study only if required.

2.6 The recent Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Preferred Options for the Core Strategy has already identified that water-related issues could have a potentially significant effect on European Sites (Cabinet, 23 September 2010, Item 8 refers).

3 Timetable

3.1 Subject to commencing the study early in December 2010, it is expected that the study will be completed by April 2011.

4 Procurement

4.1 Following discussions with the Council's Corporate Procurement Unit, the recommended procurement route is via a 'Request for Quotation'. The Corporate Procurement Unit will provide support throughout the process, with advice and guidance.

4.2 Wirral Council is the commissioning authority. The contract will be with Wirral Council and subject to its financial regulations and standing orders.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 Cabinet on 22nd July 2010 (Minute 89 refers) received a report indicating that a Water Cycle Study requiring specialist consultancy would need to be undertaken before a draft Core Strategy could be prepared.

5.2 Procuring external consultancy support to produce a Water Cycle Study for Wirral and Liverpool is estimated to cost up to £50,000. The maximum of £50,000 will be jointly funded between Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council on a 50:50 split basis. This cost will be met from existing resources, involving the use of Investment Strategy funding allocated to Strategic Development.

6 Staffing Implications

6.1 There are no staffing implications arising directly out of this report. The management of the commission will be led by officers in the Forward Planning and Investment Strategy teams and supported by officers from the Coast Protection and Drainage and Development teams, as part of the Steering Group.

6.2 The use of external consultants is required because the necessary capacity and specialist technical expertise to carry out this work is not available within the Council.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

7.1 There are no implications for equal opportunities arising directly from this report.

8 Community Safety Implications

8.1 There are no community safety implications arising directly out of this report. The Water Cycle Study is, however, expected to include a review of the existing Flood Risk Assessment evidence base and surface water systems, which will seek to protect and improve community safety.

9 Local Agenda 21 Implications

9.1 The Water Cycle Study will provide the evidence base for setting policy and encouraging more water-sustainable forms of development. Encouraging development with higher water efficiency standards will contribute towards Local Agenda 21 priorities

10 Planning Implications

10.1 The Water Cycle Study will be a key part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Development Framework, including the Core Strategy Development Plan Document which, once adopted, will form part of the statutory Development Plan for Wirral alongside the remaining parts of the Council's Unitary Development Plan (which have not been replaced by the Core Strategy).

10.2 The Water Cycle Study will also have implications for the determination of individual planning applications and other decisions under the Planning Acts.

11 Anti-Poverty Implications

11.1 There are no anti-poverty implications arising directly from this report.

12 Human Rights Implications

12.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

13 Social Inclusion Implications

13.1 There are no social inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

14 Local Member Support Implications

14.1 There are no specific Ward Member implications arising from this report.

15 Background Papers

15.1 Planning Policy Statement 12 - Local Spatial Planning (CLG, June 2008) can be viewed at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pps12lsp.pdf>

15.2 Planning Policy Statement 25 – Development and Flood Risk (CLG, March 2010) can be viewed at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/planningpolicystatement25.pdf>

15.3 Wirral Council – Local Development Framework for Wirral – Core Strategy Development Plan Document – Preferred Options Report (Cabinet 22 July 2010) can be viewed at [http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/Published/C00000121/M00003058/AI00009579/\\$LDFDraftPreferredOptionsCabRep22Jul10.docA.ps.pdf](http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/Published/C00000121/M00003058/AI00009579/$LDFDraftPreferredOptionsCabRep22Jul10.docA.ps.pdf)

15.4 The Core Strategy Preferred Options Habitats Regulations Assessment can be viewed at: <http://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13057&path=12848>

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet agrees to the commissioning of a joint Water Cycle Study with Liverpool City Council, on the terms set out in this report.

K. ADDERLEY

Interim Director of Corporate Services

This report has been prepared by the Forward Planning Section who can be contacted on 691 8218.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

EXTENSION OF THE WIRRAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal to extend the Wirral Apprentice Programme and updates members on the project to date..
- 1.2 As part of the Council Budget for 2010/11 A policy option of £500,000 was made available to extend the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme.
- 1.3 Members requested that officers investigate all relevant sources of finance to ensure this programme continues to grow, working in partnership with Wirral businesses, giving new opportunities to Wirral's young people and maximising any opportunities provided by the two major schemes for digital infrastructure and for extensive home insulation.
- 1.4 The funding is to increase the total number of apprenticeships under the successful Wirral Apprentices Scheme to a minimum of 200, doubling the original target of 100 apprentices.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At Cabinet on 23rd April 2009 the Wirral Apprentice Programme was approved in response to feedback from businesses and partners on the adverse impact that the recession was having on the availability of apprenticeship places for young people in Wirral.
- 2.2 The Programme was designed around a number of principles:
 - Direct support for businesses by offering an 18 month wage subsidy to employers in return for a minimum 2 year apprenticeship employment contract. The subsidy is paid at the National Minimum Wage for 18-21 year olds – currently £4.83 an hour, and rising to £4.92 per hour from 1st October 2010 for up to 40 hours per week.
 - Engaging with small to medium enterprises with no history of apprenticeship recruitment;
 - Working with partners to open up apprenticeship places to 'hard to reach' individuals
- 2.3 The programme has been extremely well received by businesses and is oversubscribed. This led to an additional allocation of Working Neighbourhoods Funding of £807,140 being approved to support an additional 50 apprenticeship places. This additional phase of The Wirral Apprentice targeted Wirral's 16 to-18 year olds who are not in Employment Education or Training (NEET) and vulnerable young people and/or those in disadvantaged areas.
- 2.4 An opportunity for further funding through the European Social Fund became available in summer 2010. A successful application for this funding was made through the Pathfinder Enabling Programme (PEP), securing a further £275,000 for the apprentice programme. This will result in an additional 17 apprentice placements being funded.

2.5 The combined funding for the Wirral Apprentice Programme is shown in the table below:

WNF initial allocation	£1,699,800
Additional WNF allocation	£807,140
PEP (ESF)	£275,000
Wirral Council (Policy Option Fund)	£500,000
TOTAL	£3,281,940

3.0 PROGRESS OF THE SCHEME

3.1 The first 100 Apprentices were recruited in September and October 2009.

3.2 Recruitment for the second tranche of apprentices focused on the NEET cohort and began in January 2010. Most of these positions have been recruited and the remaining few will be recruited by October 2010.

3.3 Through existing funding arrangements; a total of 167 apprentices have been recruited to date.

3.4 A breakdown of individual participants for both phases shows that:

- All are Wirral residents
- 57 were NEET; with a further 15 NEET to be recruited
- 31 would have been NEET if not for the programme
- 16 were unemployed young adults

3.5 The programme has engaged with 121 businesses during the first two tranches which has encouraged several employers to take on additional staff and trainees funded directly through the employer. This has led to an additional 17 apprenticeships and the creation of 8 new jobs.

3.6 A table giving a breakdown of the apprenticeships by occupational area is shown below:

Accountancy	4
Admin	31
Agriculture	1
Construction	37
Electronic engineering	4
Engineering	23
Engineering Motor Vehicle	9
Environmental	7
Hair & Beauty	6
Health & Social Care	6
Hospitality & Tourism	3

IT	4
Manufacturing/production	3
Media/design	8
Print	2
Retail	7
Science/technology	4
Sport	3
Warehouse/logistics	4
Other	1

4.0 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Options to explore how the additional funding of £500,000 can be maximized; have been investigated by officers from the Corporate Services and Children and Young People's departments.

- 4.2 The opportunity to source additional funds for the Wirral Apprentice Programme through the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) has been considered. However, the Future Jobs Fund is a national programme commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions with eligibility criteria that do not align fully with the principles of the Wirral Apprentice Programme.
- 4.3 Most significantly, Future Jobs Fund is only eligible for the creation of 'additional' jobs that demonstrate community benefit which has largely restricted the programme to public sector and voluntary/community sector employers. There are also restrictions on FJF participant eligibility which would limit potential apprentices to those over 18 years and claiming Jobseekers Allowance for a prescribed duration.
- 4.4 Whilst the Council's Future Jobs Fund Programme has been successful in its own right there is little scope to use these funds to expand the Apprenticeship Programme for the reasons given above. Given the continuing demand from private sector companies for apprenticeships it is the Officers view that the additional £500,000 should be used to extend the current Apprenticeship Programme.
- 4.5 The option of securing Wirral Apprentice opportunities within the Digital Infrastructure scheme has also been considered. Initial meetings established that the appointment of a contractor or agent to deliver the digital infrastructure scheme is unlikely to be in position until 2011/2012. This would put this scheme beyond the scope of the existing Wirral Apprentice programme. However employment and training opportunities for local people will be included as an important part of the tender process when this takes place.
- 4.6 The option of securing Wirral Apprentice opportunities within the Home Insulation scheme recently approved by Members has also been considered. The contract for Wirral's free insulation scheme involved the procurement of a managing agent to coordinate the programme. Working with the procurement team, a requirement to include employment and training opportunities was included within the tender specification.
- 4.7 It was originally envisaged that approximately 10 to 12 apprenticeship positions could be linked to the Home Insulation scheme. Following discussions with the appointed contractor; it was apparent that it would not be suitable for inclusion within the Wirral Apprentice Programme as the insulation fitters and installation positions involved in this scheme only require a short training period. Therefore it is more cost effective for the Council to ensure the companies involved will meet the costs of any employment and training positions directly.
- 4.8 There will be approximately 30 job and training opportunities created from this contract over the next 4 years subject to funding for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 being confirmed by the Council as part of its annual budget setting process.. The majority of these positions are being targeted at local unemployed people. These will be managed through the construction employment integrator (CEI) project, which is better placed for managing these positions. Targeted recruitment and training commitments are now being agreed with the delivery agents involved.
- 5.0 **PROPOSAL**
- 5.1 It is therefore proposed that the additional £500,000 policy option is used to create a further 33 apprenticeship positions within the parameters of the existing programme. The Apprenticeship Programme will maintain the existing delivery model and framework offer to

employers and participants and will be facilitated through existing staff resources within the Council.

5.2 Recruiting suitable employers and apprentices will take approximately two months, with the apprentice positions profiled to start in January 2011. This extends the timescales for the Wirral Apprentice Scheme until the end of Dec 2012.

5.3 This proposal will raise the total opportunities created through the Wirral Apprentice Scheme to a minimum of 200 apprentices.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The policy option funding will be committed and spent between January 2011 and June 2012.

7.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Implementation costs will be met from the existing resources for the programme and managed by the Children & Young People's Department.

8.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The implementation of the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme will reflect the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No implications arising directly from this report

11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct planning implications arising from this report.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 As part of the Working Wirral suite of projects, the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme will have significant future benefits for this area.

13.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

14.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 As part of the Working Wirral suite of projects, the Wirral Apprenticeship Programme will have significant future benefits for this area.

15.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no implications arising directly from this report.

16.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 Cabinet report 23rd April 2009, Wirral Apprentice Programme

16.2 Cabinet report 22nd February 2010, Budget 2010-11

16.3 Details of learning through apprenticeship as well as links and contact information can be found at <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>

17.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

17.1 Cabinet approves the extension of the Wirral Apprentice Programme as set out in this report.

Kevin Adderley
Interim Director of Corporate Services

This report was prepared by Lee Parker who can be contacted on 691 8432

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

THIRD MERSEYSIDE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – PREFERRED STRATEGY & PROPOSED WORKSHOP

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the draft version of the third Merseyside Local Transport Plan's Preferred Strategy and seeks Cabinet's comments and endorsement.
- 1.2 Cabinet is also requested to approve the proposal to hold an LTP3 Member/Senior Officer Workshop, to be held in November, to consider Wirral's transport priorities within the context of the overall strategy.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members may be aware that the current Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Merseyside expires at the end of March 2011, and that over the past year or so, officers have been working to develop the third LTP (LTP3) which will run from April 2011.
- 2.2 Wirral Member involvement in this process has particularly been via the Merseyside Strategic Transportation Committee (MSTC) and Merseytravel's Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) LTP Committee. Councillor Rennie and Councillor Hale represent Wirral Council on the MSTC and Councillors Abbey, Blakeley, Mitchell and Rowlands represent Wirral Council on Merseytravel's LTP Committee.
- 2.3 Over the last six months, Wirral officers, along with the other LTP partners, have continued to develop the LTP3 which is now at the 'Preferred Strategy' stage. This development has stemmed from a significant body of background data, and from the "Challenges and Opportunities" paper that was published for consultation in March of this year.
- 2.4 Cabinet will recognise that the national and local policy framework for developing the third LTP remains unclear following the change in Government in May 2010. At the time of writing, authorities still await the outcome of the new Government's Spending Review to be followed by the publication of the Department for Transport's (DfT) Business Plan. One of the biggest uncertainties remains the level of funding that will be available within the first few years of the next LTP. Notwithstanding this uncertainty, the LTP remains the framework within which authorities shall set out their transport priorities for the foreseeable future.
- 2.5 Due to this current uncertainty, it will be appreciated that the LTP3 will need to be kept as sufficiently flexible as possible to allow for further changes, not least changes arising from future decisions around funding.

3.0 DRAFT PREFERRED STRATEGY

- 3.1 The LTP3 Preferred Strategy was launched at a successful event at the Holiday Inn, Liverpool, on 8 September 2010. This marked the start of a twelve week consultation period to seek public and stakeholders' feedback on the draft strategy before preparation of the final LTP3.
- 3.2 Key points in the development of the draft Preferred Strategy for the third Merseyside LTP are as follows:
- 3.3 It is being prepared in uncertain times. What is clear however is that there will be less funding available. The Preferred Strategy uses a range of £15m to £19m per annum as possible funding levels. This is a substantial reduction on levels enjoyed for LTP2 (2006/07 – 2010/11).
- 3.4 The Preferred Strategy also recognises the importance that the Government now attaches to private sector funding at one level, and possible community and third sector funding at the level signalled by the 'Big Society'.
- 3.5 Our forecasts for the future also contain more uncertainty than in the past due to the financial challenges facing the country and its, and the Liverpool City Region's, ability to move out of recession, and to what timescales. This clearly has an impact on likely implementation dates for key initiatives such as Wirral and Liverpool Waters and the expansion of the Port of Liverpool.
- 3.6 Such developments will, in turn, impact on future demand for transport. The assumptions for LTP3 are based on the evidence that travel demand will remain static for the first few years, before starting to increase in line with an upturn in the economy from around 2014/15.
- 3.7 On this basis, it is believed that the existing highway and public transport networks will be able to cope without the need for major investment, other than at certain locations or pinch points.
- 3.8 This should help mitigate the pressure from reduced levels of funding. Fortunately, funding for the strengthening of Bidston Moss Viaduct is already secured (see previous Cabinet report dated 15th April 2010, Minute 401 refers), and Wirral does not expect to have any other major highway schemes identified for inclusion in LTP3, excluding those associated with Wirral Waters which will be subject to separate agreements as part of the planning process.
- 3.9 There also remain major uncertainties about organisational arrangements at a national and local level. The LTP partners are particularly concerned how the framework for the LTP delivery will be addressed at the Liverpool City Region (LCR) level within the developments around any Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and await to see how transport provision will be taken forward should the Liverpool City Region LEP be approved by Government. (Minute 122 of the Cabinet meeting held on 2 September 2010 provides further information about the LEP).
- 3.10 Taking all these issues into consideration, the LTP Partners have developed the Preferred Strategy based on three key principles:

- The “twin peaks” of supporting **economic growth** and delivering a **low carbon economy**;
- A clear need to demonstrate **value-for-money efficiency, and effectiveness** in a funding constrained environment; and
- The need to address multiple objectives and pool resources with other core policy areas, such as health, to address common goals.

3.11 In summary, the Preferred Strategy suggests:

- **Addressing multiple objectives:** Being more innovative and clever with available resources - pooling and sharing.
- Having a clear commitment to **work with private sector partners, operators and other agencies** to achieve this.
- **Targeted use of resources** to provide improvements to address known demand.
- **Maintenance of core assets** and making **best use of assets**.
- **Safety and Inclusivity** – Reducing road accidents and the provision of equality of travel opportunities to address disadvantage.
- **Focus on active modes** - lower capital investment required, potential for high benefit:cost ratios - health and carbon benefits.
- **Technological improvement** - using ITS and Smartcards to make existing provision work better and encouraging green technology.
- **Smarter Choices** with **behavioural change** programmes.
- **Collaboration and co-operation** - working with planners and developers to reduce reliance on transport capital solutions as an essential element of development.
- **Resilient planning** - Planning for the future to ensure capacity for potential large economic or policy/funding changes.

3.12 These are translated into the following areas of activity:

- **Maintain the existing highway and public transport assets.** This will ensure that district infrastructures are protected from further deterioration, enabling us to make the best use of what we have.
- **Develop Statutory Quality Partnership** routes, on approaches to, and within, city and town centres, and associated **enforcement** of these measures.

- **Expand the range of public transport services by examining the role of other providers backed up by a network of neighbourhood based information services.** This will have a direct impact in disadvantaged areas, creating greater opportunities to travel, access employment and foster well being.
- **Develop and begin to implement the next generation of technology.** On highway network, this will include systems to improve traffic flows and advise road users, and the introduction of smart cards will offer a range of benefits to public transport users. Such technology will maintain free flowing networks, increase journey opportunities and integrate a wide range of transport uses.
- **The creation of an extensive network of low speed zones** to create safer roads, encourage more cycling and walking, therefore, improving people's health and well-being whilst reducing carbon outputs.
- **Work with the Freight Quality Partnership and other interested parties to develop and enhance the freight and logistics network.** This will strengthen Merseyside's competitiveness, support Superport and access to the Port, reduce the impact of freight movement on local communities, promote the use of rail and make a major contribution to reducing carbon outputs.
- **Develop the low emissions strategy and prepare a complementary strategy that seeks to reduce reliance on oil.** This will reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and improve health and provide a stimulus to the creation of new technologies in support of the LCR low carbon economy.
- **Fully integrate the LTP with the Local Development Frameworks and community strategies.** This will provide a robust planning framework linking transport and future developments in ways that can reduce long distance travel, improve accessibility and provide a framework for future funding sources.
- **Step up promotion of sustainable travel and behaviour change.** This will reinforce the advantages of change to create a healthier and low carbon Merseyside and create the foundations for the area to join other sustainable and successful cities.
- **Plan for the long term.** This will ensure that Wirral and its City Region partners are best placed to react to any future up-turn in the market and ensure that local transport systems are best able to support local growth.

3.13 Most of the Preferred Strategy is set at the City Region level, however the document recognises the link between transport and future major developments at locations such as Wirral Waters. References to Wirral Waters are in the Summary at paragraphs 16 & 17, and within the main text in Section 2.23, Tables 4 & 5 and Section 4.25 of the Preferred Strategy document.

3.14 Copies of the LTP3 Preferred Strategy – A New Mobility Culture for Merseyside (110 pages) along with a Public Summary for Consultation (8 pages) are available in the Members Library. Due to the amount of supporting information, Members are directed to the Merseyside LTP website http://www.letstravelwise.org/content188_LTP3-Consultation.html where various documents and data can be viewed electronically.

4.0 FUTURE TRANSPORT PROGRAMMES

4.1 At the present time, it is not known whether two, three or four-year settlement periods will be adopted for LTP3. The previous Government had planned for a three-year horizon, which had the advantage of being aligned with Local Area Agreements and Local Strategic Partnerships. It is hoped that the LTP partners will be informed by the DfT of the length of the first 'settlement' period soon after the Spending Review announcement, which is due on 20 October 2010, to enable the drafting of authority implementation programmes from 2011/12.

4.2 Once clarity around funding levels begins to emerge from the October Spending Review, the various LTP partners will develop draft Implementation Programmes. This will translate the Preferred Strategy into a delivery programme covering the first 3 or 4-years of LTP3 from 2011/12.

4.3 I anticipate bringing Wirral's final draft LTP capital programme to a Cabinet meeting early in the New Year for approval once the level of the financial settlement is known.

5.0 PROPOSED WIRRAL MEMBER/ SENIOR OFFICER WORKSHOP

5.1 In order to provide the opportunity for elected Members to receive a presentation on the development of the LTP3 to date, it is proposed to hold a workshop at a date to be arranged in mid November. This workshop will also enable attendees to consider Wirral's priorities for transport within the context of, firstly, the wider transport strategy and, secondly, other non-transport Council priorities, such as housing and economic regeneration.

5.2 It is suggested that nominated Members and key officers from various departments of the Council attend the workshop to provide an opportunity for a full debate, which will help inform Wirral's LTP capital programme from 2011/12. It is also proposed that the discussion at the Workshop can then provide the basis of the formal Wirral Council response to the consultation document.

5.3 Cabinet is advised that the following Members be nominated for the workshop:

- Councillor Lesley Rennie, Cabinet Member for Streetscene & Transport Services;
- Members of the Sustainable Communities O&S Committee - Councillors Hale, Smith, Wilkins, Anderson, McCubbin, S Williams, McLachlan, J Williams, Brighouse and Mitchell;
- Councillors Abbey, Blakeley and Rowlands as additional representatives on Merseytravel's LTP Committee;

- Councillors Clements, Gilchrist and Keeley as additional representatives on the Wirral Pedestrian Forum and Wirral Cycle Forum;
- All remaining Members of the Council.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 LTPs provide the main means by which to draw down capital funding from the Department for Transport. It is expected that funding levels will be greatly reduced in the early years of LTP3, given the national budget deficit and the associated reductions in DfT funding.
- 6.2 Reduced funding levels will mean that the Council will not be able to support and deliver the same level of transport infrastructure improvements and initiatives that have been seen over the last five years or so, hence difficult decisions regarding funding priorities will inevitably need to be made.

7.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Staff from my Department will continue to provide Wirral's input to the third LTP and its strategic development. Delivery of the Transport Capital Programme will also be managed in-house.

8.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 LTP3 will continue to support strategic aims to reduce worklessness, promote greater independence and choice, improve support for those with mental health problems, reduce numbers not in employment, education or training, especially from disadvantaged communities.
- 8.2 An important part of the development of LTP3 is an Equality Impact Assessment as part of an overall Integrated Assessment, which will assess the Plan's alignment with legislative requirements.

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 LTP3 will continue to address road safety as an integral element of the transport strategy, which links closely with the Council's Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan objectives to reduce traffic accidents, and also complements most of the Council's corporate objectives.

10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Sustainability and LA21 issues are common threads running through all the transport policies, and as part of the LTP3 development a full Strategic Environmental Assessment, a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitat Regulations Assessment will be included within an Integrated Assessment of the Plan.
- 10.2 Projects to increase the use of sustainable modes of transport support the aims to reduce our carbon footprint, as well as encourage healthier lifestyles and participation in fulfilling activities, such as walking and cycling.

11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no specific planning implications under this heading.

11.2 However, in accordance with DfT guidelines, the LTP is closely aligned with the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and other strategic and local policies, including the Regional Transport Strategy, Wirral's Tourism Strategy and local environmental, social and economic regeneration strategies.

11.3 The Merseyside Authorities are committed to approving a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which will improve linkages between land use and transport within the planning approvals' process. Members may recall that the SPD was particularly noted by the Government in the settlement letter as "indicative of forward thinking on the links between transport and planning".

11.4 This SPD will form an integral part of the Core Local Development Framework (LDF), and will be approved and implemented in the near future.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no specific anti-poverty implications in regards to the LTP Preferred Strategy.

12.2 However, it is recognised that the cost of travel continues to be a barrier for some people. To this end, the LTP Partners continue to work to develop a transport network that provides different options for travel, and engage with commercial public transport operators to try and address such issues.

13.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Social inclusion is a thread running through the LTP, which aims to provide a fully integrated transport system that is accessible to everyone. However, reductions in future transport funding is likely to impact on the extent of the measures and interventions that could help improve social inclusion.

14.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no implications under this heading.

15.0 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS/IMPACT ASSESSMENT

15.1 A Health Impact Assessment will form part of the Integrated Assessment to be carried out as part of the LTP3 development process.

16.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

16.1 No papers have been used for the preparation of this report.

16.2 The DfT Guidance for LTP preparation is accessible at: www.dft.gov.uk/adobe/pdf/165237/ltp-guidance.pdf

16.3 Access to the LTP3 Preferred Strategy consultation documents and the various supporting documentation is available at:
http://www.letstravelwise.org/content188_LTP3-Consultation.html

17.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

17.1 The LTP contains a Wirral-wide transport strategy and implementation plan, therefore, will be of interest to Members in all wards.

18.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (i) Endorse the Preferred Strategy for the third Merseyside Local Transport Plan;
- (ii) Approve that proposal to hold a special Member/ Senior Officer Workshop as described in this report.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR
TECHNICAL SERVICES

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

WINTER MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2010 / 2011

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise Members of the proposed Winter Maintenance Arrangements for 2010 / 2011
- 1.2 The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the proposed arrangements.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Winter Maintenance Policy and Arrangements document details proposals of the extent and manner in which winter maintenance operations will be carried out during the winter period for the treatment of carriageways, footways and other areas where required.
- 2.2 Following the severe weather, which occurred in January 2010, Cabinet requested that a review of the winter maintenance arrangements be undertaken via the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Minute 250 – 14/01/2010).
- 2.3 This review was led by the Health, Safety & Resilience Manager and he reported his finding back to the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 21 June 2010 (Minute 60 – 21/06/2010). The Committee noted the impact of the severe weather in January 2010. They endorsed the Council's response and recommended to Cabinet that the current winter maintenance provision be maintained.
- 2.4 The impact of the severe weather has also been reviewed on a sub-regional, regional and national basis. Some comfort can be drawn out as a result of these reviews and some highlights are:
 - The National Salt Cell will be activated far sooner and all agencies with a highways responsibility will be reporting their Salt stock levels on a far more frequent basis – allowing for a fair distribution in time of crisis. Cabinet should be reminded that Salt is ineffective as a thawing agent below minus 8°C.
 - The resilience fraternity has been building on the community spirit element of a response to severe weather – e.g. advice placed on the Councils internet, pre-prepared severe weather information leaflets for schools, communities and businesses plus registration schemes for 4x4 vehicles and other offers from the community to assist are all now in place.
 - More advanced weather forecasting and warning and informing has been put in place. Members will be aware of the benefit of this from the

more detailed weather forecasts and alerts they receive from the Health, Safety & Resilience Team.

- 2.5 Additionally, as part of the review, an Innovation Group was set up with Council Officers and Colas staff to examine ways of providing the service more efficiently.
- 2.6 This has resulted in a complete revision of gritting routes, the fitting of satellite tracking in gritters, revised administrative procedures and mutual aid agreements with other Merseyside Authorities.
- 2.7 Training in winter maintenance operations has been extended to more staff including trainees, ensuring additional cover in the event of severe weather.
- 2.8 Details of the proposed arrangements for 2010 / 2011 are appended, herewith.

3.0 WINTER MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS 2010 / 2011

- 3.1 Full details of the Council's Policy and Winter Maintenance Arrangements are appended as follows:
 - i) Council Policy - Appendix 1
 - ii) Gritting Routes - Appendix 2
 - iii) Grit Bin Locations - Appendix 3

However, a brief overview is set out, herewith.

- 3.2 Council officers and Colas staff will be on 24 hour standby from 15 November 2010 until 3 April 2011, although this may be varied, depending on the prevailing weather at the start and end of the season.
- 3.3 Winter maintenance forecasts are provided by MeteoGroup Limited, who have staff available for consultation at all times.
- 3.4 Decisions whether to grit are generally made between 1.00 pm and 2.00 pm when the forecast is received, but weather conditions frequently require later decisions through the night.
- 3.5 10 full size gritters and 2 mini gritters are used for winter maintenance operations, with snowploughs available for each of the main gritters.
- 3.6 Minor additions to the gritted network have been incorporated at the request of Members, Merseytravel and as a result of a review of school routes.
- 3.7 The 11 Area Forums have each allocated funding to Technical Services for the provision and maintenance of additional grit bins. Details of these requests have now been received and subject to final checking will be installed, filled and available for use by 15 November. A supplementary list of these locations will be provided to Members in due course.

4.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The budget allocation for 2010 / 2011 is £269,700. However, the actual spend for an average winter of 33 call outs is likely to be in the order of £500,000.
- 4.2 Should it not be possible to contain the expenditure within the budget allocation, options will be presented to Members in terms of funding the additional expenditure. In the event of an extreme winter it may be necessary to call on the Council's reserves / balances.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no known ethnic minority implications.
- 5.2 The Winter Maintenance Arrangements increase accessibility for all highway users during periods of freezing weather, particularly the elderly and persons with disabilities who may find that winter conditions present particular problems.

6.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no planning implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The safety of all highway users is a Council priority and these arrangements ensure that available resources are applied in the most effective way.

8.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no known human rights implications arising directly from this report.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The volume of salt spread on highways is commensurate with achieving a satisfactory road surface condition on those roads treated and complies with the recommendations of the Department for Transport.
- 9.2 Council will be aware of the Governments' requirement to minimise the usage of salt on the highway, both to restrict the run off into watercourses and drainage systems and to conserve national stocks. The current arrangements take this requirement into account.

10.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no social inclusion implications arising directly from this report.

11.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no anti-poverty implications arising directly from this report.

12.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

12.1 A copy of the Winter Maintenance Arrangements document is available for viewing at the Technical Services Department, Cheshire Lines Building, Canning Street, Birkenhead, CH41 1ND and will be available for viewing on Wirral's website.

13.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The report will be of interest to all Ward Members.

14.0 RECOMMENDATION

14.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the Winter Maintenance Arrangements for 2010/11 as detailed in this report.

DAVID GREEN
DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL
TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE POLICY STATEMENT

Legal Requirements

The Metropolitan Borough of Wirral, as the Highway Authority for Wirral is under a duty to maintain the highway.

Section 111 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 imposed an additional duty to ensure that, where reasonably practicable, safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.

Wirral's Winter Maintenance Service involves:

Pre-treating the highway to prevent ice from forming

Post-treating the highway when ice has formed or snow has accumulated, subject to the availability of resources.

Treatment of Roads

The decision to treat roads is taken by a Senior Officer based on forecasts received from a forecast provider.

24 hour monitoring of forecasts ensures current weather conditions are known throughout the Winter Maintenance period.

It is not considered reasonably practical because of resources and costs to pre-treat all highways in the Borough.

Pre-treatment is carried out on approved routes comprising:

Principle Roads (Class "A" and Class "B" roads)
Other strategic main roads
Major bus routes notified by bus operators

Known problem locations and hazardous gradients may be treated when conditions dictate and are authorised by the Client Senior Officer.

Treatment of approved routes will be carried out during and after snowfall.

Treatment of minor roads not forming part of the agreed routes may only be considered in response to specific reports that they are in an icy condition and only after they have been inspected by a duty winter maintenance inspector.

During and after snow, minor roads will not be treated until approved routes have been sufficiently treated to ensure that they remain open to traffic.

These roads will then be treated on the basis of importance in response to specific requests from the Emergency Services, public etc.

Treatment of Footways

Footways, shopping centres or cycleways adjacent to carriageways, are not specifically included in pre-determined routes for precautionary treatment. Cycleways are treated where they form part of the treated road network.

The decision to treat footways, shopping centres and cycleways will be made in emergency situations, once snow has settled or during prolonged freezing conditions.

There will however, be an amount of salt projected onto these areas when treatment has been carried out on adjacent carriageways.

Treatment Times

The Winter Maintenance Period 2010 / 2011 runs from 15th November 2010 up to and including 3rd April 2011 but may be extended should weather conditions dictate otherwise.

Pre-treatment is normally commenced at a specified time, based on a forecast received from the forecast provider, generally between 12.00 and 14.00.

When a pre-treatment time cannot be determined due to varying weather conditions, treatment will commence within one hour of the decision being taken to grit.

In normal conditions, treatment should be completed within three hours, but may vary depending on rates of spread, prevailing weather conditions and the time of operation which may be during busy traffic periods.

Route No. 1 Grey**Appendix 2**

- 1 Leave salt barn and grit from barn to M53 interchange.
- 2 Grit the whole of the interchange and the westbound slip road onto Woodchurch Road.
- 3 Grit Woodchurch Road westbound up to the traffic lights at Arrowe Park.
- 4 Grit through lights to Arrowe Park Road Hospital main entrance.
- 5 Grit main hospital bus route and exit right.
- 6 Grit Arrowe Park Road to lights and onto Woodchurch Road eastbound.
- 7 Grit Woodchurch Road to Ackers Road lights.
- 8 Travel back up to Arrowe Park lights.
- 9 Grit Arrowe Park Road southbound to Thingwall Road East roundabout and grit roundabout.
- 10 Grit Barnston Road from roundabout to Chester Road roundabout, Gayton.
- 11 Grit roundabout and exit towards Heswall.
- 12 Grit full length of Telegraph Road to Caldly Road / Montgomery Hill roundabout.
- 13 Turn around and grit Telegraph Road to Mere Lane.
- 14 Return to Caldly roundabout and grit Column Road, Grange Road, Meols Drive to Market Street roundabout, Hoylake.
- 15 Grit Station Road, Carr Lane to end and return.
- 16 Grit Market Street, Birkenhead Road, Hoylake Road to Moreton Cross roundabout and exit right.
- 17 Grit Upton Road from roundabout to Upton Bypass and turn right.
Grit slip road to roundabout and exit towards Birkenhead.
- 18 Grit bypass southbound to Greasby Road / Old Greasby Road roundabout.
- 19 Grit roundabout and grit bypass to Arrowe Park Road roundabout (Sainsbury's).

- 20 Grit roundabout and exit towards Birkenhead and grit Upton Bypass, Upton Road to Warren Drive roundabout and turn around.
- 21 Grit dual carriageway section of Upton Road and travel to Arrowe Park roundabout.
- 22 Travel Upton Bypass towards Moreton and grit dual carriageway section and Moreton slip road to top.
- 23 Turn at first junction and grit Moreton Road (both sides of reservation) / Arrowe Park Road to Arrowe Park Road Hospital exit.
- 24 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Ackers Road lights.
- 25 Grit Woodchurch Road from lights to Woodchurch Interchange slip road.
- 26 Grit slip road.

FINISH

Route No. 2 Brown

- 1 Travel to M53 Junction 5 Hooton and grit roundabout.
- 2 Grit A41 New Chester Road northbound from roundabout to Bolton Road roundabout, New Ferry.
- 3 Grit bypass to St Pauls Road roundabout, Rock Ferry.
- 4 Grit roundabout, bypass and A41 New Chester Road southbound to Junction 5 roundabout.
- 5 Return to salt barn and reload.
- 6 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Storeton Road junction.
- 7 Grit Storeton Road / Mount Road southbound to Brimstage Road roundabout Junction 4.
- 8 Grit roundabout and exit to Mount Road northbound.
- 9 Grit Mount Road dual carriageway section and return to roundabout.
- 10 Exit towards Heswall.
- 11 Grit Brimstage Road from roundabout to Chester Road, Gayton roundabout and exit left.
- 12 Grit Chester Road from roundabout to Ellesmere Port boundary (Boathouse Lane).
- 13 Turn and grit Chester Road from boundary to Gayton roundabout.
- 14 Return to Chester High Road / Parkgate Lane.
- 15 Grit Parkgate Lane from Chester High Road to end (Neston Road).
- 16 Turn right and grit Neston Road to boundary
- 17 Return to Neston Road / Parkgate Lane.
- 18 Grit Neston Road, Thornton Common Road to Raby Mere Road / Poulton Hall Road bridge and turn left.
- 19 Grit Poulton Hall Road to junction of Poulton Road / Dibbinsdale Road.
- 20 Grit Poulton Road from Poulton Hall Road to Spital Road lights.
- 21 Travel to M53 Junction 4 Clatterbridge roundabout and exit towards Clatterbridge.

- 22 Grit Mount Road southbound to garage roundabout and grit roundabout.
- 23 Grit Mount Road northbound to M53 Junction 4 Clatterbridge roundabout.
- 24 Return to Clatterbridge Hospital access road (Mount Road).
- 25 Grit access road and hospital main bus route.
- 26 Return to Clatterbridge Road.
- 27 Grit Clatterbridge Road, Willaston Road to Ellesmere Port boundary (Turn at Lydiate Lane).
- 28 Return to Willaston Road / Benty Heath Lane.
- 29 Grit Benty Heath Lane to Ellesmere Port boundary (Turn at Eastham Rake).
- 30 Travel to Willaston Road / Willowbrow Road.
- 31 Grit Willowbrow Road from Willaston Road to Raby Mere Road.
- 32 Travel to Brimstage Road / Brimstage Lane, Brimstage.
- 33 Grit Brimstage Lane to Red Hill Road.
- 34 Travel to Willaston Road / Raby Mere Road junction.
- 35 Grit Raby Mere Road westbound from Willaston Road to Ellesmere Port boundary.
- 36 Travel to Raby Mere Road / Raby Road, Raby
- 37 Grit Raby Road through to village.
- 38 Travel to Thornton Common Road / St Georges Way.
- 39 Grit St Georges Way from Thornton Common Road to Manor Road.
- 40 Grit Smithy Hill from Manor Road to Thornton Common Road and turn left
- 41 Grit Manor Road from Thornton Common Road to Brimstage Road.
- 42 Travel to Brimstage Road / Talbot Avenue.
- 43 Grit Talbot Avenue from Brimstage Road to Manor Road.
- 44 Travel to Brimstage Road / Whitehouse Lane

- 45 Grit Whitehouse Lane from Brimstage Road to Barnston Road.
- 46 Travel to Barnston Road / Storeton Lane.
- 47 Grit Storeton Lane, Station Road to Lever Causeway roundabout.
- 48 Grit roundabout.
- 49 Grit Lever Causeway northwards from roundabout to Mount Road.
- 50 Travel to Mount Road / Rest Hill Road.
- 51 Grit Rest Hill Road from Mount Road to Red Hill Road.
- 52 Grit Red Hill Road from Rest Hill Road to Lever Causeway.
- 53 Return to Red Hill Road / Rest Hill Road.
- 54 Grit Red Hill Road from Rest Hill Road to Mount Road.
- 55 Cross Mount Road to Bracken Lane.
- 56 Grit Bracken Lane from Mount Road to Teehey Lane.
- 57 Travel to Heath Road / Cross Lane.
- 58 Grit Cross Lane from Heath Road to Stanton Road.
- 59 Cross into Beechway.
- 60 Grit Beechway from Stanton Road to Brimstage Road.

FINISH

Route No. 3 Green

- 1 Travel to Hoylake Road / Pasture Road roundabout, Moreton
- 2 Grit Pasture Road from roundabout to Leasowe Road
- 3 Grit Leasowe Road from Pasture Road to Wallasey Village
- 4 Grit St Johns Road from Wallasey Village to St Georges Road
- 5 Travel to St Georges Road / Perrin Road
- 6 Grit Perrin Road to Wallasey Village
- 7 Grit Leasowe Road from Wallasey Village to Mosslands Drive
- 8 Grit Mosslands Drive to end and return.
- 9 Grit Leasowe Road from Mosslands Drive to Pasture Road
- 10 Return to Leasowe Road / Reeds Lane
- 11 Grit Reeds Lane to Hoylake Road

DO NOT GRIT INSIDE STOP LINES OF RAILWAY CROSSING

- 12 Turn right and grit Hoylake Road from Reeds Lane to Pasture Road
- 13 Return to Fender Lane / Reeds Lane
- 14 Grit Fender Lane, Bidston Bypass eastwards to Bidston Link Road roundabout (Tesco)
- 15 Grit roundabout
- 16 Grit Bidston Link Road northwards to Bidston Moss roundabout
- 17 Grit roundabout and Bidston Link Road southwards to Hoylake Road
- 18 Grit Hoylake Road eastwards to St James Church
- 19 Turn and grit Hoylake Road westwards to Worcester Road
- 20 Grit Worcester Road, Boundary Road to Upper Flaybrick Road
- 21 Grit Upper Flaybrick Road to Tollemache Road
- 22 Travel to Tollemache Road / Upton Road junction
- 23 Grit Upton Road westwards to Boundary Road
- 24 Grit Boundary Road to Upper Flaybrick Road

- 25 Travel to Worcester Road
- 26 Grit Worcester Road to Hoylake Road
- 27 Grit Hoylake Road to Bidston Bypass
- 28 Grit Bidston Bypass, Fender Lane westwards to Reeds Lane
- 29 Travel to North Wallasey Approach Road
- 30 Grit North Wallasey Approach Road, Bayswater Road from roundabout to Harrison Drive
- 31 Travel to Harrison Drive / Groveland Road
- 32 Grit Groveland Road, Newport Avenue to Bayswater Road
- 33 Travel to North Wallasey Approach Road
- 34 Grit North Wallasey Approach Road to Bidston Moss roundabout
- 35 Travel to North Wallasey Approach Road / Leasowe slip road
- 36 Grit slip road to Leasowe Road
- 37 Travel to Leasowe Road / Birkenhead slip road
- 38 Grit slip road to North Wallasey Approach Road
- 39 Travel to North Wallasey Approach Road / Wallasey slip road
- 40 Grit slip road to Leasowe Road
- 41 Travel to Leasowe Road / Greenleas Road
- 42 Grit Greenleas Road, Bayswater Road to North Wallasey Approach Road
(Grit both sides of refuges)
- 43 Travel to Wallasey Village / Green Lane
- 44 Grit Green Lane to Greenleas Road including school section
- 45 Travel to Leasowe Road northside slip road (signed Birkenhead)
- 46 Grit slip road to North Wallasey Approach Road
- 47 Travel to Wallasey Docks Link North
- 48 Grit Wallasey Docks Link North from roundabout to Poulton Bridge Road roundabout

- 49 Grit Dock Road from roundabout to Tower Road roundabout
- 50 Grit Kelvin Road, Wheatland Lane from Dock Road to Poulton Road
- 51 Grit Poulton Road from Wheatland Lane to Mill Road
- 52 Travel to Poulton Bridge Road roundabout/ Wallasey Docks Link South
- 53 Grit Wallasey Docks Link South to Bidston Link Road
- 54 Travel to Leasowe Road / Gardenside
- 55 Grit Gardenside, Twickenham Drive to Cameron Road
- 56 Grit Cameron Road, Grant Road, Ross Avenue and return to Twickenham Drive
- 57 Grit Twickenham Drive from Cameron Road to Castleway South
- 58 Grit Castleway South to Birket Avenue and back to Twickenham Drive
- 59 Grit Castleway North from Twickenham Drive to Leasowe Road and back to Twickenham Drive
- 60 Grit Twickenham Drive to Wakefield Drive
- 61 Grit Wakefield Drive to Leasowe Road
- 62 Travel to Wakefield Drive / Blackheath Drive
- 63 Grit Blackheath Drive to Reeds Lane
- 64 Travel to Reeds Lane / Birket Avenue
- 65 Grit Birket Avenue to end

FINISH

Route No. 4 Red

- 1 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Ackers Road
- 2 Grit Ackers Road to Home Farm Road and back to Woodchurch Road.
- 3 Grit Woodchurch Road eastbound from start of dual carriageway to railway bridge and turn around.
- 4 Grit Woodchurch Road from railway bridge to end of dual carriageway.
- 5 Return to M53 interchange and travel to northeast sliproad and grit up to Woodchurch Road.
- 6 Grit Woodchurch Road, Singleton Avenue / Borough Road to Central Station roundabout.
- 7 Grit roundabout and travel to Town Link Viaduct eastbound.
- 8 Grit Town Link Viaduct to New Chester Road.
- 9 Grit New Chester Road southbound to Green Lane and grit roundabout.
- 10 Grit New Chester Road southbound to A41 Bypass and grit roundabout.
- 11 Grit New Chester Road northbound to Town Link Viaduct.
- 12 Grit Town Link Viaduct westbound to Argyle Street (Central Station roundabout)
- 13 Grit Argyle Street from roundabout to Hamilton Square (north side)
- 14 Grit Hamilton Square to Hamilton Street
- 15 Grit Hamilton Street, Chester Street to Bridge Street (Not Woodside Ferry)
- 16 Grit Bridge Street to Hamilton Street and return to Chester Street
- 17 Grit Bridge Street westwards filter from Chester Street and return to Chester Street / Bridge Street
- 18 Grit Chester Street to New Chester Road / Green Lane roundabout.
- 19 Grit Campbletown Road from roundabout to A41 Bypass and exit towards Birkenhead
- 20 Grit New Chester Road, Chester Street (Underpass) from Town Link Viaduct to Duncan Street

- 21 Grit Duncan Street to Hamilton Street
- 22 Grit Hamilton Street to Conway Street / Tunnel roundabout.
- 23 Travel to Hamilton Street / Hinson Street.
- 24 Grit Hinson Street to Argyle Street
- 25 Grit Argyle Street from Hinson Street to Conway Street roundabout and grit roundabout.
- 26 Grit Argyle Street to Central Station roundabout.
- 27 Grit Wilbraham Street, Clifton Crescent, Borough Road to Singleton Avenue.
- 28 Return to Borough Road / North Road
- 29 Grit North Road to Derby Road.
- 30 Cross and grit Elm Road to Church Road.
- 31 Travel to Church Road / Downham Road
- 32 Grit Downham Road to Old Chester Road
- 33 Travel to Old Chester Road / Union Street
- 34 Grit Union Street to New Chester Road
- 35 Travel to New Chester Road / Green Lane
- 36 Grit Green Lane (grit both sides of island) to Queen Street and turn left
- 37 Grit Queen Street from Green Lane to Old Chester Road (1st left)
- 38 Grit Old Chester Road from Queen Street to Green Lane
- 39 Travel to Queen Street / Top of Green Lane
- 40 Grit Queen Street, Hinderton Road from Green Lane to Argyle Street South
- 41 Grit Argyle Street South to Clifton Crescent (Central Station)
- 42 Travel to Borough Road / Whetstone Lane and turn left
- 43 Grit Whetstone Lane to Church Road and turn left
- 44 Grit Whetstone Lane, Pearson Road / Argyle Street South to Hinderton Road

- 45 Travel to Whetstone Lane / Derby Road
- 46 Grit Derby Road, Greenway Road to Mount Road / Everest Road /
Bebington Road roundabout
- 47 Travel to Church Road / Well Lane
- 48 Grit Well Lane to Old Chester Road (Grit both sides of refuges)
- 49 Cross to St Pauls Road
- 50 Grit St Pauls Road to New Chester Road
- 51 Travel to Greenway Road / Prenton Road East
- 52 Grit Prenton Road East to Borough Road
- 53 Cross and grit Prenton Road West to Storeton Road
- 54 Cross and grit Prenton Lane, Prenton Hall Road to Woodchurch Road
- 55 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Prenton Dell Road
- 56 Grit Prenton Dell Road to Prenton Hall Road
- 57 Travel to Waterpark Road / Storeton Road
- 58 Grit Waterpark Road to Prenton Hall Road
- 59 Travel to Prenton Hall Road / Prenton Village Road
- 60 Grit Prenton Village Road east side from Prenton Hall Road to Prenton
Hall Road
- 61 Travel to Prenton Village Road / Bramwell Avenue
- 62 Grit Bramwell Avenue to Glenavon Road
- 63 Grit Glenavon Road to Prenton Hall Road
- 64 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Holm Lane
- 65 Grit Holm Lane to Talbot Road
- 66 Travel to Bidston Road / Budworth Road
- 67 Grit Budworth Road to Wexford Road
- 68 Grit Wexford Road to Bidston Road
- 69 Return to Budworth Road / Wexford Road

- 70 Grit Budworth Road, West Road, Beryl Road to Noctorum Avenue
- 71 Travel to Noctorum Avenue / Upton Road
- 72 Grit Noctorum Avenue, Noctorum Way, Townfield Lane to Bidston Road
- 73 Travel to Wexford Road / Mere Farm Road
- 74 Grit Mere Farm Road to Farndon Way
- 75 Grit Farndon Way to Townfield Lane
- 76 Travel to Noctorum Way / Wethersfield Road
- 77 Grit Wethersfield Road to Budworth Road / West Road
- 78 Travel to West Road / Westway
- 79 Grit Westway to Noctorum Avenue / Noctorum Way
- 80 Travel to Townfield Lane / Shavington Avenue
- 81 Grit Shavington Avenue to Overton Way
- 82 Grit Overton Way to Holm Lane

FINISH

Route No. 5 Purple

- 1 Travel to Upton Road / Warren Drive
- 2 Grit Upton Road eastward to Lymm Road and grit roundabout
- 3 Grit Lymm Road loop and return to Broadheath Avenue
- 4 Grit Broadheath Avenue to end
- 5 Grit Upton Road from Lymm Road to Eleanor Road
- 6 Grit Eleanor Road to Statham Road
- 7 Grit Statham Road to Edrich Avenue and return to Upton Road
- 8 Grit Upton Road, Park Road North to Laird Street, Birkenhead
- 9 Grit Park Road North, Conway Street from Laird Street to Hamilton Street / Tunnel Approach roundabout
- 10 Grit roundabout and grit Conway Street to Europa Boulevard
- 11 Grit Europa Boulevard to Price Street
- 12 Grit Europa Boulevard to Conway Street
- 13 Travel to Borough Road / Whetstone Lane and turn right
- 14 Grit Whetstone Lane, Atherton Street, Exmouth Street, Watson Street, Rendel Street to Tower Road / Canning Street roundabout
- 15 Turn right and grit Canning Street to Hamilton Street
- 16 Travel around circulatory to Canning Street and grit access slip
- 17 Travel to Canning Street / Shore Road
- 18 Grit Shore Road (including both sides of refuges and building at Hamilton Street end)
- 19 Travel to Cleveland Street / Argyle Street
- 20 Grit Cleveland Street to Corporation Road / Cavendish Street roundabout
- 21 Travel to start of Beaufort Road
- 22 Grit Beaufort Road to Stanley Road / Wallasey Bridge Road roundabout and grit roundabout exiting to Wallasey

- 23 Grit Wallasey Bridge Road to Docks Link roundabout and return to Beaufort Road roundabout
- 24 Grit Stanley Road to St James Church / Laird Street
- 25 Grit Laird Street, Park Road North to Cavendish Street
- 26 Travel to Park Road North / Duke Street
- 27 Grit Duke Street to Dock Road (Grit slip roads)
- 28 Travel to Dock Road / Tower Road roundabout
- 29 Grit Tower Road to Rendel Street and grit roundabout
- 30 Travel to Rendel Street / Corporation Road
- 31 Grit Corporation Road to St James Church
- 32 Travel to Upton Road / Boundary Road and turn left
- 33 Grit Boundary Road, Bidston Road, Talbot Road, Mill Hill, Ingestre Road, Storeton Road to Woodchurch Road
- 34 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Singleton Avenue lights
- 35 Grit Woodchurch Road, Oxton Road from lane separation to Grange Road West / Whetstone Lane
- 36 Travel to Claughton Road / Exmouth Street and turn right
- 37 Grit Claughton Road to Hemingford Street and return to Exmouth Street
- 38 Grit Claughton Road, Park Road South, Park Road West to Park Road North and turn around
- 39 Grit Park Road West to Park Road South / Palm Grove
- 40 Travel to Park Road North / Ashville Road
- 41 Grit Ashville Road (both sides of any refuges) to Park Road West
- 42 Exit to St Davids Road
- 43 Grit St Davids Road to Egerton Road / Forest Road
- 44 Travel to Shrewsbury Road / Tollemache Road and turn to Claughton
- 45 Grit Shrewsbury Road to Upton Road
- 46 Travel to Upton Road / Tollemache Road

- 47 Grit Tollemache Road northwards to St James Road and turn around
- 48 Grit Tollemache Road, Egerton Road to Park Road West
- 49 Travel to Park Road South / Slatey Road
- 50 Grit Slatey Road to Christchurch Road
- 51 Grit Christchurch Road to Rose Mount
- 52 Grit Rose Mount to Ingestre Road
- 53 Travel to Christchurch Road / Palm Hill
- 54 Grit Palm Hill to Shrewsbury Road / Balls Road
- 55 Travel to Shrewsbury Road / Columbia Road
- 56 Grit Columbia Road to Village Road
- 57 Travel to Slatey Road / Devonshire Road
- 58 Grit Devonshire Road westwards, Devonshire Place, Manor Hill to St David Road roundabout
- 59 Travel to Forest Road / St David Road roundabout
- 60 Grit Forest Road southward to Howbeck Road
- 61 Grit Howbeck Road to Bidston Road
- 62 Travel to Bidston Road / Ashburton Road
- 63 Grit Ashburton Road to Tollemache Road
- 64 Travel to Tollemache Road / Shrewsbury Road
- 65 Grit Shrewsbury Road to St Aidans Terrace
- 66 Grit St Aidens Terrace to roundabout
- 67 Travel to Shrewsbury Road / St Aidans Terrace
- 68 Grit Shrewsbury Road, Balls Road, Balls Road East to Borough Road
- 69 Travel to Borough Road / Salisbury Street
- 70 Grit Salisbury Street to Whetstone Lane
- 71 Travel to Whetstone Lane / Grange Road West

- 72 Grit Grange Road West to Cole Street
- 73 Grit Cole Street to Claughton Road
- 74 Return to Grange Road West via Eastbourne Road and turn left
- 75 Grit Grange Road West left filter onto Whetstone Lane / Exmouth Street
- 76 Travel to Claughton Road / Park Road East
- 77 Grit Park Road East, Vittoria Street to Corporation Road
- 78 Travel to Cleveland Street / Park Street
- 79 Grit Park Street, Freeman Street to Rendel Street
- 80 Travel to Cleveland Street / Old Bidston Road
- 81 Grit Old Bidston Road to Cavendish Street / Brassey Street including cul-de-sac section
- 82 Grit Brassey Street to Laird Street including both sides of islands
- 83 Travel to Bidston Road / Vyner Road South
- 84 Grit Vyner Road South to Upton Road
- 85 Grit Vyner Road North to Boundary Road
- 86 Grit Boundary Road to Bidston Village Road
- 87 Grit Bidston Village Road to Hoylake Road
- 88 Grit Valley Road to end
- 89 Return to Bidston Village Road / Boundary Road
- 90 Grit Bidston Village Road to Fender Way
- 91 Grit Fender Way, Warren Drive to Upton Road including both sides of islands
- 92 Travel to Upton Bypass / Manor Drive and turn right
- 93 Grit Manor Drive to Norwich Drive
- 94 Grit whole of Norwich Drive loop and return to Manor Drive
- 95 Grit Manor Drive, Sandbrook Lane to Cherry Tree Road
- 96 Grit Cherry Tree Road to Chapelhill Road

- 97 Grit Chapelhill Road to Stavordale Road
- 98 Grit Stavordale Road to Hoylake Road
- 99 Travel to Hoylake Road / Sandbrook Lane
- 100 Grit Sandbrook Lane to Cherry Tree Road
- 101 Travel to Sandbrook Lane / Croft Drive
- 102 Grit Croft Drive to Upton Road
- 103 Travel to Hoylake Road / Sandbrook Lane
- 104 Grit Sandbrook Lane filter to end of island
- 105 Travel to Glebelands Road
- 106 Grit Glebelands Road to Upton Road

FINISH

Route No. 6 Yellow

- 1 Travel to Birkenhead Road / Dock Road
- 2 Grit Birkenhead Road to Victoria Place
- 3 Grit Ferry terminal circulatory
- 4 Grit Church Road, Brighton Street, King Street, Seabank Road, Rowson Street, to Kings Parade / Marine Promenade
- 5 Grit Marine Promenade to end and return
- 6 Grit Kings Parade to Atherton Street
- 7 Grit Atherton Street to St Georges Mount
- 8 Travel to Kings Parade promenade / Portland Street
- 9 Grit Portland Street to Albion Street
- 10 Grit Albion Street to Rowson Street
- 11 Travel to Rowson Street / Victoria Road
- 12 Grit Victoria Road to roundabout and return
- 13 Travel to Kings Parade / Atherton Street
- 14 Grit Kings Parade, Harrison Drive to junction Bayswater Road and turn around (NB Grit all roundabouts)
- 15 Grit Harrison Drive, Kings Parade to Marine Promenade / Rowson Street
- 16 Travel to Rowson Street / Victoria Road
- 17 Grit Victoria Road, Warren Drive to Grove Road and grit roundabout
- 18 Grit Grove Road to Harrison Drive
- 19 Grit Harrison Drive to Bayswater Road
- 20 Travel to Harrison Drive / Grove Road
- 21 Grit Wallasey Village to Breck Road / St Hilary Brow roundabout and turn left
- 22 Grit St Hilary Brow, Wallasey Road, Liscard Village to Liscard Crescent
- 23 Grit Liscard Crescent to Mill Lane

- 24 Grit Mill Lane to St Albans Road
- 25 Grit St Albans Road to Wallasey Road
- 26 Travel to Liscard Crescent and grit bus layby
- 27 Travel to Mill Lane / St Albans Road
- 28 Grit Mill Lane to Victoria Hospital
- 29 Grit Hospital Road
- 30 Grit Mill Lane, Poulton Bridge Road to Dock Road
- 31 Grit roundabout
- 32 Grit Poulton Bridge Road to Breck Road
- 33 Grit Breck Road to St Hilary Brow
- 34 Travel to Wallasey Village / Sandy Lane
- 35 Grit Sandy Lane to Claremount Road
- 36 Grit Claremount Road to St Hilary Brow
- 37 Travel to Claremount Road / Broadway Avenue
- 38 Grit Broadway Avenue to Belvidere Road
- 39 Travel to Claremount Road / Broadway
- 40 Grit Broadway, St Georges Road to Sandy Lane
- 41 Travel to Sandy Lane / Claremount Road
- 42 Grit Claremount Road to Grove Road
- 43 Travel to Grove Road / Rolleston Drive lights and turn right
- 44 Grit Rolleston Drive, Belvidere Road, Torrington Road, Marlowe Road, Woodstock Road, Oxtan Road, Gorse Lane to roundabout
- 45 Grit roundabout and northbound slip and return to roundabout
- 46 Grit Gorse Lane to Dock Road and back up to roundabout
- 47 Travel to Dock Road / Oakdale Road
- 48 Grit Oakdale Road to Vernon Avenue
- 49 Grit Vernon Avenue to Wheatland Lane

- 50 Travel to Wheatland Lane / St Pauls Road
- 51 Grit St Pauls Road to Church Road
- 52 Travel to Brighton Street / Borough Road
- 53 Grit Borough Road to Poulton Road
- 54 Grit Poulton Road to Mainwaring Road
- 55 Grit Mainwaring Road to Liscard Road
- 56 Grit Liscard Road to Mill Lane
- 57 Travel to Liscard Village / Liscard Crescent lights
- 58 Grit Liscard Village, Rake Lane, Rowson Street to Seabank Road
- 59 Travel to Albion Street / Dudley Road
- 60 Grit Dudley Road to Hamilton Road and turn right
- 61 Grit Hamilton Road to Mount Road and turn left
- 62 Grit Mount Road, Kirkway, Earlston Road, Penkett Road to Steele Avenue
- 63 Grit Steele Avenue to Seabank Road
- 64 Cross to Holland Road and grit to Magazine Brow
- 65 Grit Magazine Brow, Magazine Lane to Rake Lane / Rowson Street
- 66 Cross to Mount Pleasant Road and grit to Hose Side Road
- 67 Grit Hose Side Road, to Warren Drive roundabout
- 68 Travel to Hose Side Road / Seaview Road
- 69 Grit Seaview Road to Earlston Road
- 70 Grit Earlston Road to Kirkway
- 71 Return to Seaview Road / Earlston Road
- 72 Grit Seaview Road to Wallasey Road / Liscard Village
- 73 Travel to Liscard Village / Manor Road
- 74 Grit Manor Road to Seabank Road

- 75 Travel to Seabank Road / Trafalgar Road
- 76 Grit Trafalgar Road to Stringhey Road
- 77 Grit Stringhey Road, Penkett Road to Zig Zag Road / Steele Avenue
- 78 Grit Zig Zag Road to Rake Lane and return to Withens Lane
- 79 Grit Withens Lane to Martins Lane / Serpentine Road
- 80 Grit Serpentine Road to Liscard Road
- 81 Travel to Liscard Road / Martins Lane
- 82 Grit Martins Lane to Withens Lane (grit both sides of island)
- 83 Travel to Manor Road / Grosvenor Street
- 84 Grit Grosvenor Street to Martins Lane
- 85 Travel to Trafalgar Road / Serpentine Road
- 86 Grit Trafalgar Road to Stringhey Road
- 87 Travel to Church Street / Brighton Street
- 88 Grit Church Street to Liscard Road (grit both sides of island) and turn left
- 89 Turn 1st right to Parkside
- 90 Grit Parkside, Hampstead Road to Poulton Road
- 91 Travel to Poulton Road / Brentwood Street / Rycroft Road
- 92 Grit Rycroft Road to Gorsedale Road and turn left
- 93 Grit Gorsedale Road to Oakdale Road
- 94 Grit Oakdale Road to Vernon Avenue

FINISH

Route No. 7 Lime

- 1 Travel to Moreton Road / Royden Road, Upton
- 2 Grit Royden Road to Upton Bypass and travel to Upton Bypass / Greasby Road roundabout
- 3 Grit Greasby Road, Frankby Road, Black Horse Hill to Column Road
- 4 Travel to Grange Road / Dee Lane
- 5 Grit Dee Lane to end and return to Dee Lane / Banks Road
- 6 Grit Banks Road to Sandy Lane
- 7 Grit Sandy Lane to Village Road / Caldby Road
- 8 Grit Village Road to St Bridgets Lane
- 9 Grit St Bridgets Lane / Ludlow Drive to Sandy Lane
- 10 Travel to Village Road / Caldby Road
- 11 Grit Caldby Road to Column Road / Montgomery Hill roundabout
- 12 Grit Montgomery Hill to Hillbark Road and turn left
- 13 Grit Hillbark Road to Frankby Road
- 14 Travel to Frankby Road / Greasby Road lights
- 15 Grit Greasby Road southwards to Arrowe Road
- 16 Grit Arrowe Road to Rigby Drive
- 17 Grit Rigby Drive to school and return
- 18 Grit Arrowe Road, Arrowe Brook Road to Arrowe Park Road and turn
- 19 Grit Arrowe Brook Road to Arrowe Brook Lane
- 20 Grit Arrowe Brook Lane to Mill Hill Road roundabout
- 21 Grit Mill Hill Road to Thingwall Road
- 22 Travel to Thurstaston Road / Manor Road, Irby
- 23 Grit Manor Road to Mill Hill Road
- 24 Travel to Mill Hill Road / Mill Lane
- 25 Grit Mill Lane to Greasby Road

- 26 Travel to Greasby Road / Well Lane
- 27 Grit Well Lane to Frankby Road roundabout and grit roundabout
- 28 Travel to Mill Hill Road / Hillbark Road
- 29 Grit Hillbark Road to Montgomery Hill
- 30 Travel to Column Road / Grange Cross Lane
- 31 Grit Grange Cross Lane to Newton Park Road
- 32 Cross to Ennisdale Drive
- 33 Grit Ennisdale Drive to Black Horse Hill
- 34 Travel to Frankby Road / Newton Cross Lane
- 35 Grit Newton Cross Lane to Newton Park Road
- 36 Grit Newton Park Road, Grammar School Lane to Column Road and turn right
- 37 Travel to Column Road / Village Road
- 38 Grit Village Road to St Bridgets Lane
- 39 Travel to Sandy Lane / Hilbre Road
- 40 Grit Hilbre Road, Westbourne Road to Grange Road
- 41 Travel to Grange Road / Bridge Road
- 42 Grit Bridge Road to Anglesey Road / Orrysdale Road
- 43 Grit Anglesey Road, Greenbank Road to Saughall Massie Road / Black Horse Hill
- 44 Grit Saughall Massie Road to end of bypass and turn left to Saughall Road
- 45 Grit Saughall Road to Hoylake Road
- 46 Cross to Millhouse Lane and grit to 1st Town Meadow Lane junction on right hand side
- 47 Grit Town Meadow Lane to Millhouse Lane and turn left
- 48 Grit Millhouse Lane to Town Meadow Lane junction

- 49 Travel to Birkenhead Road / Heron Road roundabout and grit roundabout
- 50 Grit Heron Road, Pump Lane to Frankby Road
- 51 Travel to Greasby Road / Arrowse Road and turn right
- 52 Grit Greasby Road to Frankby Road
- 53 Travel to Saughall Massie Road via Greasby Road, Upton Bypass
- 54 Grit Saughall Massie Road from Upton Bypass to Saughall Massie Bypass
- 55 Turn 1st right to West Kirby Road and grit to Saughall Road
- 56 Travel to Saughall Road / Acton Lane
- 57 Grit Acton Lane to Hoylake Road
- 58 Cross to Bermuda Road and grit to Town Meadow Lane
- 59 Grit Town Meadow Lane to Maryland Lane
- 60 Grit Maryland Lane to Pasture Road
- 61 Travel to Hoylake Road / Borrowdale Road
- 62 Grit Borrowdale Road, Overchurch Road to Saughall Massie Road
- 63 Travel to Upton Bypass / Old Greasby Road roundabout
- 64 Grit Old Greasby Road to Moreton Road
- 65 Grit Moreton Road to Upton Village lights
- 66 Continue and grit The Village, Ford Road to Manor Drive
- 67 Travel to Ford Road / Salacre Lane
- 68 Grit Salacre Lane to Upton Bypass
- 69 Cross to Houghton Road
- 70 Grit Houghton Road to end
- 71 Travel to Meadow Crescent / Pool Lane
- 72 Grit Pool Lane to Arrowse Park Road
- 73 Return to Pool Lane / Meadow Crescent

- 74 Grit Meadow Crescent to Home Farm Road
- 75 Grit Home Farm Road to New Hey Road
- 76 Grit New Hey Road to Houghton Road
- 77 Travel to Houghton Road / Pemberton Road
- 78 Grit Pemberton Road to Home Farm Road
- 79 Travel to New Hey Road / Carr Bridge Road
- 80 Grit Carr Bridge Road to New Hey Road

FINISH

Route No. 8 Orange

- 1 Travel to New Chester Road / St Pauls Road
- 2 Grit New Chester Road from Bypass roundabout to Bolton Road roundabout, New Ferry and grit exit to Bolton Road
- 3 Grit Bolton Road to Greendale Road and turn left
- 4 Grit Greendale Road to Wood Street
- 5 Grit Wood Street to The Ginnel
- 6 Grit The Ginnel to Bolton Road
- 7 Travel to Bolton Road / Greendale Road and turn left and right to Ellens Lane
- 8 Grit Ellens Lane to Bromborough Road and turn left
- 9 Grit Bromborough Road to Spital Road roundabout and turn right
- 10 Travel to Spital Road / Church Road
- 11 Grit Church Road, The Village to Civic Way
- 12 Grit Civic Way to Church Road and turn left and 1st right to The Wiend
- 13 Grit The Wiend to Bromborough Road and turn left
- 14 Grit Bromborough Road to The Village and turn right
- 15 Grit The Village, Bebington Road to Old Chester Road / Bebington station
- 16 Grit Old Chester Road including The Oval One Way road and Oval car park to Grove Road, Rock Ferry
- 17 Grit Grove Road to Bedford Road
- 18 Travel to Bedford Road / Highfield Road
- 19 Grit Highfield Road to Rock Lane West
- 20 Travel to Old Chester Road / Grove Road
- 21 Grit Old Chester Road, Queen Street, to Holt Hill
- 22 Grit Holt Hill to Church Road and turn left
- 23 Grit Church Road, Bebington Road, Old Chester Road to Bebington station lights and turn right

- 24 Travel to The Village / Heath Road
- 25 Grit Heath Road, Teehey Lane, Kings Road, Borough Road to Singleton Avenue
- 26 Travel to Church Road / Mount Road / Bebington Road roundabout
- 27 Grit Mount Road, The Wiend to Borough Road
- 28 Cross to Thornton Road
- 29 Grit Thornton Road to Mount Road and turn right
- 30 Travel to Mount Road / Storeton Road lights and turn right
- 31 Grit Mount Road, Bedford Drive to Bedford Avenue roundabout and turn right
- 32 Travel to next right and grit Hesketh Avenue to Borough Road
- 33 Travel to Bebington Road / Bedford Drive roundabout and exit to Bedford Avenue
- 34 Grit Bedford Avenue, Bedford Road to Mersey Lane South
- 35 Grit Mersey Lane South to Rock Lane East
- 36 Grit Rock Lane East to New Chester Road
- 37 Cross to Rock Lane West and grit to Old Chester Road
- 38 Travel to Old Chester Road / Highfield South
- 39 Grit Highfield South to Rock Lane West and turn left
- 40 Travel to Kings Lane lights
- 41 Grit Kings Lane, Broadway to Mount Road and turn left
- 42 Travel to Mount Road / Village Road
- 43 Grit Village Road to Kings Road and turn left
- 44 Travel to Town Lane
- 45 Grit Town Lane to Old Chester Road and turn right
- 46 Travel to Old Chester Road / Bebington Road lights and turn left
- 47 Grit Bebington Road to Boundary Road

- 48 Grit Boundary Road to New Chester Road and turn left
 - 49 Travel to New Chester Road / New Ferry Road
 - 50 Grit New Ferry Road to The Dell
 - 51 Grit The Dell to Proctor Road
 - 52 Grit Proctor Road to New Chester Road
 - 53 Travel to Bromborough Road / Quarry Road East, Bebington
 - 54 Grit Quarry Road East to Church Road
 - 55 Travel to Dibbins Hey / Poulton Road, Spital
 - 56 Grit Dibbins Hey to Venables Drive
 - 57 Grit Venables Drive to Warren Hey
 - 58 Grit Warren Hey to Poulton Road
 - 59 Cross to Poulton Royd Drive
 - 60 Grit Poulton Royd Drive to Poulton Road
 - 61 Travel to Church Road / Stanton Road
 - 62 Grit Stanton Road to Peter Prices Lane
 - 63 Grit Peter Prices Lane to Brackenwood Road
 - 64 Grit Brackenwood Road to Mount Road and return to Peter Prices Lane junction
 - 65 Grit Brackenwood Road to Bracken Lane
 - 66 Travel to Heath Road / Pulford Road
 - 67 Grit Pulford Road / Higher Bebington Road to Teehey Lane
 - 68 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Singleton Avenue
 - 69 Grit Woodchurch Road to Durley Drive
- FINISH

Route No. 9 Pink

- 1 Travel to Arrowe Park Road / Thingwall Road East roundabout
- 2 Grit Thingwall Road East, Pensby Road to Telegraph Road
- 3 Cross and grit The Mount to Dawstone Road
- 4 Grit Dawstone Road, Well Lane to Telegraph Road
- 6 Travel to Dawstone Road / Baskervyle Road
- 7 Grit Baskervyle Road to Gayton Road and turn left
- 8 Grit Gayton Road to Cottage Lane
- 9 Grit Cottage Lane to Lilleyfield
- 10 Grit Lilleyfield to Long Meadow
- 11 Grit Long Meadow to Cottage Lane
- 12 Travel to Well Lane / Gayton Road
- 13 Grit Well Lane to Gayton Lane
- 14 Grit Gayton Lane to Dee Park Road
- 15 Grit Dee Park Road, Latchford Road to Gayton Parkway
- 16 Grit Gayton Parkway to Boathouse Lane
- 17 Travel to Chester Road / Gayton Lane
- 18 Grit Gayton Lane to Dee Park Road
- 19 Travel to Gayton Lane / Well Lane
- 20 Grit Well Lane to Dawstone Road
- 21 Travel to Gayton Road / Baskervyle Road
- 22 Grit Gayton Road to Station Road / Wallrake
- 23 Grit Station Road to end and return
- 24 Grit Wallrake to Dawstone Road and travel to Dawstone Road / Hillside Road
- 25 Grit Hillside Road to Telegraph Road

- 26 Travel to Gayton Road / Village Road
- 27 Grit Village Road, Thurstaston Road to Telegraph Road and turn left
- 28 Turn 1st right to Quarry Road East and grit to Irby Road
- 29 Return to Telegraph Road / Quarry Road West
- 30 Grit Quarry Road West to Oldfield Road and turn right
- 31 Grit Oldfield Road to Oldfield Drive
- 32 Return to Oldfield Road / Quarry Road West
- 33 Grit Oldfield Road to Thurstaston Road
- 34 Travel to Thurstaston Road / Delavor Road
- 35 Grit Delavor Road to Broad Lane
- 36 Grit Broad Lane to Banks Road
- 37 Grit Banks Road to end
- 38 Travel to Delavor Road / Pipers Lane
- 39 Grit Pipers Lane to Redstone Drive
- 40 Grit Redstone Drive to Oldfield Drive
- 41 Travel to Thurstaston Road / Dee View Road
- 42 Grit Dee View Road to Dawstone Road / Rocky Lane
- 43 Grit Rocky Lane to Telegraph Road
- 44 Travel to Telegraph Road / Downham Road South
- 45 Grit Downham Road South to Milner Road
- 46 Grit Milner Road to Barnston Road
- 47 Return to Milner Road / Whitfield Lane
- 48 Grit Whitfield Lane to Pensby Road
- 49 Travel to Pensby Road / Irby Road
- 50 Grit Irby Road, Thurstaston Road to Telegraph Road
- 51 Cross and grit Station Road to end and return to Church Lane

- 52 Grit Church Lane to Telegraph Road
- 53 Travel to Thurstaston Road / Thingwall Road
- 54 Grit Thingwall Road / Thingwall Road East to Pensby Road
- 55 Travel to Barnston Road / Sparks Lane
- 56 Grit Sparks Lane to Pensby Road
- 57 Travel to Pensby Road / Whaley Lane
- 58 Grit Whaley Lane to Thingwall Road
- 59 Travel to Pensby Road / Fishers Lane
- 60 Grit Fishers Lane to Irby Road and turn left
- 61 Travel to Irby Road / Kylemore Drive
- 62 Grit Kylemore Drive to Nelson Drive
- 63 Grit Nelson Drive to Fishers Lane
- 64 Travel to Fishers Lane / Kentmere Drive
- 65 Grit Kentmere Drive to Old Wood Road and turn right
- 66 Grit Old Wood Road to Portal Road
- 67 Grit Portal Road to Nelson Drive and turn left
- 68 Travel to Nelson Drive / Kylemore Drive and turn left
- 69 Grit Kylemore Drive to Old Wood Road and turn left
- 70 Grit Old Wood Road to Fishers Lane
- 71 Return to Kylemore Drive / Old Wood Road
- 72 Grit Kylemore Drive to Pensby Road
- 73 Travel to Pensby Road / Gills Lane
- 74 Grit Gills Lane to Barnston Road

FINISH

Route No. 10 Blue

- 1 Travel to Brimstage Road / Clatterbridge Road roundabout
- 2 Grit Brimstage Road, Spital Road from roundabout to Croft Avenue East
- 3 Grit Croft Avenue East to New Chester Road
- 4 Cross and grit Caldbeck Road to Stadium Road and turn
- 5 Grit Caldbeck Road to Welton Road
- 6 Grit Welton Road loop back to Caldbeck Road and grit to New Chester Road
- 7 Travel to Croft Avenue East / Spital Road and turn left
- 8 Grit Spital Road to Mark Rake
- 9 Grit Mark Rake to Palatine Road
- 10 Grit Palatine Road to The Rake
- 11 Grit The Rake to Ecclestone Road
- 12 Grit Ecclestone Road to Palatine Road
- 13 Grit Palatine Road to Mark Rake
- 14 Travel to Mark Rake / Croft Lane
- 15 Grit Croft Lane to Croft Avenue
- 16 Grit Croft Avenue to Spital Road
- 17 Travel to The Rake / Ashfield Road
- 18 Grit Ashfield Road to Acre Lane
- 19 Grit Acre Lane to Beechwood Road
- 20 Grit Beechwood Road to The Rake
- 21 Grit The Rake from Palatine Road / Valley Road to Bromborough Village Road (grit both sides of monument) and return to The Rake / Allport Lane (2nd left)
- 22 Grit Allport Lane to shops (1st left)
- 23 Grit Allport Lane shops (both sides of refuges) to The Rake

- 24 Travel to Allport Lane (shops) junction
- 25 Grit Allport Lane to Acre Lane
- 26 Grit Acre Lane to Dawpool Drive
- 27 Grit Dawpool Drive to Allport Road
- 28 Grit Allport Road, Raby Hall Road, Raby Mere Road to Willaston Road
- 29 Travel to Allport Road / Dibbinsdale Road
- 30 Grit Dibbinsdale Road, Poulton Road to Poulton Hall Road
- 31 Travel to Poulton Hall Road / Blakeley Road
- 32 Grit Blakeley Road to Raby Hall Road
- 33 Travel to Allport Road / Dawpool Drive
- 34 Grit Allport Road to New Chester Road and turn left
- 35 Travel to New Chester Road / Bromborough Village Road
- 36 Grit Bromborough Village Road to Mark Rake
- 37 Travel to Travel to Allport Lane / Acre Lane
- 38 Grit Allport Lane to Allport Road
- 39 Cross to Bridle Road
- 40 Grit Bridle Road to New Chester Road (both sides at refuges) and turn right
- 41 Travel to M53 junction 5 Hooton and exit to North Road, Eastham
- 42 Grit North Road to Bankfields Drive
- 43 Grit Bankfields Drive to Powerhouse Road
- 44 Travel to New Chester Road / Eastham Village Road (southern end)
- 45 Grit Eastham Village Road to Stanley Lane
- 46 Grit Stanley Lane to New Chester Road
- 47 Return to Eastham Village Road / Rivacre Road
- 48 Grit Rivacre Road to boundary (face of motorway flyover)
- 49 Return to Eastham Village Road / Stanley Lane

- 50 Grit Eastham Village Road / Ferry Road to end
- 51 Travel to New Chester Road / Eastham Rake
- 52 Grit Eastham Rake to motorway bridge and return to Brookhurst Avenue
- 53 Grit Brookhurst Avenue to Allport Road and turn right
- 54 Travel to Allport Road / Plymyard Avenue
- 55 Grit Plymyard Avenue to Eastham Rake
- 56 Travel to Plymyard Avenue / Lyndale Avenue
- 57 Grit Lyndale Avenue to Bridle Road
- 58 Travel to Eastham Rake / Mill Park Drive (western end)
- 59 Grit Mill Park Drive to Eastham Rake
- 60 Travel to New Chester Road / Heygarth Road
- 61 Grit Heygarth Road to Plymyard Avenue
- 62 Travel to Allport Road / Morland Avenue
- 63 Grit Morland Road to Raeburn Avenue
- 64 Grit Raeburn Avenue to Heygarth Road
- 65 Travel to New Chester Road / Old Hall Road
- 66 Grit Old Hall Road to Stadium Road
- 67 Grit Stadium Road to Thermal Road
- 68 Grit Thermal Road to Dock Road South and turn right
- 69 Grit Dock Road South to end and return to Stadium Road
- 70 Grit Dock Road South to Port Causeway
- 71 Grit Port Causeway to Thermal Road end
- 72 Return to Dock Road South / Port Causeway
- 73 Grit Port Causeway to New Chester Road
- 74 Travel to New Chester Road / Pool Lane

- 75 Grit Pool Lane to South View
- 76 Return to Old Court House Road / Pool Lane
- 77 Grit Old Court House Road to Thermal Road
- 78 Grit Thermal Road, Stadium Road to Old Hall Road / Riverwood Road
- 79 Grit Riverwood Road to Riverview Road
- 80 Grit Riverview Road to Commercial Road
- 81 Grit Commercial Road to Riverbank Road
- 82 Grit Riverbank Road to Thermal Road
- 83 Travel to Stadium Road / Commercial Road
- 84 Grit Commercial Road to Riverview Road
- 85 Turn and grit other side of island at junction of Stadium Road
- 86 Travel to Plantation Road / Riverview Road
- 87 Grit Plantation Road to Stadium Road / Old Hall Road
- 88 Travel to Plantation Road / Power Road
- 89 Grit Power Road to Riverwood Road

FINISH

Route No. 11

- 1 Travel to New Chester Road / Tunnel Road
- 2 Grit Tunnel Road approach to tunnel and exit via Borough Road East
- 3 Travel to Borough Road tunnel approach flyover
- 4 Grit tunnel approach flyover to portal area
- 5 Grit portal area including areas beyond toll booths (Tunnel Police assistance required)
- 6 Grit tunnel exit flyover to Borough Road
- 7 Travel to Woodside Ferry Approach
- 8 Grit bus station circulatory roads
- 9 Travel to Conway Street bus station
- 10 Grit left side and loop back to Conway Street
- 11 Grit right side of bus station and Claughton Road exit
- 12 Grit Claughton Road to Hemingford Street
- 13 Grit Hemingford Street
- 14 Return to bus station left side
- 15 Grit bus station exit
- 16 Grit Market Service Road
- 17 Travel to Argyle Street / Price Street
- 18 Grit Price Street to Corporation Road
- 19 Travel to Hoylake Road / Gautby Road
- 20 Grit Gautby Road to Stanley Road
- 21 Travel to Cavendish Street / Beckwith Street
- 22 Grit Cavendish Street to Park Road North
- 23 Travel to Beckwith Street / Duke Street
- 24 Grit Beckwith Street to Cavendish Street

- 25 Travel to Park Road South / Palm Grove
- 26 Grit Palm Grove to Balls Road
- 27 Travel to Christchurch Road / Bessborough Road
- 28 Grit Bessborough Road to Woodchurch Road

FINISH

Mini Gritter Route

- 1 Travel to Woodchurch Road / Holmlands Drive, Prenton
- 2 Grit Holmlands Drive and Christleton Close to end
- 3 Return to Holmlands Drive / Holmlands Way
- 4 Grit Holmlands Way to Oulton Close
- 5 Return to Holmlands Drive / Prestbury Avenue
- 6 Grit Prestbury Avenue from Holmlands Drive to Holmlands Drive
- 7 Travel to Waterpark Road / Northwood Drive, Prenton
- 8 Grit Northwood Road to Prenton Village Road
- 9 Travel to Storeton Road / Fairview Road, Oxtun
- 10 Grit Fairview Road to Bennetts Hill

- 11 Travel to Mount Road / Mill Road, Bebington
- 12 Grit Mill Road to Village Road
- 13 Travel to Kings Road / Well Lane
- 14 Grit Well Lane to Mill Road
- 15 Travel to Mill Road / Linkside
- 16 Grit Linkside to Kings Road
- 17 Travel to Kings Road / Princes Boulevard
- 18 Grit Princes Boulevard to Kings Lane
- 19 Travel to Mill Park Drive / Crosthwaite Avenue, Eastham
- 20 Grit Crosthwaite Avenue to end and turn right
- 21 Grit Thornleigh Avenue to Mill Park Drive

- 22 Travel to Thurstaston Road / School Lane, Thurstaston
- 23 Grit School Lane to end

- 24 Travel M53 to junction 2, Moreton
- 25 Grit motorway from bottom of exit slip road to Upton Bypass roundabout
- 26 Travel around roundabout and exit to motorway
- 27 Grit from roundabout to bottom of entrance slip road

- 28 Travel to Worcester Road / Observatory Road, Bidston
- 29 Grit Observatory Road to Boundary Road

- 30 Travel to Seabank Road / Dalmorton Road, New Brighton
- 31 Grit Dalmorton Road to end and return
- 32 Travel to Seabank Road / Vaughan Road
- 33 Grit Vaughan Road to end and travel to Vaughan Road / Maitland Road
- 34 Grit Maitland Road to Dalmorton Road
- 35 Travel to Virginia Road / Waterloo Road
- 36 Grit Waterloo Road to Victoria Road

This page is intentionally left blank

EXISTING GRIT BIN LOCATIONS BY DISTRICT

BARNSTON

25 Whitfield Lane / Downham Road North (o/s school)

BEBINGTON

6 Bentfield Gardens, Bebington
22 Derwent Road / Shallmarsh Road, Bebington
23 Derwent Road, Bebington (top of)
44 Mount Avenue, Bebington
45 Mountwood Road / Mount Road, Bebington
48 Oakridge Road / Birchridge Close, Bebington
50 Orchard Way/Well Lane, Bebington
64 School Lane / Shallmarsh Road, Bebington
70 Teehey Lane / Roland Avenue, Bebington
72 Top of Derwent Road, Bebington

BIDSTON

80 Westwood Road, Bidston

BIRKENHEAD

83 Woodside Bus Terminus, Birkenhead

BROMBOROUGH

10 Bridle Park (o/s 5), Bromborough

CALDY

15 Caldby Road / Kings Drive, Caldby
36 Kings Drive / Hairpin Bend, Caldby
37 Kings Drive / Thorsway, Caldby
67 Stonehey Drive / Mount Road, Caldby

CLATTERBRIDGE

56 Raby Hall Road / Foxes Hill, Clatterbridge

CLAUGHTON

- 24 Devisdale Grove, Claughton
- 27 Eleanor Road / Statham Road, Bidston
- 60 Rivington Avenue / Pleasington Drive, Claughton

GREASBY

- 20 Coombe Road / Thingwall Road, Greasby
- 40 Martin Close / Sandy Lane, Greasby

HESWALL

- 1 Acre Lane, Heswall
- 2 Anthonys Way / Hillside Road, Heswall
- 9 Brackenside / Grange Road, Heswall
- 17 Circular Drive / Half way up, Heswall
- 28 Erica Court / Quarry Road East, Heswall
- 43 Morland Close / South Drive, Heswall
- 49 Oldfield Drive / Greenfield Lane 2 No. Heswall
- 54 Pensby Road / Poll Hill Road / Florence Avenue, Heswall
- 57 Radnor Avenue / Pensby Road, Heswall
- 58 Redstone Road / Ferns Close, Heswall
- 63 School Hill / Half way down, Heswall
- 69 Teals Way / Gulls Way, Heswall
- 71 The Mount / Dee View Road, Heswall
- 73 Tower Road South / Pensby Road, Heswall
- 75 Village Road, Heswall
- 78 Warren Way / Hatton Close, Heswall
- 81 Whitfield Lane / Downham Road North o/s Heswall Primary School

HOYLAKE

- 7 Birkenhead Road / Cottage Hospital, Hoylake
- 46 North Parade / Lifeboat Station, Hoylake
- 65 Shaws Drive / Birkenhead Road, Hoylake

LISCARD

- 11 Broadway / Claremount Road, Liscard
- 12 Buckingham Road / Breck Road, Liscard
- 19 Cliff Road / Breck Road, Liscard

MORETON

52 Pasture Road Bridge, Moreton

NEW BRIGHTON

21 Dalmorton Road / Maitland Road, New Brighton
26 Egremont Promenade / Lincoln Drive, New Brighton
39 Magazine Promenade / Hertford Drive, New Brighton
55 Portland Street / Albion Street, New Brighton
62 Rowson Street / St James Road, New Brighton
74 Vaughan Road / Maitland Road, New Brighton
76 Virginia Road Bus Terminus, New Brighton

NOCTORUM

79 Wendover Close (top of), Noctorum

OXTON

34 Holm Lane / Ingestre Road (school), Oxton
47 Nursery Close, Oxton (bottom)
51 Oulton Close, Oxton o/s 86/88
59 Ringwood, Oxton
68 Tabley Close/Holm Lane, Oxton

PENSBY

38 Kylemore Drive / Hillfield Drive, Pensby

PRENTON

14 Burrell Close, Prenton top
14a Burrell Close, Prenton bottom
18 Clee Hill Road, Prenton
29 Fairview Road / Bennetts Hill, Prenton
41 Mendip Road / Storeton Road, Prenton
61 Roman Road / Prenton Dell Road, Prenton
82 Woodchurch Road (steps to footbridge), Prenton

RABY MERE

8 Blakeley Rd/Raby Drive, Raby Mere
42 Mere Avenue, Raby Mere (o/s 32 in grass verge)

THINGWALL

4 Barnston Road / Fox and Hounds, Thingwall

TRANMERE

32 Holborn Hill / Old Chester Road, Tranmere
33 Holborn Hill / Olive Mount, Tranmere
35 Holt Road / Old Chester Road, Tranmere
53 Pearson Road / Holt Road, Tranmere
66 Sidney Road / Old Chester Road, Tranmere

WALLASEY

77 Wallacre Road, Wallasey

WEST KIRBY

3 Banks Road / Dee Lane, West Kirby (seating area)
5 Beacon Drive / Hill, West Kirby
13 Burlingham Avenue / Croome Drive, West Kirby
16 Caldly Road / Melloncroft Drive, West Kirby
30 Gilroy Road, West Kirby
31 Grange Hill / Darmonds Green, West Kirby

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

CHANGE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT – BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Cabinet on 22 July 2010 agreed a report outlining revised governance and programme management arrangements for the change programme. This report details the budget virements to enable the previous report to be implemented.

2. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1. The functions of the Change Team have transferred from the Director of Finance to the Director of Technical Services with the exception of the following functions which remain with the Director of Finance:-
 - a. Implementation of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and Geographical Information System (LLPG/GIS).
 - b. Census 2011.

This transfer involves seven staff and a budget of £200,800 for 2010-11 and £300,800 in a full year.

- 2.2. Previously the Assurance function accounted for the majority of the time of a senior manager in the Change Team. This post has been transferred to the Director of Technical Services. It is proposed that the involvement of Internal Audit in the change programme should be enhanced. With an increased involvement from senior management in Internal Audit the work could be undertaken by a Principal Auditor PO2-6 (£30,851-£34,549). This post could be funded from the Efficiency Investment Budget at a total cost of £42,800.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

4. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. There are none arising directly from this report.

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

28 SEPTEMBER 2010

REFERRALS TO CABINET

24 CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING AND ADULTS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

The Director of Adult Social Services presented his report which had been considered by the Cabinet on 2 September 2010 (minute 109 refers) in relation to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Report, following its Service Inspection of Adult Social Care undertaken in May 2010. The focus of the review had been on safeguarding adults, making a positive contribution for adults with a learning disability and increased choice and control for adults with a learning disability.

He commented that the CQC report had criticised the Council's performance. The report had concluded that the Council was performing poorly in safeguarding adults and in supporting adults with a learning disability to have increased choice and control. The report had also concluded that the Council was performing adequately in supporting adults with a learning disability to make a positive contribution. Lastly, the CQC had concluded that the Council's capacity to improve was uncertain.

The Director outlined the key findings from the report and indicated that it contained a number of recommendations for the Council to improve. Those recommendations had been incorporated into a robust improvement plan that had been approved by the Cabinet and submitted to the CQC. The Director had been instructed to present a further report to the 14 October 2010 Cabinet, to include the timetable required to deliver the improvements set out in the second, revised improvement plan.

Members expressed their concern with regard to the findings of the CQC report and sought assurance that measures were now in place to ensure that the significant risks identified were being addressed. The Director stated that in response to the previous 'Red Flag' related to safeguarding adults, there had been a fundamental review of how performance data was collected. Data quality was now as good as it had ever been and this had been acknowledged by the CQC. However, he acknowledged that the improvements made were recent and the CQC wanted to see that the changes had bedded in. In response to a question from a Member, the Director commented that the Department had worked closely with Internal Audit with regard to the key components of the improvement plan.

The Director indicated that the improved governance arrangements put in place would supplement the usual management arrangements and would ensure that progress was tightly monitored to ensure improvement in all areas within the timescales set out in the plan. He stated that there was a need to prioritise work within DASS to ensure compliance with the Improvement Plan. The Director also referred to engaging with partners to help support delivery of the Improvement Plan.

The Chair asked whether work was being undertaken to change things culturally within DASS. The Director confirmed that this was the case, particularly in relation to improving skills and competencies and ensuring that mechanisms were in place to provide support to managers and frontline staff working with vulnerable adults and adults with learning difficulties. The Director expressed his appreciation of the support DASS had received from Corporate HR in this work.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted.**
- (2) That the Cabinet be advised to receive a report to each meeting in relation to progress to date against the actions contained within the improvement plan.**
- (3) That an update report be presented to the January 2011 meeting of the Committee.**

25 PROGRESS REPORT ON REIMBURSEMENT IN RELATION TO PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT 1998 (PIDA)

Further to minute 95 (24 March 2010), the Director of Adult Social Services provided an update on progress in the implementation of reimbursement to certain residents and former residents of Bermuda Road, Curlew Way and Edgehill Road supported living establishments in Moreton, following the agreement of the Cabinet (minute 256 (14 January 2010) refers) to the recommendations of this Committee.

The Director reported that of the sixteen individuals, who had been identified as eligible for a payment, four were now deceased and reimbursement payments had been made to their next of kin. Each of the remaining twelve people had been provided with an independent advocate, ten with Wirral Mind, one with Mencap and one with Advocacy in Wirral. He reported that a task force had met on a regular basis since February 2010 in order to review progress with advocates on individual cases and to discuss any issues. Those meetings were attended by advocates, Weightmans Solicitors and Council staff (including officers from finance, welfare benefits and operational areas). In response to a comment from the Chair, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management confirmed that although Weightmans Solicitors had been appointed to represent the Council, their attendance was to ensure that the reimbursement process was carried out in a proper and lawful manner. The Council had accepted that it was liable and the role of Weightmans was non-adversarial and intended to be supportive.

The Director of Adult Social Services reported that, in May 2010, a letter had been received from the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG), who had been made aware of the proposed reimbursements and had identified potential safeguarding concerns in relation to substantial sums of money being paid to vulnerable adults who may not have the capacity to make their own decisions. The OPG had advised that capacity assessments should be completed in respect of all individuals and that, where they did not have capacity, it would be appropriate for applications to be made to the Court of Protection. Of nine initial assessments completed, there was an indication

that eight individuals did not have the capacity to make decisions around financial matters. Referrals had been arranged for formal assessments of those eight individuals, which is a requirement of the Court of Protection. The Director proposed that the Department would make applications to the Court where there was not an appropriate person or family member willing to do so. The outcome of the three remaining initial assessments was awaited. The Director confirmed that the one payment already made was to a person who did have capacity.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to the timescales for the completion of the work to reimburse the remaining eleven individuals, the Director indicated that there was a desire to conclude the process as soon as possible. Although the pace of work had been guided by work undertaken with advocates, he commented that it was now dependent upon the progress of the applications to the Court of Protection.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted.**
- (2) That the final details of reimbursements to individuals be reported to the Cabinet.**
- (3) That an update report be presented to the January 2011 meeting of the Committee.**

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 14th OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW HR & ASSET MANAGEMENT

HESWALL AND ALEXANDER HALL - COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposal made by the Heswall Halls Steering Group for Community Asset Transfer in respect of Heswall and Alexander Halls. It examines issues arising from the Business plan and recommends a way forward.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet, at its meeting of 15th January 2009, made decisions on a number of its assets as part of the Strategic Asset Review. In the case of Heswall and Alexander Halls, Members resolved that they be transferred to community management, where the community expresses an interest, within a two year period.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 19th March 2009, Cabinet approved a Community Asset Transfer Policy to ensure that transfers are approached on a consistent basis. This requires interested parties to submit initial expressions of interest in a standard format so they can be appraised and a recommendation made as to which applicant(s) should proceed to a second stage. The second stage would require a much more detailed response to be submitted including a business plan.
- 2.3 In accordance with the policy, the halls were advertised in the local press which resulted in two groups submitting expressions of interest. These were assessed and reported to Cabinet on 9th December 2009 which resolved to invite one of the parties, the Heswall Halls Steering Group (HHSO), to submit a more detailed, stage two, proposal.
- 2.4 On 24th June 2010 Cabinet reconsidered the resolution of 15th January 2009 in respect of the deadline for closure of facilities, and agreed to extend the deadline to 31st March 2012 where groups are willing to proceed with a transfer.
- 2.5 In response to the revised deadline, the Heswall Hall Steering Group has confirmed that it wishes to continue with a transfer.

3. HESWALL HALL AND ALEXANDER HALL

- 3.1 Heswall Hall was constructed circa 1973 as a purpose built hall, predominantly single storey, in Heswall Town Centre and is identified on the attached plan. Alexander Hall was constructed circa 1960 as a purpose built single storey community hall, and is also identified on the attached plan.
- 3.2 Both facilities are currently run from a central location with shared resources and running costs. They are operated by the Council as community halls and offer a range of activities including bridge, fitness and art clubs with Heswall Hall also

attracting theatrical productions because of its stage and seating area. The facilities have never been operated on a commercial basis and are made available for hire to many groups at heavily subsidised rates and jointly run at a deficit which for the period 2010/11, is projected to be in the region of £123,000 inclusive of staffing costs.

- 3.3 As part of the transfer process both properties have been the subject of independent condition reports. In the case of Heswall Hall a number of elements of repair were identified and are referred to elsewhere in this report. In the case of Alexander Hall, which is a prefabricated timber frame structure, the report identified concerns as to the long term viability and the economic life of the building.

4. KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PROPOSED TRANSFER

- 4.1 Sustainability - In order for a transfer of Heswall Hall and Alexander Hall to a community group to be successful the group needs to be capable of operating in a profitable manner. This raises a number of difficult challenges, the most significant of which is the considerable operating loss which requires a radical review of the manner in which the property is operated. The current operating deficit and the new proposal which will take time to develop means that the proposal will only become viable after five years of transferred activity.
- 4.2 Repairs - The properties suffer from a sustained lack of investment. An independent condition survey of Heswall Hall has identified backlog repairs which total approximately £170,000. The majority of this figure relates to the need for new windows and a new roof. The independent condition report for Alexander Hall raised concerns about the long term viability of the facility. The building is of timber framed construction which has already exceeded its design life.
- 4.3 Additional investment - Beyond the scope of the condition survey there are alterations, improvements to the premises and other investments concerning the future operations of Heswall Hall which have been identified by the HHSG as being essential to the delivery of a sustainable business plan and the future promotion of Heswall Hall as an attractive venue and support delivery of the business plan.
- 4.4 Car Parking - Easily accessible and affordable parking for users of Heswall Hall has been identified by the HHSG as essential to its successful future operation particularly given the nature of the activities, many of which will be attended by older people. The facility has a Council owned car park to the rear which also serves other town centre users. The Business Plan identifies that this car park would need to be available for the duration of the lease term to ensure the successful operation of the hall as a community facility.

5. TRANSFER PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The HHSG has submitted a proposal in accordance with stage two of the Community Asset Transfer process. The submission includes a business plan and explains how the proposal meets the criteria required for Community Asset Transfer. These include: outcomes and benefits, organisational structure, capability and skills, community benefits, sources of finance, use of space, collaboration and financial offer.

- 5.2 The submission advises that the group which will be formed to run the premises will be the Heswall Hall Community Trust (HHCT), which will be a company limited by guarantee and also a registered charity. It will include a board of up to 12 Directors who will be members and Trustees of the charity, eight of which will be nominated by user groups and the remainder for appointment by the board.
- 5.3 The proposal centres primarily on Heswall Hall and its continued running as a community facility. It outlines the way in which the hall can be run in a manner which addresses the need to reduce the annual losses and to eventually produce profits for reinvestment in the community. The HHSG propose to reduce running costs by following an operational model used successfully at other community halls in the country but this will mean a totally different form of operation than that currently operated by the Council at the hall and this requires some initial investment to change operational models. Without such an approach it is believed that the hall will continue to operate at a deficit. This new approach relies, in part, on the users being active in setting up and clearing away equipment, which generates significant reductions in staffing costs. To increase income, the group also proposes to promote the use of the facility for functions at weekends, which will enable them to offer the hall at reasonable rates through the week. The hire rates will, however, need to be increased and the group proposes to gradually impose an increase of up to 50% above the existing rates in the first few years after transfer.
- 5.4 The business plan covers a five year period, and shows how the deficit position is reduced over four years from a deficit of £59,180 in year one down to £1,516 in year four. The plan then shows a profit of £6,202 in year five.

To achieve a sustainable position the group is seeking the following support from the Council until it moves in to a profit in year five:

- The group has asked for the four year tapering operating deficit, totaling £123,746 to be funded by the Council as part of the transfer.
- The group advises that it needs to make provision of £23,000 per annum over the term of the business plan totaling £115,000. This is required to ensure that funds are available to fully maintain the premises in the future.
- Initially the business plan had been developed on the premise that the adjoining Council owned car park would be included in the transfer and the group would receive the net profits of £23,000 per annum. The car park does not form part of the transfer and the group will not receive this income. Consequently, as the success of the business plan assumed the inclusion of this income, the group has asked that additional transitional support in the sum of £23,000 per annum be given for the five year term of the business plan and then reducing by £5,000 per annum thereafter.
- The proposal assumes the Council will address all items identified within the condition report on Heswall Hall prior to transfer. It also assumes that the Council will fund the additional items which the group has identified as being essential to the successful operation of the hall. These works will enable the group to offer, immediately upon transfer, a good quality facility which would justify a price increase and attract new custom.

- 5.5 In view of the concerns over the structure of Alexander Hall and the additional costs of running the facility, the group has not included it in its long term plans. In the short term, the group would look to continue to operate Alexander Hall as a community facility, with a view to gradually relocating the users to Heswall Hall. Alexander Hall would also be used to enable flexibility while repairs and improvements are undertaken to Heswall Hall. The group therefore proposes to take Alexander Hall on a three year lease, during which time it would gradually relocate users to Heswall Hall. After three years the group would release back to the Council the vacant hall, at which time the Council would be at liberty to offer it for sale. The group sees Alexander Hall as a community facility and firmly believes that any proceeds from a sale should be used to assist the long term sustainability of Heswall Hall.
- 5.6 The group also sees the provision of the car parking facility to the rear of Heswall Hall as essential to the operation of the hall and to its viability.

6. COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- 6.1 As part of the Community Asset Transfer submission, groups are asked to identify the benefits to the community which will be derived from the transfer. The HHSG has offered the following:
- Government has recognised that the transfer of assets to the community can realise many benefits. Some of these benefits are detailed in the Quirk Review 'Making Assets Work, and the government's response 'Opening the Transfer Window'. Many of these potential benefits can be realised in the transfer of Heswall Hall and Alexander Hall, all be it short term in the case of the latter.
 - An immediate benefit to the Council of a viable and sustainable asset transfer will be the eventual elimination of the current level of financial support to both halls.
 - The Steering Group was formed with representatives from a wide range of existing users of the Hall. This group has proved already that it is capable of working closely together in the development of this Business Plan with the objective of ultimately setting up the new Community Trust. If this had not happened then it would be difficult, if not impossible, to visualise the community coming together of its own accord to seek the transfer of the halls. That in itself is a significant benefit to the Community.
 - Once the assets are transferred, it is the intention of the trust to engage with all groups within the community to create a new civic spirit which harnesses the community's energies for the wider public good. Heswall Hall will provide a base and a focal point for a developing range of community activities enabling the trust to give help to the community in solving problems, planning and shaping community activity, promoting community cohesion by maintaining and developing mutual understanding and harmony, and generally increasing community confidence in collective activities for the generation of future benefit. A particular focus for the trust will be the youth development.
 - The trust will hope to foster a sense of belonging, and would endeavour to play a role in enhancing the local environment, and raising peoples' aspirations.

- It will also be the intention of the trust to generate wealth creation activities and opportunities as the use of Heswall Hall for such activities can have a powerful multiplying effect. Any surpluses from the operation of the assets will be retained in the community for the community.

7. CONSIDERATION OF THE TERMS OF TRANSFER

- 7.1 The transfer of Heswall Hall to the community is one of the more complex propositions which have been dealt with in accordance with the Community Asset Transfer process. The business plan shows viability in the longer term but requires significant financial assistance from the Council to achieve sustainability.
- 7.2 The HHSO is a newly formed organisation which has not had the opportunity to build up funds to invest in the premises from the outset. If the transfer is to be successful the business plan makes clear that investment is required in the premises beyond the 'standard' level of essential repairs. This would include items such as internal furnishings that would enable the hall to be offered as a modern attractive venue on a more commercial basis, and managed more efficiently. If a transfer to HHSO is approved then, given the particular circumstances of this asset, officers endorse this approach be taken.

Analysis of the business plan shows the following requirements for support:

	Amount	Description	Notes
Repairs	£170,000 (+fees and contingencies)	Predominantly replacement windows and roof with general overall maintenance.	This is the estimated cost of bringing the property up to a fit standard based upon the findings of an independent report.
Fittings and Equipment	£26,000	Modern furnishings and improvements	These are the estimated costs of items deemed necessary to make a successful transfer which are not directly related to the condition of the building.
Pre CAT Funding	£92,860	Initial set up costs required to for transfer .	These are the costs which have been identified in the business plan as essential to make the business a success.

- 7.3 The above items, totaling £288,860 plus fees and contingencies can be met from the community fund.
- 7.4 In discussions with the HHSO it has been agreed that they would be expected to make a contribution to the transfer by undertaking some works themselves, including such items as internal decoration. These are estimated to total £26,500 plus fees and contingencies. It can be argued that the business plan for the halls would be strengthened if all outstanding disrepair items were addressed before transfer. A suggested mechanism to allow this to happen would be for the Council to meet these costs by initially funding the work from its repair and maintenance budget and recovering the actual cost from the proceeds of the intended sale of Alexander Hall. If a transfer to HHCT is approved then, given the particular circumstances, officers recommend that this approach be taken.

- 7.5 Annual support for the term of the business plan is also required to include a tapering operating deficit identified over the first four years, provision for future repairs (the depreciation reserve) and additional transitional support which equates to the net income of the adjacent car park, which are set out in the table below:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Depreciation reserve	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000
Additional transitional support	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000	£23,000
Operating deficit	£59,180	£35,925	£27,125	£1,516	nil
Total annual support required	£105,180	£81,925	£73,125	£47,516	£46,000

The first two years' support can be met by way of transitional support through the Community Fund. Based on the business plan the Council would be required to provide financial support for a further three years for years three to five as shown above.

At the end of year 5 the expectation is that the Hall will have moved into a profitable position. The need for further support through this mechanism will then be reviewed on the basis of the audited accounts of Heswall Hall. If required, The Council would also continue to provide the additional transitional support past year five on a tapering basis as follows:

Year 6	£18,000
Year 7	£13,000
Year 8	£ 8,000
Year 9	£ 3,000

These payments are to be maximum figures. It will be reduced to the extent that it is not required in any year for the Trust to achieve at least a 'break-even' position

During the period of support the Council would work with the Trust to seek ways of maximising car park income. Any net additional income generated (other than through an increase in parking charges consistent with the Council's general car park charging policy) would be shared equally between the Council and the Trust

If a transfer is agreed this would represent a departure from the current approach to asset transfer, and the Council would need to make budgetary provision in the above amounts. Whilst this transfer shows a longer period than two years before the asset becomes self-sustaining the financial projections are considered by officers to be based on realistic assumptions and to be appropriate to the nature of the facility and the change required in its operation to achieve viability.

- 7.6 The HHSG is confident that Heswall Hall will be successful and envisage a time when further development and extension of Heswall Hall will be required. The group has requested that, following the termination of the proposed lease for Alexander Hall, a share of the net proceeds from the sale, (after deduction of repair costs as explained

in paragraph 7.4 above) be made available for the group to part fund the development works on the basis set out in the table below:

Capital receipt (net)	% share received by HHCT
Up to £200,000	50%
£200,001 to £500,000	25%
£500,001 to £1m	10%

This is referred to in the group's risk analysis.

- 7.7 In light of the HHSG's assertion that the availability of parking is critical to the success of the Hall, the Council would accept an undertaking to continue to provide car parking for the term of the proposed lease of the Hall. The Council could terminate this undertaking, in the event that it wished to promote a redevelopment of the car park, on the basis that it would re-provide a similar amount of spaces, reasonably adjacent to Heswall Hall. This would be subject to giving three years notice, or earlier by agreement. If the offer of alternative parking, or proposals for redevelopment, were unacceptable to the group, provision would be included to allow the group to terminate the lease of the Hall.
- 7.8 In addition to the repairs and other support itemised above, the HHSG has identified a need to upgrade technical equipment within Heswall Hall including lighting, sound system and stage equipment. There is also a requirement for additional IT provision. At this stage further work must be undertaken to confirm exactly what is needed. It is proposed that officers work with the HHSG to help the group clarify its requirements and seek separate approval as necessary to use the Community Fund to upgrade equipment.
- 7.9 The works include the demolition of the nearby disused public conveniences. The HHSG has confirmed that it will allow public access to the Hall's toilets as and when it is open and staffed.

8. ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- 8.1 Heswall Hall and the neighbouring Council owned land and buildings, which include the library, public car park and bowling green, occupy a significant area in Heswall town centre. Members should be aware that if sold unrestricted on the open market, the premises have the potential for redevelopment (for example for retail purposes) and to generate a significant capital receipt. A long lease of Heswall Hall, and restrictions on the Car Park, will significantly detract from this potential. A redevelopment of this area could create an opportunity to re-provide Heswall Hall and the library in new purpose built facilities. No detailed work has been done at this stage to confirm the potential for such redevelopment.

9. DISPOSAL TERMS

- 9.1 HHSG has not offered any payment for the transfer of the two halls.
- 9.2 Members will be aware of the Council's obligation to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the disposal of its land and property. However, under the General Consent, the Council does have the power to restrict the value of land by imposing

restrictions as to its use on the grounds that to do so is in the interest of the economic and / or environmental and / or social well being of the inhabitants of the Borough and provided also that any such restriction in value does not exceed two million pounds, per transaction.

9.3 A transfer on this basis would require a lease of Heswall Hall which is shown thickly edged on the attached plan. The lease terms would be as follows:

- Term: 99 years
- Rent: Peppercorn
- Liabilities: The lessee to be responsible for all outgoings and maintenance.
- User clause: For use as a community.

The transfer would also require the leasing of Alexander Hall on the following terms:

- Term: 3 years (opted out of the Landlord and Tenant Acts)
- Rent: Peppercorn
- Liabilities: The lessee to be responsible for all outgoings and maintenance.
- User clause: For use as a community hall.

10. RISKS

10.1 In developing the business plan the HHSG has adopted a realistic approach to its assumptions in the business plan. There are however, risks to any business venture and the group has highlighted a number of risks in its business plan, which are summarised as follows:

Alexander Hall dowry	The vision for Heswall Hall calls for development and extension over a period of time. Part of the funds for these changes is planned to come from the proceeds of the Alexander Hall site. Failure to secure this 'dowry' as a source of funds would put at risk the longer term development of Heswall Hall.
Loss of car parking facilities	Any loss of car parking facilities would have a most serious effect on the prospects for the success of the new Trust and the future of Heswall Hall.
Failure to balance the books over the period of the Business Plan	This might lead to the demise of the New Community Trust. Such an eventuality would neither be in the interests of the local community nor of WMBC. The Steering Group has taken the view that the best way of avoiding this risk is to take a very hard headed approach both to costs, hire charges and other revenue streams.
Financial Prospects once the Transitional Revenue Support Payment starts declining at the end	Once the new Community Trust has operated for 5 Years the Transitional Revenue Support payment will start to decline. At that stage future prospects will increasingly depend on the generation of additional and alternative sources of Revenue. While the HHSG are optimistic that this can be achieved it has to be stated clearly that

of the initial 5 years of the Business Plan	significant and increasing risks could arise to the long term viability of the whole project
The new Community Trust starts off with inadequate funding	The Community Trust has no funds and will be primarily dependent on WMBC providing finance for working capital, transitional costs and the covering of the deficits which are shown in the Business Plan particularly in the first three to four years.
Failure to secure the support and involvement of the local community	This would be regarded as a serious failure. To minimise this risk the Steering Group will be engaging in very wide ranging consultation not only with existing Users but also all manner of local organisations who might have direct or indirect involvement or interests in the long term operation of the new Trust and Heswall Hall. HHSG is also committed to publicising the proposals for Heswall Hall in the local media so that the information about what is planned is properly disseminated.
Failure to find an effective manager	This is a low risk provided a proper Job Description has been designed and a fair level of remuneration offered and a period of probationary service agreed .
Loss of existing Users	It is vital that the Hall retains existing Users. The HHSG's proposals for how the Hall will be operated will represent big changes for the users and they will only accept them if they are properly explained and the changes are made practical, for example, by the provision of lighter folding tables both for functions and User Groups. As this new mode of operation is widely practiced elsewhere we are confident that, albeit with some initial teething problems, it will be accepted by the User Groups.
Theatre Groups	Need to retain the theatre users by offering a quality facility. It must therefore be treated as a risk to the Hall revenues if the improvements are not agreed or put into place as a matter of priority.
Acceptance of increased Hire Charges	The Business Plan has a 50% increase in Hire Charges built into it over a three year period. We believe it will be acceptable by most users.
Rates Relief	The rates due on Heswall Hall alone are currently over £10,000. The Trust will not be able to afford these. The projections are based on the assumption that the Trust will be able to get automatic relief owing to its charitable status.
Security and Theft	Security will be an issue and the booking terms for users will have to lay down clear procedures for the conduct of opening up/closing up of the Halls together with precise stewarding arrangements for functions and parties and the like.

<p>The unknown and the unexpected</p>	<p>The HHSG has done its best to become aware of all the issues and uncertainties associated with the running of Heswall Hall. Partly because there has never been a Management committee of local people involved it is likely that after the asset transfer to the new Trust matters will arise which will need to be dealt with but for which no financial provision has been made. We call these 'The unknown and the unexpected' and we would expect that WMBC will take on board that some items will surface under this category and accept responsibility for them for a reasonable period after the asset transfer.</p>
--	---

10.2 In response to the final stated risk “The unknown and unexpected” it is recommended that the Council makes no commitment to accept any responsibility after transfer for any unforeseen items or costs. Should any problems arise they would be considered in the light of the circumstances prevailing at the time.

11. CONCLUSION

11.1 HHSG has put significant time and effort into developing a detailed business plan and, in view of officers, has taken a prudent approach to the development of that plan.

11.2 Substantial financial support will be required, both through the Community Fund and from the Council, over the first five years and possibly on to year 9, until the Hall moves to a profitable position. This reflects the work needed to move away from the current operating model and reduce a substantial, existing, operating deficit. It also reflects the fact that HHSG is a newly formed group which has not had the benefit of running the Hall previously (like Joint Management Committees of community centres) and building up financial reserves.

11.3 Whilst there are clear risks in moving forward to transfer the halls, the new Trust, with Council support, should be able to deliver a vibrant, refurbished and modernised facility for the benefit of the local community and the wider area.

11.4 The proposal that has been received is considered by officers to be the best way to achieve an asset transfer.

11.5 If Members do not wish to investigate further the potential for redevelopment of this area, then it is recommended that a transfer of the two halls to HHCT proceeds on the terms described.

12. Financial implications

12.1 Funding of the scheme as identified in the report, totalling approximately £475,965 plus fees and contingencies, would be met from the Community Fund which includes, amongst other things, backlog maintenance totalling £170,000.

- 12.2 Funding of the support for years 3-5 of the business plan, including potential to support up to year 9 totalling £208,641 will be required to be met from the Council's budget.
- 12.3 The cost of repairs that would be expected to be met by the Trust (estimated at £26,500 plus fees and contingencies) will be funded from the repair and maintenance budget and recouped from the proceeds of the future sale of Alexander Hall. The balance of proceeds from the sale of Alexander Hall is to be set aside to enable the Trust to submit a proposal for the development of Heswall Hall. It would be made available for this purpose and shared on the basis described in the report, if a suitable scheme is forthcoming within a reasonable period.
- 12.4 The transfer of these assets on the terms described will result in savings relating to running costs which have been projected at approximately £123,000 per annum for 2010/2011 inclusive of staffing costs, although there is no specific budget for Heswall Hall. Alexander Hall has a budget £2,600 per annum.
- 12.5 Future life cycle maintenance costs are estimated at £222,000 over the next 10 years. The Council will no longer have responsibility to meet these costs after transfer.
- 12.6 The sale of Alexander Hall, following expiration of the proposed lease, would generate a capital receipt which would be determined by a marketing exercise, but is not likely to be less than £100,000.

13. Staffing implications

- 13.1 There are four caretakers and a booking clerk currently employed by the Council to run these halls and they will be managed in accordance with the Council's staffing policy.

14. Equal Opportunities implications/Equality Impact Implications

- 14.1 The group will make the hall available to all members of the community.
- 14.2 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the wider Community Asset Transfer process.

15. Community Safety implications

- 15.1 None arising directly from this report.

16. Local Agenda 21 implications

- 16.1 None arising directly from this report.

17. Planning implications

- 17.1 The proposal enables the properties to continue to be used as community halls. Under these circumstances no planning implications arise.
- 17.2 The block including the hall, car park, the medical centre, the fire station, 117 to 137 Telegraph Rd and properties fronting the Mount are part of the key town centre for

Heswall. In principle, town centre redevelopment would be supported in this part of the site under UDP Policy SH1 and National Planning Policy PPS4. The remaining area including the bowling green and putting area is designated as Urban Greenspace in the UDP is protected from development subject to UDP Policy GR1 and National Planning Policy PPG17.

18. Anti-poverty implications

18.1 None arising directly from this report.

19.0 Human Rights implications

19.1 None arising directly from this report.

20.0 Social Inclusion implications

20.1 None arising directly from this report.

21. Local Member Support implications

21.1 The property is located within the Heswall Ward.

22.0 Background Papers

22.1 Cabinet reports:

27 November 2008 – Strategic Asset Review

15 January 2009 – Transforming Wirral

9 December 2009 – Heswall and Alexander Hall, Heswall

24 June 2010 – Community Asset Transfer

23.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

23.1 In accordance with Members' instruction to offer Heswall Hall and Alexander Hall for Community Asset Transfer, the properties be transferred to the Heswall Hall Community Trust in accordance with the terms now reported.

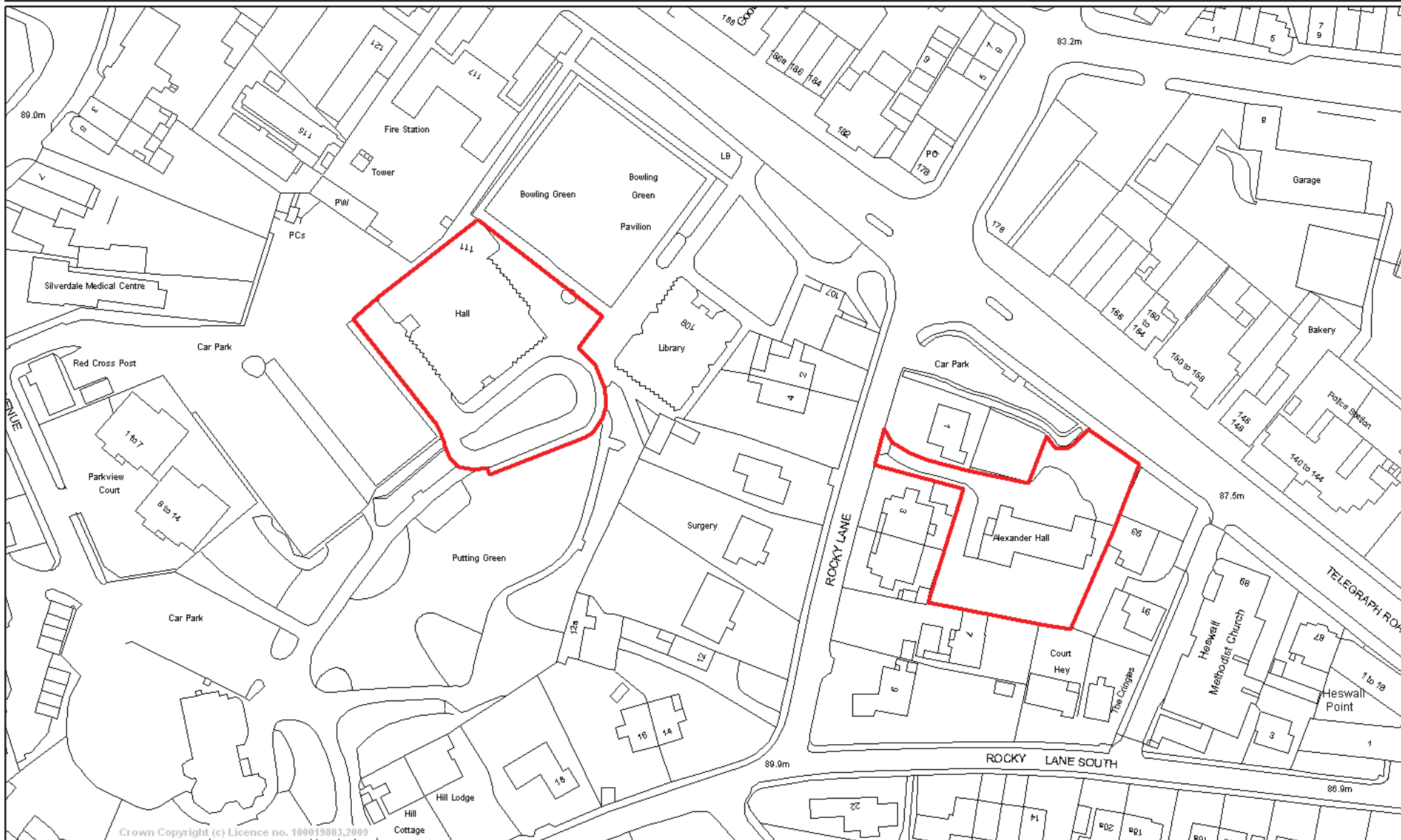
23.2 The director of Finance be authorised to make the necessary budgetary adjustments.

23.3 That, following expiration of the proposed lease of Alexander Hall, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be instructed to arrange for its disposal, with the sale proceeds to be dealt with in the manner described in this report.

Bill Norman

Director of Law HR & Asset Management

Heswall and Alexander Hall, Heswall



Page 283

Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100019803.2009



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright reserved. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number: 100019803

Scale 1/1250

Date 27/9/2010

Centre = 327023 E 381680 N

Dept:

Section:

Phone:

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 14 OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW HR & ASSET MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER – OVERTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a transfer by lease of Overton Community Centre, Upton, in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet, at its meeting on 15th January 2009, identified a number of facilities that should be transferred to community management, where the community expressed an interest.
- 2.2 Cabinet, at its meeting on 19th March 2009, approved the Community Asset Transfer policy. The policy sets out the mechanism to pass over the ownership and control of assets to community based groups and explains in detail the key principles and basis for transfer. The minute also resolved that Community Centres first be offered to the established and viable Joint Management Committees.

3. OVERTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

- 3.1 Overton Community Centre is located on Royden Road and is shown on the attached plan.
- 3.2 The Centre was built in 1995 as a purpose-built single storey community centre, and has been operated by the community for the last fifteen years. The Joint Management Committee (JMC) has developed a range of services at the centre including:
- Nursery
 - Church group
 - Over 60's
 - Keep fit
 - Karate club
 - Residents association
 - Play scheme
 - Yoga
 - Puppy training
 - Multiple Sclerosis Society.

4. TRANSFER PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The JMC of Overton Community Centre wishes to take a transfer of the community centre building from the Council and proposes to form the Overton Community Centre Limited (OCCL), a Company Limited by Guarantee, to proceed with the transfer.

- 4.2 In order to proceed with the transfer, the JMC has produced a five year business plan which has been assessed and is considered to be sustainable, following a transitional two year period. To achieve a sustainable position the business plan identifies the need for the employment of an Operational Manager, who will be required for a period of two years to promote the centre and increase occupancy and usage. Consequently, for the first two years of operation post transfer, OCCL will require a subsidy to cover the operating deficit for the period. The business plan then shows that the Centre would produce a small profit in Year 3, rising again in Years 4 and 5.
- 4.3 An independent property condition survey of the Centre has been undertaken and identifies a number of items requiring repair. The most significant of which are some structural repairs, boiler replacement and repairs to windows. In addition to these repairs, the JMC has requested that an additional access be created to the front of the building, comprising double doors. This would enable greater flexibility of the centre, with the two main halls having separate access and egress points, which would make it easier for the group to let the two rooms at the same time which would increase occupancy and income.
- 4.4 The Community Asset Transfer policy advises that the Council will not normally seek payment from community based groups, unless substantial commercial use of buildings generates large profits in excess of the running costs of the property. However, the Council will normally expect community based groups to be responsible for the running costs of the building, including repairs, maintenance and all insurance. In light of the business plan and the community benefits described later in this report, the main terms of the proposed lease are as follows:
- Term: 99 years
 - Rent: Peppercorn
 - Liabilities: The lessee to be responsible for all outgoings and maintenance.
 - User clause: Community Activities
- 4.5 Members will be aware of the Council's obligation to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the disposal of its land and property. However, under the General Consent, the Council does have the power to restrict the value of land by imposing restrictions as to its use on the grounds that to do so is in the interest of the economic and / or environmental and / or social well being of the inhabitants of the Borough and provided also that any such restriction in value does not exceed two million pounds, per transaction.

5.0 COMMUNITY BENEFIT

- 5.1 The JMC is very positive about taking a transfer of the community centre building. It has objectives which support community well-being and its proposals will bring additional community benefits.
- 5.2 In addition to continuing the current activities, OCCL will focus on wider community benefits including crime prevention, employment and independent assistance through Citizens Advice Bureau outreach centres.
- 5.3 The members of the JMC have previously run the Overton Community Centre for many years. It is the view of officers who have worked with the Committee that their proposals are very focused and dedicated to the local community.
- 5.4 Members should be aware that Overton Community Centre is currently used for a number of Local Authority functions including Area Forums along with other public

meetings such as Police presentations, Residents Association meetings etc. Post transfer, OCCL would still wish to offer the use of the facility for those functions. However, this will be a community run facility that needs to generate income to cover its costs. Should the various groups, including the Council, wish to continue to use the premises, they will have to pay in accordance with the Centre's charging policy.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 Overton Community Centre is operated by a dedicated team of volunteers who take a very active role in the running of the centre, without direct staffing support from the Council. Consequently the financial savings to the Council as a result of a transfer in terms of annual running costs are relatively low. However, the proposal submitted by the JMC is considered to show, with the financial support described earlier in this report, a viable and sustainable business plan, which is considered to be the best way to achieve a successful transfer. After transfer the group would increase the use of the facility as described in section 5.0.

7.0 Financial implications

7.1 The Council will support use of Community Fund monies for a grant for the following items:

- The repairs described in the report, which relate predominantly to the need for structural repairs, heating system and window repairs have an estimated cost of £55,000 plus fees and contingencies. This includes provision of the new entrance doors, as described in the report.
- The deficit in year one in the sum of £43,812 and the deficit in year two in the sum of £42,688, totalling £86,500 over two years.

7.2 The transfer of this asset on the terms described will result in revenue savings to the Council in running costs of approximately £11,500 per annum.

7.3 If the Council retained Overton Community Centre it would have to address the Backlog maintenance estimated at £51,000 from its own resources. Future life cycle maintenance costs are estimated at £62,000 over the next 10 years, which the Council will no longer be responsible for after transfer.

7.4 If the Council were to sell the property with vacant possession it could achieve a capital receipt. The actual amount would be determined by a marketing exercise, but would be expected to be in the region of £140,000.

8.0 Staffing implications

8.1 The JMC currently makes its own arrangements for cleaning and janitorial services. There are therefore no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

9.0 Equal Opportunities implications/Equality Impact Implications

9.1 The transfer lease will require the group to adhere to current legislation including equal opportunities.

9.2 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the wider Community Asset Transfer process.

10.0 Community Safety implications

10.1 None arising directly from this report.

11.0 Local Agenda 21 implications

11.1 None arising directly from this report

12.0 Planning implications

12.1 None arising directly from this report

13.0 Anti-poverty implications

13.1 None arising directly from this report

14.0 Human Rights implications

14.1 None arising directly from this report

15.0 Social Inclusion implications

15.1 The building is used by a wide cross section of the community.

16.0 Local Member Support implications

16.1 The properties are located within the Upton Ward.

17.0 Background Papers

17.1 Cabinet reports:

15 January 2009 – Transforming Wirral

19 March 2009 – Asset Management Update

18.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 That a transfer by lease of the Overton Community Centre be agreed and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to complete the necessary lease on the terms set out in this report.

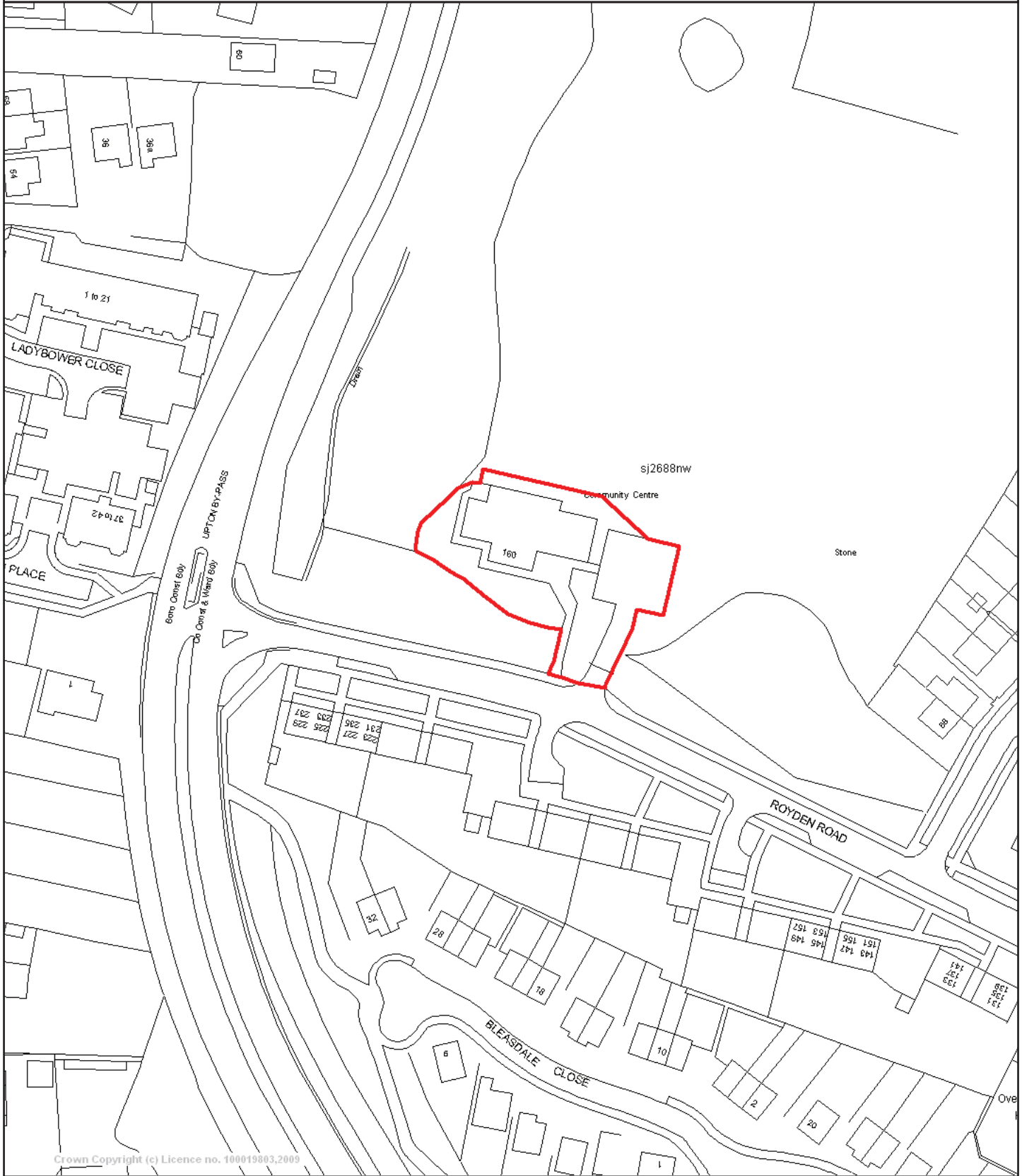
18.2 That the necessary repair works, additional doorway and the transitional costs for the first two years of the business plan, be funded from the Community Fund.

Bill Norman

Director of Law HR & Asset Management.

This report was prepared by Steve McMorran who can be contacted on 691 8409

Overton Community Centre



Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100019803,2009



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright reserved. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number: 100019803

Scale 1/1250
Centre = 326214 E 388722 N

Date 24/9/2010

Dept:
Section:

Page 289

Phone:
Fax:

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET - 23 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW HR & ASSET MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - GROSVENOR BALLROOM AND LISCARD COMMUNITY CENTRE, WALLASEY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a transfer by lease of The Grosvenor Ballrooms Community Centre, Wallasey in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet, at its meeting on 15th January 2009 identified a number of facilities that should be transferred to community management, where the community expresses an interest.
- 2.2 Cabinet, at its meeting on 19th March 2009, approved the Community Asset Transfer policy. The policy is used to pass over the ownership and control of assets to community based groups and explains in detail the key principles and basis for transfer. The minute also resolved that Community Centres first be offered to the established and viable Joint Management Committees.

3. GROSVENOR BALLROOMS

- 3.1 The Grosvenor Ballrooms were opened in 1906, constructed in red pressed brick with ornate detailing. Purpose built as a ballroom, this two storey building has been operated latterly as a community hall. It is identified on plan A.
- 3.2 The ground floor consists of a large ballroom with capacity to accommodate 300 people, and there is a licensed bar facility and a buffet room. There is also a small office, based at the front of the building and a small storage area on the ground floor. There is a large training kitchen which can deliver commercial catering.
- 3.3 This facility is currently in operation seven days a week and provides activities which include: Pensioners Luncheon Club, ballroom dancing, line dancing, tai chi, tea dances, keep fit, church group, children's dance groups, weddings, parties, theatre group, concerts, blood donors, conferences and educational training. Upstairs, at the front of the building, there is a dance studio and the rear of the building there is a recording studio.

4. LISCARD COMMUNITY CENTRE

- 4.1 The centre was originally built circa 1970 as a sports hall / gymnasium and was constructed in brick under a flat roof. It is identified on plan B.

- 4.2 Liscard Community Centre comprises one large main hall, a smaller upstairs meeting room, kitchen facilities and a small office with limited storage space.
- 4.3 There is an environmentally friendly garden area to the rear which has recently been improved through a Fairshare grant. Activities provided are Pre-School, Out of School Club, Holiday Club, Tai Chi, Tae-Kwon-Do, dancing, children's parties, keep fit, theatre group and limited private hire. The garden area is held on a 25 lease by the Joint Management Committee granted in 2006 at a peppercorn rental which was created to enable access to funding.

5. PROPOSAL

- 5.1 Both premises are operated by the Joint Management Committee for the Liscard Community Facilities Complex and in accordance with the Community Asset Transfer policy the group was invited to submit a proposal for Community Asset Transfer. The group has established Grosvenor Community Associates Ltd to go forward with the transfer and it originally considered the potential to take a transfer of both buildings. However, for the reasons outlined later in this report, its preferred option is now to incorporate all its activities at one site, the Grosvenor Ballroom.
- 5.2 In order for the organisation to relocate to one site and maintain the same level of activity and income, it would need to replace the space lost at Liscard and re-provide it at the Grosvenor Ballroom. To achieve this, the proposal assumes the construction of an extension at Grosvenor Ballroom to be funded through the asset transfer process from the Community Fund.
- 5.3 In arriving at its decision to deliver its community activities from one location, the group has identified the following benefits:
- Achieve a sustainable transfer of community facilities to a credible, established community organisation.
 - Remove ongoing local authority capital, revenue and management commitments for two community facilities.
 - Ensure community services continue to be offered in the long term in the Liscard area.
 - Ensure high quality child care provision is enhanced by high quality facilities in the area.
 - Develop a partner to work with the local authority and other service providers to localise services and provision to vulnerable and hard to reach communities (a key priority in Big Society).
 - Preserve a significant local building with cultural and historical significance.
 - Enhance Grosvenor as an anchor organisation for the area, providing facilities and space for smaller community groups and support to small organisations and individual citizens (a key priority in Big Society).

The group has also provided a value for money case for the transfer which is outlined as follows:

- Grosvenor Ballroom is a successful local community facility with the capacity to generate sufficient income to be self sustaining. This means that services can continue to be offered to the local community without the Council having the cost

of staffing, running costs and management – a significant long term saving, especially in the current economic climate.

- The plan involves reducing from two community buildings to one building. Whilst initial capital outlay is required, the re-sitting to one facility means that the local authority is no longer meeting the staffing, revenue, repairs, maintenance and management costs of the Liscard Centre.
- The vacant site created by the demolition of Liscard Community Centre will have a residual value which can be recovered by the Council should it proceed to sale. (The future of this building has not yet been determined and demolition may not necessarily be the outcome).
- The cost of the extension to the Grosvenor Centre can be seen as an investment. The additional space will ensure that the facilities at Liscard are properly relocated, but the additional space will also provide an additional revenue income opportunity for Grosvenor, further ensuring sustainability.
- The existing childcare facilities at Liscard are poor. Although the service has received an excellent Ofsted report, the ongoing suitability of the building has been called into question. The re-sitting to Grosvenor ensures that high quality childcare provision continues, but within a high quality environment, rather than a 'make do' environment. This contributes fully to the Council's priorities for high quality childcare and pre school learning (previously key elements of Every Child Matters).
- Investment in Grosvenor is not anti competitive. Whilst it is true that private operators may question public sector investment in this childcare facility, it is also true that a private operator would make private gain from the investment. As a social enterprise and a charity, the trustees of Grosvenor will not receive any dividend or profit. Any profit generated as a result of the investment will in fact be reinvested into the charity, and can be used to increase the benefits to the local community, either through enhanced childcare facilities, or through the provision of other charitable services.
- The transfer of the Big Lottery funded garden will be completed at a cost to the Grosvenor Centre, and not the local authority. (The funders have advised the group that the grant will not need to be repaid if the garden is re-sited)

5.4 Within the Grosvenor complex are eight lock up garages, four of which are occupied by individuals on monthly licence agreements. These have been in place for some time, the earliest dating back to 1981. One of the garages is vacant and the other three are used by the Joint Management Committee for the Liscard Community Facilities Complex. The proposed extension to the Grosvenor Ballroom would require the vacation and demolition of the garages which would necessitate the Council serving notice to obtain possession of the four properties currently on licences.

6. COMMUNITY BENEFITS

6.1 The Liscard and Grosvenor facilities currently offer a wide range of activities and functions for the community. Many of the benefits of a transfer of the Grosvenor Ballroom with the proposed extension have previously been described. The group has, however, advised, within its business plan, that after transfer it proposes to offer community benefit by expanding the business in the following ways:

- *To widen participation in and by the community*
- *To develop the commercial opportunities for the catering facilities at the Grosvenor Ballroom.*

- *To provide vocational/non vocational accredited courses within the local community*
- *To enhance local residents employability*
- *To build on relationships with the PCT*
- *To enhance the services provided in the luncheon club*
- *By identifying down time and marketing new opportunity created*
- *Exploring new opportunities both within and outside the established buildings*

7. TRANSFER PROPOSAL

7.1 The business plan, which covers a five year period, has been assessed and is considered to show a viable and sustainable opportunity for Community Asset Transfer towards the end of the business plan period. In order to achieve this, support is required in for the first two years of the plan, which the proposal requires the Council to meet from the Community Fund.

7.2 The Community Asset Transfer Policy advises that the Council will, subject to the availability of funding and the anticipated economic life of the building, carry out essential repairs to the main elements of the building. Such repairs are identified through an independent condition survey. The proposal requires that the repairs are funded by the Council from the Community Fund.

7.3 The Joint Management Committee for the Liscard Community Facilities Complex has submitted the proposal on the basis of a transfer of Grosvenor Ballroom in accordance with the Community Asset Transfer policy which would involve a transfer by lease on the following terms:

- Term: 99 years
- Rent: Peppercorn
- Liabilities: The lessee to be responsible for all outgoing and maintenance.
- User clause: For use as a community centre.

The group would also be required to vacate Liscard Community Centre and to surrender its lease of the play area to the rear at no cost to the Council.

7.4 The retention of Liscard Community Centre will require its security or demolition. However, as can be seen from the attached plan, the centre is located adjacent to the Liscard Municipal Offices and would enable significantly improved flexibility should the municipal complex require remodelling or developing.

7.5 Members will be aware of the Council's obligation to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the disposal of its land and property. However, under the General Consent, the Council does have the power to restrict the value of land by imposing restrictions as to its use on the grounds that to do so is in the interest of the economic and / or environmental and / or social well being of the inhabitants of the Borough and provided also that any such restriction in value does not exceed two million pounds, per transaction. Members should be aware that the Grosvenor Ballroom, if offered for sale without restrictions, would produce a capital receipt.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposal submitted by the Joint Management Committee for the Liscard Community Facilities Complex centres on its preference for locating all its activities on one site, the Grosvenor Ballroom. This requires repair and extension to the building, as described, that will provide an upgraded, high quality, community facility. The cost of providing the extension is substantial, however, given the savings to the Council and the opportunities offered by the return of the Liscard Community Centre, transfer and extension of Grosvenor Ballroom is considered to be the best means of achieving a viable and sustainable community facility.

9. Financial implications

9.1 The council will support use of Community Fund monies for a grant for the following items:

- The repairs described in the report, which relate predominantly to the need for a heating system and new windows have an estimated cost of £155,000 plus fees and contingencies.
- The cost of the extension has been estimated at between £300,000 and £350,000.
- The business plan identifies a deficit in year one in the sum of £43,272 and a deficit in year two in the sum of £18,946.

9.2 The transfer of this asset on the terms described will result in savings relating to running costs of approximately £30,000 per annum for Grosvenor and £12,700 per annum for Liscard.

9.3 If the Council retained Grosvenor Ballroom it would have to address the Backlog maintenance estimated at £155,000.

9.4 Future life cycle maintenance costs are estimated at £164,000 over the next 10 years. The Council will no longer have responsibility to meet these costs after transfer.

9.5 If the Council were to sell the property it could achieve a significant capital receipt. The actual amount would be determined by a marketing exercise, but would not be expected to be less than £350,000.

9.6 The return of Liscard Community Centre to the Council would enable it to determine future options whether it should be retained or sold. If it was agreed that it was sold the value, which would be determined by a marketing exercise, would not be expected to be less than £100,000.

9.7 Relocation of the Big Lottery funded garden at the rear of Liscard Community Centre would be funded by the Joint Management Committee at considerable expense.

9.8 The lock up garages currently produce an income of £1,300 per annum which would end once they become vacant.

10. Staffing implications

- 10.1 The Council employs two part time janitors at the centres. Post transfer Grosvenor Community Associates Ltd will make their own arrangements for janitorial services and the Council will manage the staff under existing HR policies.

11. Equal Opportunities implications/Equality Impact Implications

- 11.1 The transfer lease will require the group to adhere to current legislation including equal opportunities.
- 11.2 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of the wider Community Asset Transfer process.

12. Community Safety implications

- 12.1 None arising directly from this report.

13. Local Agenda 21 implications

- 13.1 In undertaking work to Grosvenor Ballroom consideration will be given to energy savings.

14. Planning implications

- 14.1 The proposed extension to the Grosvenor Ballroom will require planning permission. The site is a location designated as a Primarily Residential Area and any future application would be assessed against Policies HS15 and RE10 in the Unitary Development Plan.

15. Anti-poverty implications

- 15.1 None arising directly from this report

16. Human Rights implications

- 16.1 None arising directly from this report

17. Social Inclusion implications

- 17.1 The building is used by a wide cross section of the community.

18. Local Member Support implications

- 18.1 The properties are located within the Liscard Ward.

19. Background Papers

- 19.1 Cabinet reports:

15 January 2009 – Transforming Wirral
19 March 2009 – Asset Management Update

20. RECOMMENDATIONS

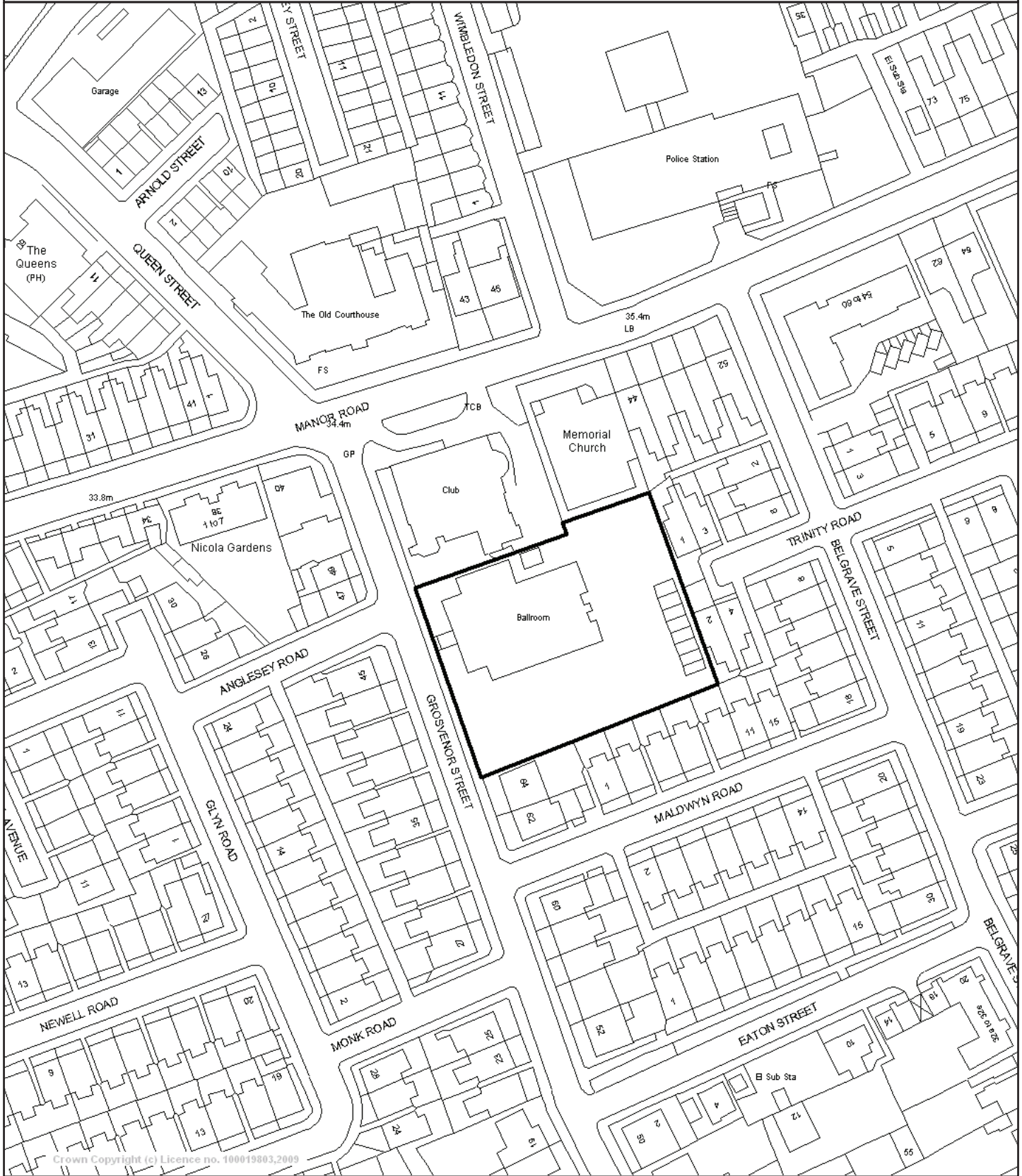
- 20.1 That a transfer by lease of the Grosvenor Ballroom be agreed and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to complete the necessary lease on the terms set out in this report.
- 20.2 That, following vacation by the group, the Council accepts a surrender of the existing interests in Liscard Community Centre and the adjacent garden area.
- 20.3 That the agreed works and extension to the property, together with the transitional costs for the first two years of the business plan, be funded from the Community Fund, with the contribution to the costs of an extension not to exceed £350,000.
- 20.4 The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management be authorised to obtain possession of the garages as described in the report.

Bill Norman

Director of Law HR & Asset Management.

This page is intentionally left blank

PLAN A Grosvenor Ballroom, Grosvenor Street



Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100019803,2009



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright reserved. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number: 100019803

Scale 1/1250
Centre = 330899 E 392118 N

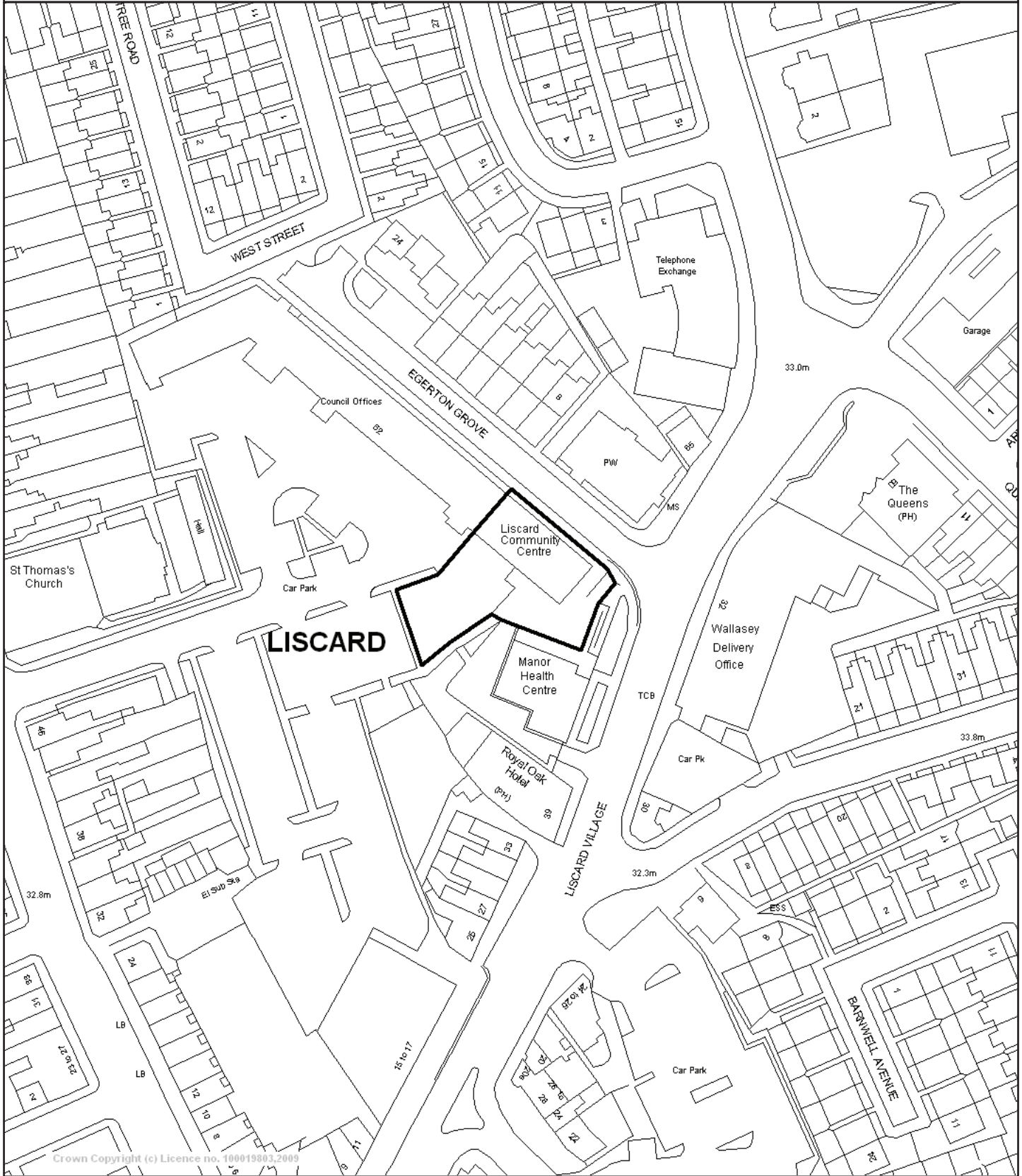
Date 3/9/2010

Dept: Law HR & Asset Management
Section: Asset Management

Phone:
Fax:

This page is intentionally left blank

PLAN B Liscard Community Centre



Crown Copyright (c) Licence no. 100019803.2009



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright reserved. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number: 100019803

Scale 1/1250
Centre = 330695 E 392174 N

Date 3/9/2010

Dept: Law HR & Asset Management
Section: Asset Management

Phone:
Fax:

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET 14th OCTOBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR & ASSET MANAGEMENT

SCHEDULE OF RATES 2010/13 – TENDER REPORT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members will be aware that Schedule of Rates Contracts are maintained for the responsive day-to-day repairs and items of planned maintenance to various buildings owned by the Council, or in which the Council has an interest. These include operational buildings such as offices, community centres, libraries and leisure centres.
- 1.2 The contracts cover the period 2010/13 with the option to extend for a further two years. They are due to commence from 1 December 2010. The purpose of this report is to update and advise Cabinet Members of tenders received, and to seek approval to accept the most economically advantageous tender.
- 1.3 Details of the most economically advantageous tenders are included in the Financial Appendix to this report. The Financial Appendix is exempt, because the information it contains is commercially sensitive to the respective tendering parties.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Schedule of Rates contracts 2006/10 provide an invaluable framework for issuing works orders and for job costing and monitoring purposes.

The existing Schedule of Rates contract operates across the whole of the Borough and is separated into the following categories:

1. General Building Works
2. Mechanical Works
3. Electrical Works
4. Roofing Works
5. Flooring Works
6. Curtain Walling
7. Glazing Works

- 2.2 Cabinet confirmed the extension of the existing contracts, which covered 2006/09, by one year to 30 November 2010, at Cabinet on 23 July 2009 (minute 67 refers).
- 2.3 The above report also identified the opportunity to review those items that could be considered superfluous to the schedules. This exercise has now

been carried out, in conjunction with officers from the Client Departments and has resulted in the removal of a large number of unused Schedule of Rates items and the addition of relevant new items. This will improve the future operation and implementation of the schedules.

- 2.4 As the value of the contract is above the threshold for EU Directives for Services, in accordance with EU procurement rules, a Notice was published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), on 28th May 2010, inviting expressions of interest from suitably qualified contracting organisations to carry out these works. A notice was also published in the Wirral Globe, on 26th May 2010 and in the Chest North West Portal, on 28th May 2010. This Portal is the Government's E Tendering Initiative and its use is recommended by the Council's Corporate Procurement unit.

3.0 THE CONTRACTS 2010-2013

- 3.1 For all public sector and utilities' procurements covered by the full regime of the EU Procurement Directives, a mandatory "standstill period" will apply for 10 calendar days. The 10 days must elapse between the written communication of the award decision to all tenderers and the contract commencement. This will enable tenderers to request the detailed grounds for the award decision and where necessary, seek a judicial remedy.
- 3.2 Wirral Council has undertaken a fully compliant and open exercise and does not envisage such a challenge to this process.
- 3.3 The "10 day standstill period" will commence, post Cabinet approval, when contract notifications are issued.
- 3.4 The new contract is to run initially for a 3-year period with an option to extend for up to a further 2 years, based on performance. This was identified in the Notices.
- 3.5 Each of the 232 Contractors, that expressed an interest in response to the OJEU and other Notices by 28th May 2010, was sent a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) to complete. The PQQ contained instructions on how to complete the form and also identified the evaluation procedure. A total of 75 PQQ's were received by the closing date of 4th June 2010.
- 3.6 Following an evaluation of the PQQ's using the scoring model, tender documentation was sent to all those contractors who had scored 70% or more of the available marks. It was also a requirement that successful contractors have to be Constructionline and Construction Health and Safety registered. Tenders were dispatched on 30th July 2010 with a return date of 27th August 2010, the timescale as required by the EU procurement directives.
- 3.7 An evaluation model was developed based on the amount of spend for each work category in a typical financial year. This model was approved by the Corporate Procurement Unit and Internal Audit.

4.0 TENDERS

- 4.1 The tenders were based upon pre-priced Schedules of Rates with the contractors being invited to submit tenders in the form of a percentage increase or decrease. These percentages were then applied to the evaluation model. The evaluation model contained a quality element, as tenders were evaluated on an 80% price 20% quality criterion.
- 4.2 It should be noted that the values used in the evaluation model are for evaluation purposes only and that the actual levels of spend could vary from these values.
- 4.3 The tendered percentages were applied to the evaluation model and the most economically advantageous tenders are summarised in Financial Appendix, which is exempt.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Based on the tenders received, it is clear that a continued Responsive Repair and Maintenance Contract can be delivered at a reduced cost to the Authority. Based upon the tender evaluation model used in the Schedule of Rates in the Financial Appendix, the potential cost reduction is £0.2 million per annum, based upon the projected spend of £2.4 million per annum. It should be noted that this is an indicative figure as the nature of the works in any financial year will vary.

6.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific implications in this report for equal opportunities, including women, ethnic minorities or the elderly.

8.0 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS/IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There are no health implications arising from this report.

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no Community Safety Implications directly arising from this Report.

10.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The successful contractors will be encouraged to source materials from local suppliers and follow Council sustainable policies on all projects.

11.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no Planning Implications directly arising from this Report.

12.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no Anti-poverty Implications directly arising from this Report.

13.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific human rights implications within this report.

14.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The successful contractors are committed to recruiting local labour.

15.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no Ward specific implications directly arising from this report.

16.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 The information used in the preparation of this report was obtained from the Quantity Surveyors working papers. No other background papers have been used in the preparation of this report.

17.0 RECOMMENDATION

17.1 That the most economically advantageous tenders as indicated in the Financial Appendix, be approved for the 3 year period commencing on 1st December 2010, with the option to extend for a further two years based upon performance, subject to completion of contractual documentation.

17.2 That based on the outcome of the tendering exercise a saving of £0.2m per annum be agreed with effect from 1 December 2010 for expenditure through Schedule of Rates contracts.

Bill Norman

Director of Law, HR and Asset Management

This report was prepared by Jeff Sherlock/Ron Cox who can be contacted on 606 2299

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank