



Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Monday, 14 March 2011
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP

Members are asked to consider whether they have personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they are.

Members are reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November, 2010

3. PRESENTATION - HOUSING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

To receive a progress report on comments received during the consultation process.

4. PRESENTATION - EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT - COUNCIL PROGRESS TOWARDS EXCELLENCE STATUS (Pages 7 - 12)

This report has been referred to all overview and scrutiny committees.

5. PRESENTATION - QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2010/11

The Head of Housing and Regeneration will report verbally.

A copy of the report is available in the Web Library

6. OUTCOMES FROM EXISTING REGENERATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES AND AN OUTLINE OF FUTURE PROGRAMMES (Pages 13 - 22)

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11 (Pages 23 - 30)

To note the progress of the committee's work programme.

8. FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the period March 2011 to June 2011 has now been published on the Council's intranet/website and Members are invited to review the Plan prior to the meeting in order for the Committee to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

9. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A WATER CYCLE STUDY (Pages 31 - 34)

10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1)

11. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The following item contains 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 item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

12. REGENERATION UPDATE

The Director of Regeneration will provide a verbal update on major development schemes within the borough.

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

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ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 November 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	G Davies (Chair)	
	Councillors	B Kenny (In place of J Stapleton) J Hale M Johnston S Kelly	D Knowles A Pritchard D Roberts I Williams
<u>In attendance:</u>	Councillors		
<u>Apologies</u>	Councillors	E Boulton	

62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/PARTY WHIP

Members were asked to consider whether they had personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

Councillor B Kenny declared a prejudicial interest minute 65 Next Generation Access by virtue of his employment with British Telecom.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement. No such declarations were made.

63 MINUTES

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June, 2010.

Resolved – That the minutes be received.

64 INVEST WIRRAL - PRESENTATION

The Director of Corporate Services gave a presentation outlining the Invest Wirral's role and responsibilities in providing information and support to help businesses grow and develop, including:

- locating business premises
- links to key business support organisations

- training and skills knowledge
- funding support
- networking and events
- supplier links
- business partner collaboration
- apprenticeship opportunities
- inward and local investment enquiries

He provided key statistics for the past year highlighting performance against targets for jobs created/safeguarded, and investment.

The Director gave some specific examples of the range of work with local companies to assist their development plans; partnership working with a range of business support organisations; development of the Wirral Business Forum; organisation of key business promotion events; and participation in international events to raise awareness and create opportunities for overseas trade and investment.

The Director responded to a range of questions from members including:

- the potential for increasing membership of the Business Forum;
- Wirral's initiative in taking the lead for communicating the "green" agenda across the North West Region through the Green Power Forum, the availability of government funding, and the potential locally for training schemes utilising 'Green Deal' and Skills Agency funding.

Resolved – That the Committee thank the Director for his presentation and note the achievement against the key performance indicators relating to jobs created/safeguarded, and investment.

65 **DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY AND UPDATE ON THE CONSULTATION PROCESS**

The Head of Housing and Regeneration presented a report comprising an overview of the draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026, and update on the process and progress of the first phase of the consultation programme which was currently underway and due to finish on 10th December, 2010.

Following a review of the achievements of the current Housing Strategy officers had drafted a new long term strategy for Wirral, which would run up to 2026. The vision for Wirral's Housing Strategy was to create sustainable communities across the whole of the Borough, in which people would choose to live and stay. Four key strategic priorities of 'Delivering Urban Renaissance', 'Providing Affordable Homes to Maintain Balanced Communities', 'Delivering Decent Homes in Thriving Neighbourhoods', and 'Meeting the Needs of Communities and Providing Support for Those who need It', were seen as fundamental to achieving the vision of the Strategy.

To ensure that the Strategy and in particular the Action Plan remained relevant and responsive to the changing environment, an extensive consultation exercise was being undertaken with key stakeholders, including communities across Wirral to 'reality check' the Strategy priorities and to identify any emerging local housing

related issues. The majority of those consulted, supported both the vision and the strategic priorities and felt that these 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 were currently included in the existing Strategy and Action Plan.

It was proposed that a two stage consultation programme be undertaken, with stage one specifically testing the draft strategy and gaining views on all of the key issues which would inform housing policies and initiatives for the future. This part of the consultation process commenced in October would finish on 10th December 2010. When the responses had been collated, officers would start to develop the Strategy further along with a supporting Housing Investment Plan. A further consultation stage would then take place on the Housing Investment Plan which would be used and monitored to respond to annual budgets and funding regimes such as the Comprehensive Spending Review. The final draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 and supporting Housing Investment Plan, would be reported back to Members early 2011, ready for implementation from 1st April 2011.

There was a discussion highlighting the need for initiatives to bring empty properties back into the market, the response to affordability which could include a person's ability to rent a home, and ways of supporting the letting sector.

Resolved –

(1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a further report on the outcome of the consultation and the final draft Housing Strategy 2011 – 2026 be brought back to the January meeting of this committee.

66 **NEXT GENERATION ACCESS (NGA) - PROGRESS REPORT**

(Having previously declared a prejudicial interest in respect of this matter, Councillor Kenny left the meeting whilst it was considered).

Further to minute (Cabinet – 18/3/10) when actions taken to progress the design and implementation of a Next Generation Access Network for Wirral, giving priority to the main business areas were approved, the Head of Housing and Regeneration reported upon progress to date and outlined the next stages of development.

He reported that with Cabinet approval in place, efforts had focused on consulting and preparing detailed evidence required for formal approval processes. Officers had been working with the consultants, Adit North, to develop a dedicated State Aid notification underpinned by a business model for EU Commission approval. The business case modelling exercise was factored into the production of the Statement of Requirements (SOR) which defined the expected outcomes and provided a framework for tendering purposes. The tendering process which was now at an

advanced stage would be undertaken via the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) and would be designed procure the provision of broadband infrastructure and specialist operating and management services to run the network.

With the progress made to date, it was proposed to maintain this momentum and obtain State Aid approval from the EU at the earliest possible opportunity. In parallel it was planned to proceed with the procurement of an Infrastructure Provider and a Network Operator. It was envisaged that the outcome of the tendering exercise would be the appointment of a key project partner to provide the physical infrastructure such as cabling and the procurement of an operating company.

The estimated total cost of the NGA project for Wirral was £35m. The first phase, costing approximately £12m for the businesses areas, would be funded from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and Council resources.

Resolved – That the Committee welcome and note the progress made to date on this project.

67 **QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2010/11**

The Head of Housing and Regeneration presented an overview of progress made against the indicators for 2010/2011 and key projects which were relevant to the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee covering the second quarter, from July to September 2010. Appendix1 provided the detail of the performance indicators that were reported for the second quarter and included the context and corrective action as requested by the committee.

There were 27 indicators that could be reported at the second quarter to this Committee. In summary, 24 projects were green (all milestones had been met), 3 projects were amber (critical milestones missed/serious slippage) and details of the corrective action to bring amber projects back on track was provided. Appendix 2 provided a list of the projects that were green.

He highlighted some of the key achievements:

- The Wirral Waters scheme to regenerate derelict brownfield land within East Float at Birkenhead Docks had been approved;
- The number of business start-ups supported through the Councils Business Start Programme had exceeded its quarterly target;
- The number of jobs safeguarded by company expansions or by Invest Wirral support had also exceeded its target at quarter two.
- Significant Job Seekers Allowance Reductions (JSA) (Sept data):
 - Wirral now had the lowest JSA rate in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) at 4.4%
 - Wirral's reduction was 2x faster than LCR, Regional and National rates
 - Best yearly reduction in rate at 1.0% which is over 2x faster than the England

- average
- Reduction of 1,872 claimants since September 2009.

In terms of risks, the fragile state of the wider economy continued to be a significant source of uncertainty for local businesses. Initiatives such as Wirral Waters, Invest Wirral, "Think Big Grants" and the wider Economic Recovery Plan were helping to offset the impact to some degree. However, the Government response to the budget deficit was also presenting a significant threat to priorities in this field in terms of changes to the welfare benefits system and reductions in staff and services in the public sector. The 'Working Wirral' initiative, coherent activity by the partners and the Invest Wirral programme may help to counter some of the impact.

There was also uncertainty about funding for delivering the Housing Strategy including the regeneration areas and initiatives such as the Warm Front initiative.

The departmental financial monitoring indicated that there were no significant budget variations projected at this stage of the year and spend was expected to be in line with the budget allocated.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

68 **UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11**

The Committee received an update on its work programme including reports to be scheduled for the next two meetings.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.

69 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee had been invited to review the Forward Plan prior to the meeting in order for it to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

Resolved – That the forward plan be noted.

70 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

71 **REGENERATION UPDATE**

The Head of Housing and Regeneration provided an update on major development schemes within the borough.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2011

SUBJECT:	EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT – COUNCIL PROGRESS TOWARDS EXCELLENT STATUS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER: LEADER (FINANCE AND BEST VALUE)	COUNCILLOR JEFF GREEN
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 4 March 2010 the Programme Board received a report entitled Equality and Diversity – Council Progress and agreed to further develop the scrutiny function to incorporate the criteria of the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to remind Members of the Council’s achievements in being awarded Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government in November 2009, to highlight the role for scrutiny to ensure that the Council reaches ‘Excellent’ status of the new Equality Framework for Local Government by November 2011 and to propose that the Scrutiny Programme Board and the five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees each receives a presentation on the criteria of the Equality Framework for Local Government, at their first meetings in the new Municipal Year, so that Members are fully equipped to provide effective scrutiny in the areas identified as being necessary for Excellent accreditation by the November 2011 deadline.
- 1.3 It is proposed that the presentation is made by Jacqui Cross, Corporate Equality and Cohesion Manager, who is leading the Council’s programme to reach ‘Excellent’ status.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That

- (1) the progress made to date with regard to the Equality Standard for Local Government be noted; and
- (2) this Programme Board and each of the five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees be requested to receive a presentation to help them further develop the Council's Scrutiny Function so that the Council is on course to achieve excellent status of the new Equality Framework for Local Government in November 2011.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 To ensure the Council is fulfilling all of the criteria necessary in respect of the Scrutiny Function for it to progress and be awarded excellent status in respect of the Equality Standard for Local Government in November 2011.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 At the Scrutiny Programme Board meeting on 4 March 2010 the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services provided Members with a report that contained an overview of the Council's achievements, which led to the award, in November 2009, of Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- 4.2 Achieving Level 3 had been a major milestone for the Council. Members had been made aware that the Improvement and Development Agency assessors had considered it to be a 'good and solid level 3'. Details of a number of appointments, which had significantly improved the Council's capacity to provide the necessary leadership had been provided and it had been noted that expertise to ensure that equality and diversity issues had been embedded across the organisation. The report had also set out examples of the ways in which the Council had led the way in Wirral in relation to the equality agenda.
- 4.3 The report had informed that the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) had developed a new Equality Framework for Local Government, which had now replaced the original Equality Standard. Instead of reaching Levels 1 to 5, Councils would now work towards the following three levels:
 - Developing
 - Achieving
 - Excellent
- 4.4 The Council had automatically migrated to 'Achieving' status of the new Framework and would need to be assessed for 'Excellent' status by November 2011 or risk having 'Achieving' status removed. Therefore, an action plan for reaching 'Excellent' status was currently being developed by the Corporate Equality and Diversity team.
- 4.5 The report had also set out a number of areas, highlighted by the new Equality Framework for Local Government, as being in need of effective scrutiny in order for the Council to reach 'Excellent' status by November 2011 and the Chair of the Council Excellence Overview and Scrutiny Committee had indicated that Equality and Diversity had been a major focus of her Committee

and she had referred to the work that had been undertaken to achieve Level 3 of the original Equality Standard.

5.0 BEYOND LEVEL 3 – EXCELLENT STATUS

5.1 The Action Plan for reaching 'Excellent' status, developed by the Corporate Equality and Diversity team, is currently being refreshed following:

- The publication of the Government's equality strategy, 'Building a Fairer Britain – December 2010, and
- The publication of the Council's Corporate Plan – publish date not yet known

6.0 THE ROLE OF SCRUTINY IN REACHING 'EXCELLENT' STATUS

6.1 The Equality Framework for Local Government highlights the need for effective scrutiny in the following areas:

- (a) Is the Council meeting its equality objectives in partnership with others?
- (b) Is the Council able to identify how communities are changing and the impact this may have on equality priorities?
- (c) Can the Council demonstrate improvements and outcomes as a result of its Equality Scheme?
- (d) Is the Council scrutinising its own and its partnerships' performance with regard to equality objectives and outcomes?
- (e) Can the Council demonstrate that commissioned/procured services are delivering the Council's equality objectives?
- (f) Are communities involved in the scrutiny process?
- (g) Do Members and Senior Officers demonstrate personal leadership and understand the relevance of equality and cohesion to their local communities?
- (h) Are equality impact assessments built into all aspects of decision-making, scrutiny and policy reviews?

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The report sets out the improvements necessary to the Scrutiny Function for the Council to attain Excellent status in respect of new Equality Framework for Local Government by November 2011. If the Scrutiny Function does not develop as indicated in the report the Council runs the risk of not attaining Excellent status.

8.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 There are no other options to consider at this time. The Council has indicated it wishes to pursue Excellent status.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Council's single equality scheme 'Equality Watch Scheme 2009 – 2012 is due to be refreshed during April to June 2011 to take into consideration the Equality Act 2010. Consultations will take place across the Council, with partner agencies and among members of the Council's equality watch scheme.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

10.1 Any voluntary, community, faith sector organisation providing services on behalf of the Council will need to adopt acceptable equality practices as prescribed by the Council.

11.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

11.1 There are no additional resource implications.

12.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (b) advance equality of opportunity, and c) foster good relations.

13.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (b) advance equality of opportunity, and (c) foster good relations.

13.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- (a) Is an EIA required? No
- (b) If 'yes', has one been completed?

14.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 No

15.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

15.1 No

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APPENDICES

None

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Scrutiny Programme Board	4 March 2010

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14TH MARCH 2011

SUBJECT:	OUTCOMES FROM EXISTING REGENERATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES AND AN OUTLINE OF FUTURE PROGRAMMES
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ANDREW HODSON REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY
KEY DECISION (<i>Defined in paragraph 13.3 of Article 13 'Decision Making' in the Council's Constitution.</i>)	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report was requested by Members as part of the Committee's work plan and it sets out key outcomes that have been achieved to date as a result of the following regeneration programmes:
- Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF)
 - Business Start and Business Support programmes
 - Future Jobs Fund (FJF)
 - Housing Market Renewal (HMRI)
- 1.2 The report also outlines the Government's proposed future regeneration programmes.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the progress made in the delivery of the regeneration programmes and projects and to note the outline of the Government's future regeneration programmes.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 The report was requested by Members as part of the Committee's work plan that was agreed in June 2010.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Delivering a strong, vibrant economy with high levels of employment is a key corporate priority and Wirral's Investment Strategy provides the context for progressing economic development and tackling worklessness across the Borough.

- 4.2 As a result, activity has been focused on:
- growing the economy - through activities that attract investment, encourage enterprise and innovation, and support business growth and competitiveness;
 - increasing skills and tackling worklessness – through enabling organisations from all sectors to work together to deliver targeted support to enable residents to develop skills and access employment;
 - providing the conditions for growth – including balancing our housing markets through targeted investment to ensure high quality affordable homes in some of the Borough’s most deprived areas.
- 4.3 This activity has been progressed by utilising national regeneration programmes and resources.

5.0 WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FUND

- 5.1 The Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) was allocated £30.5 million from April 2008 and was planned to run only until the end of March 2011. Members should note, however, that funds have been put aside from WNF to support the development and provision of high speed broadband within the Borough.
- 5.2 A strong partnership approach to the development and commissioning of activity, involving organisations from all sectors, has ensured that the resources add value to existing provision, avoid duplication and achieve maximum impact. An outline of the key achievements to date is set out below

Table 1 Key Achievements

Priority Area	Key Achievements
Competitive People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased skills levels • Jobs created and jobs safeguarded • Information, advice and guidance given to ‘hard to reach’ residents • Key skills and basic skills training for disadvantaged groups and communities
Competitive Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased destination Wirral Brand awareness • Wirral’s Tourism and Leisure offer strengthened • Improved business infrastructure • Wirral Business Forum website established
Competitive Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business starts increased • Increase in the number of VAT registered businesses • Improved GVA rate • Businesses supported through the BIG Grant fund

- 5.3 Activities progressed through WNF have resulted in a range of outcomes which have had a beneficial impact on the Borough. Outcomes from the programme up to the end of December 2010 are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Working Neighbourhood Fund Outcomes

PRIORITY	OUTCOMES
Job Outputs	1864 people into employment through the Working Wirral projects
Jobs safeguarded	482 jobs safeguarded through the Working Wirral projects 281 jobs safeguarded through the BIG programme 275 jobs safeguarded through the Think Big programme
Jobs created	1,065 jobs created through the Business Start programme 53 created through the BIG programme 680 jobs created through the Think Big programme
Skills	839 people obtaining NVQ Level 1 and above through the Working Wirral projects
Key and basic skills training	2,276 people receiving training through the Working Wirral projects
Apprentice programme	193 apprentices recruited to the programme
Private sector investment	The BIG and Think Big programmes have attracted £22,780,261 of private sector investment
Business starts	945 businesses have started to date

6.0 BUSINESS START PROGRAMME

- 6.1 A key priority for use of WNF resources has been to ensure that a comprehensive business start and support service is in place. Branded as WirralBiz the programme has outperformed other areas of the north west.
- 6.2 Initially the WirralBiz programme was funded entirely by WNF, whilst the NWDA developed its standard North West business start service, and once this was introduced, in October 2009, WNF resources were used to supplement the programme and to provide a stronger business support package that reflected local needs.
- 6.3 The programme has continued to perform very well and the number of business start-ups and businesses supported has exceeded targets by about 20% despite the current economic conditions. Details of achievements are set out below.

Table 3 Business Start Programme Outcomes

YEARS	TARGETS	ACHIEVEMENTS
2008/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 262 business starts supported • 210 businesses supported and still operating after 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 314 business starts supported • 250 business starts supported and still operating after 12 months
2009/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 business starts supported (figure reflected anticipated impact of recession) • 220 businesses supported and still operating after 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 business starts supported • 269 business starts supported and still operating after 12 months
2010/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 business starts supported • 210 businesses supported and still operating after 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 331 business starts supported at end of Q3 against a target of 225 • 181 business starts supported and still operating after 12 months at end Q3 against a target of 157

7.0 FUTURE JOBS FUND

7.1 The Future Jobs Fund (FJF) was launched in 2009 with the aim of creating 150,000 jobs nationally, either for young people unemployed for over 6 months or for those in unemployment 'hotspots'. A successful Liverpool City Region bid secured funding for Wirral to provide 719 six month job placements. The programme was planned to finish at the end of September 2011. Outcomes to date are set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Future Jobs Fund

Date	Total Job Starts target	Nos. that completed their FJF post	Nos. that left early / dismissed	Nos. into sustainable employment post FJF
To Apr 2010	193	193	12	36
Target for Sept 2011	526	86 Delivery commenced May 2010	15	13

7.2 As of end of February 2011 the programme has created 581 posts and is on target to fill the remaining 138 by the end of March 2011. Wirral's FJF programme has sought to create a wide spread of occupations for

employees. Of the jobs created to date, 29% were in administrative and secretarial occupations, 20% were for Teaching Assistant posts in schools and the remainder were spread across a wide range of activities including environmental work, marketing, IT, maintenance and caretaking, catering, sports coaching and nursery work. A number of council departments have utilised FJF to pilot new services. The Community Safety Team created Dog Foul Warden posts and Technical Services created Assistant Recycling Officers. Due to the success of both pilots, both have now gained core funding to continue these services.

- 7.3 The first tranche of employees finished their six months on the FJF programme in April 2010 with 36 gaining sustainable employment. A series of exit strategy workshops are now being delivered to assist FJF employees and it is projected that some 25% to 30% of employees should obtain jobs by the end of the programme. A jobsfair is being planned for summer 2011 to assist FJF employees in gaining alternative sustainable employment.

8.0 HOUSING MARKET RENEWAL

- 8.1 Wirral's HMRI programme began in 2003 as part of a government strategy to tackle failing housing markets and to create sustainable communities. The Newheartlands Programme covers parts of Liverpool and South Sefton together with parts of inner Wirral, namely Tranmere, Rock Ferry, Birkenhead and Wallasey.
- 8.2 Key housing priorities were established through extensive consultation and it was agreed that Tranmere and Rock Ferry should form the initial focus of the programme, with schemes extending into Birkenhead and Wallasey. It was recognised that market renewal is a long term project involving a range of measures including housing repair and rebuilding, but also wider regeneration activity addressing transport, education and employment. In addition a Living Through Change programme has supported residents and communities affected by the programme through schemes such as neighbourhood wardens, a homemovers service, landlord accreditation, handyperson service and community safety 'target hardening' and anti social behaviour projects.
- 8.3 HMRI resources and other public funding have resulted in the development of 473 new homes and the outputs from the programme are set out below.

Table 5 HMRI OUTPUTS

HMRI Outputs	Outputs achieved as at December 2010
Acquisitions	1247
Demolitions	1029
Home Improvements	1101
Energy Efficiency Improvements	6785
New Build – Registered Social Landlords	377
New Build - Private	121

8.4 The Government has announced that there will be no further funding for the HMRI programme, but that resources could be accessed from sources such as the Regional Growth Fund or the New Homes Bonus. Officers are currently looking at these options and are in regular dialogue with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). However, officers are also revisiting the original objectives of the programme in order to determine whether they are still relevant or deliverable given the changes in the national landscape.

9.0 OUTLINE OF GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED FUTURE REGENERATION PROGRAMMES

9.1 A number of national regeneration programmes are being progressed which provide opportunities for addressing local priorities within the Borough.

Programme Area	Activity
<u>The Regional Growth Fund</u>	The Regional Growth Fund is a £1.4 billion fund that will operate over 3 years from 2011 to 2014. The objective is to stimulate private sector investment by providing support for private sector projects that offer significant potential for long term economic growth and the creation of additional sustainable private sector jobs. The Fund will particularly help support those areas and communities that are currently dependent on the public sector to make the transition to private sector led growth and prosperity. Round 1 closed on the 21 st January and Wirral Officers supported six key bids from organisations including Peel Holdings and Unilever.
<u>ERDF</u>	The current ERDF programme runs until December 2013 and affords some opportunity to support development and business growth in order to increase new jobs and improve GVA. Resources are significantly reduced but the council will seek to respond to local business needs by utilising available funding to focus on encouraging new relevant start ups; improving business skills; encouraging export; access to finance and providing intensive support for high growth firms. Officers have developed a funding bid for ERDF support with Liverpool City Region partners, which if successful will enable additional support activities to be developed.
<u>JESSICA/ Merseyside Urban Development Fund</u>	Officers have led the development of a Merseyside Urban Development Fund (M-UDF), using ERDF funds to create a more sustainable development fund for capital regeneration schemes. JESSICA is a funding instrument that provides a financial loan to a development which will essentially be required to be returned to the fund, with a rate of interest. It does not provide GAP funding support as the money will not be offered as grant and therefore does not address market viability issues like other EU grants have done.

Programme Area	Activity
<u>North West Development Agency</u>	The Government outlined its intentions to abolish the existing RDAs in the June 2010 emergency UK Budget and introduced Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to carry out some of the functions currently carried out by RDAs. As part of this plan a number of functions previously undertaken by RDA's will cease to exist. The Government announced earlier this year that Business Link's regional network is to close in November 2011. This means that the business advice service it provided will be replaced with a national mentoring strategy provided through existing agencies and organisations. The national website is to be turned into an online "business startup hub". There are on-going discussion as to what will happen to NWDA owned assets and there is a proposal to manage the transitional ERDF programme from Regional HCA Offices.
<u>New Enterprise Allowance</u>	The Government is supporting people who want to start their own business through the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA). NEA is available to Job Seekers Allowance customers who have been claiming for more than 6 months and provides access to a business mentor for support to develop a business idea through the early stages of trading. The NEA is currently being piloted in the Liverpool City Region and Jobcentre Plus has responsibility for customer referrals. Locally the council's Invest Wirral team have successfully engaged mentors from its business network, Wirral Business Forum.
<u>The Work Programme</u>	The Government's Work Programme will replace the existing programmes for unemployed people and be the single employment programme for all longer term economically inactive people from the summer of 2011. A number of preferred providers have been identified for the North West and there will be two contractors covering Merseyside, Lancashire and Cumbria. These contractors are yet to be appointed.
<u>ESF</u>	The current ESF Programme runs until December 2013 and provides opportunities to improve the employability and skills of unemployed people and to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce. The Council is maximising resources available through ESF by commissioning a programme of activity, co-financed by the Council, that will support residents in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, Employment Support Allowance and some Job Seeker Allowance customers into employment. The programme will start from the 1 st April 2011 and is expected to deliver 702 job outcomes by May 2012. It will not duplicate provision but complement the Government's Work Programme.

Programme Area	Activity
<u>National Apprenticeship Service</u>	The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) works with employers and organisations to promote Apprenticeships to employers and learners. Their priority is to ensure they deliver the Government's ambition for more young people to undertake an Apprenticeship with a target for at least one out of every five young people to be undertaking an Apprenticeship programme by 2020. Wirral Council work closely with NAS to deliver the highly successful Wirral Apprentice programme which supports young people in the local jobs market. Further investment by the Council in the programme will create an additional 146 apprentice places to take the total supported to 313. The Wirral Apprentice also supports the growth of small businesses through the package of recruitment and training support that is included in the programme.

9.2 In addition to the programmes outlined above, the council is working closely with the private sector to ensure that investment is maximised and our regeneration priorities are met. Examples include work with Peel Holdings to progress the Wirral Waters development and also work with the HCA and with private sector developers to take forward market renewal schemes. Officers are also continuing to ensure that any external funding opportunities that become available are identified and maximised for the benefit of the Borough.

10.0 THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE CHANGING FUNDING LANDSCAPE

10.1 In the budget for 2011/12, agreed at Council on the 1st March 2011, it was agreed that funding would be made available to:

- Continue to support the Wirral Apprentice Programme;
- Provide dedicated business advice and support to Wirral businesses;
- Provide grants to businesses to support growth;
- Support the development of social enterprises and mutuals in Wirral;
- Continue to support investment in housing through a range of energy efficiency measures;
- Enable posts funded through WNF to be made permanent;
- Support further housing investment through the capital programme.

11.0 RELEVANT RISKS

11.1 Each of the regeneration programmes being taken forward will have a detailed risk assessment and analysis in place to ensure that risks are identified and managed appropriately.

12.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

12.1 Options for the delivery of the regeneration programmes covered by this report were addressed at the start of each of the programmes.

13.0 CONSULTATION

13.1 Each of the regeneration programmes has been taken forward in close consultation with partners from the private, public and voluntary, community and faith sectors.

14.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

14.1 Opportunities for the involvement of voluntary, community and faith groups in the design and delivery of the regeneration programmes is considered by each of the individual programmes.

15.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

15.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

15.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

16.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

16.1 Regeneration programmes adhere to current legislation including that relate to equal opportunities. The successful implementation of regeneration projects has the potential to benefit all members of the community and thereby promote equality of opportunity.

16.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)
(a) Is an EIA required? No

17.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

17.1 There are no direct carbon reduction implications arising from this report.

18.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

18.1 There are no direct planning and community safety implications arising from this report.

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REFERENCE MATERIAL

Information regarding the regeneration programmes outlined in the report can be viewed through the council's website.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet – Wirral’s Housing Investment Programme	14 th October 2010
Cabinet - Future Jobs Fund	9 th November 2010
Cabinet – Wirral Apprentice Programme	14 th October 2010
Cabinet – Working Wirral – Working Neighbourhoods Fund	23 rd April 2009

Updated Work Programme Economy & Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

BEGINNING OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2010 /2011

It was agreed at the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs meeting to adopt the following procedure to allow the committee members to monitor their work programme. It is felt that the work programme should be a 'living' document and as such is intended to act as a guide for the Committee throughout the year, while providing the degree of flexibility needed to respond to any emerging or pressing issues as they arise. Committee members, and particularly the Chair, should have a major role in owning and managing the work programme.

The final item on the agenda for each Scrutiny Committee will be 'Review of the Committee Work Programme'.

It is suggested that there should be four short reports. I have attached the following reports:

REPORT 1 - Lists all the issues the committee agreed to include in their Work Programme:

This report lists all items that have been selected by the Committee for inclusion on the work programme for the current year.

It also includes items, such as previous Panel Reviews, where recommendations have been made to Cabinet. It is important that the implementation of these recommendations is monitored. Otherwise there is no measure of the success of scrutiny.

For each item on the work programme, the report gives a description, an indication of how the item will be dealt with, a where possible a relative timescale for the work and brief comments on progress.

REPORT 2 - Suggestions for Additions to Work Programme

The Work Programme for the Committee should be reviewed at each meeting. This will include members having the opportunity to ask for new items to be added to the programme. This report will list any newly suggested items. Committee will then have the opportunity to agree (or not) for them to be added to the programme.

REPORT 3 - Proposed Outline Meeting Schedule for the Municipal Year

The report lists those items which are likely to be on the meeting agenda. This will give the opportunity for Committee members to take a greater lead in organising their work programme.

REPORT 4 - Progress Report on In-Depth Panel Reviews

This report will give a very brief update on progress / timescales for in-depth panel reviews which are in the 'ownership' of the Committee.

Report 1
MONITORING REPORT FOR ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME 2010/2011
(Updates are in red)

Date of item	Topic Description	How the topic will be dealt with	Comments on Progress	Complete
17 TH JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resolved – That a work programme listing the reports from chief officers on key issues during the year and the progress of major development schemes form the basis of the committee’s work programme for the current municipal year. ■ Performance reports, covering the remit of the Scrutiny Committee, would continue to be given on a quarterly basis. ■ The Forward Plan for the period July to October 2010 had now been published on the Council’s intranet/website and Members’ were invited to indicate to the chair or party spokespersons whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan. Any urgent items could also be considered. 	<p>Officer Report</p> <p>Officer Report</p> <p>Officer Report</p>	<p>Agreed items are outlined below.</p>	
15 TH SEPT	<p>Review of work programme</p>	<p>Officer Report</p>	<p>The Committee received an update on its work programme including reports to be scheduled for the next two meetings.</p> <p>Resolved – That the work programme be noted.</p>	
15 TH SEPT	<p>Housing Strategy</p>	<p>Officer Report</p>	<p>The Head of Housing and Regeneration gave a presentation on the Housing Strategy 2005-2010 which had four key aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improving the urban areas of Wirral through tackling low demand. ➤ Providing affordable homes to maintain balanced communities ➤ Delivering Decent Homes ➤ Providing support for those who need it 	

In the presentation he also referred to some key issues, influencing factors, and priority choices.

In addition he circulated a briefing note on the new 15 year Housing Strategy 2011-2026 which outlined a number of significant changes which had occurred and which impacted on its development.

These included the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy and regional housing targets, no spatial priorities and no firm direction of travel yet with regards to guidance on determining local housing targets. There was a need to re-establish the position with regards to housing numbers through the Core Strategy and he gave details of a two part consultation programme. A further report on the Draft Strategy would be brought to the Committee on 24 November.

The Interim Director responded to a number of comments from Members regarding:

- ◆ The work of the Empty Property Team in bringing empty properties back into use, of which there were now 6000 a rise from 5000 over 12 months. The Empty Property Strategy gave a breakdown of the different factors which led to properties being empty.
- ◆ Affordability which was a national issue and the need to lobby financial institutions to be more responsive in making finance available to first time buyers.
- ◆ Work to be done with RSLs for rented homes.
- ◆ The challenges of bringing the 3400 or so planning permissions for housing to completion.
- ◆ The factors affecting the bringing back into use of those empty properties which had had a different use and, which, although suitable for housing, did not now have planning permission as housing.

			<p>The Chair referred to the need for a fuller debate on the issue at the meeting of the Committee on 24 November to take account of both the Housing Strategy and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Strategy.</p> <p>Resolved – That the presentation be noted and a further report on the Housing Strategy be brought to the meeting on 24 November, 2010.</p>	
<p>24TH NOV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on Housing Strategy Consultation ▪ Invest Wirral including the support of business in the present economic circumstances ▪ NGA Broadband 	<p>Officer Report Officer Report Officer Report</p>		
<p>12TH JAN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Poverty Needs Assessment ▪ Outcomes from projects and programmes currently receiving funding and then to define the future outcomes to be achieved <p>(Programmes include Working Neighbourhoods Fund, Future Jobs Fund, HMRI, Business Start and Business Support Programmes)</p>	<p>Officer Report Officer Report</p>		

Report 2

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONS TO WORK PROGRAMME FOR ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011

Topic Description	Topic suggested by	How the topic will be dealt with	Estimated Completion Date

Report 3

PROPOSED OUTLINE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR ECONOMY AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2010/2011

Meeting Date	Topic Description
17TH JUNE	<p>The views of the Committee were requested concerning topics to be included in this year's scrutiny work programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Resolved</u> – That a work programme listing the reports from chief officers on key issues during the year and the progress of major development schemes form the basis of the committee's work programme for the current municipal year. ▪ Performance reports, covering the remit of the Scrutiny Committee, would continue to be given on a quarterly basis. ▪ The Forward Plan for the period July to October 2010 had now been published on the Council's intranet/website and Members' were invited to indicate to the chair or party spokespersons whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan. Any urgent items could also be considered.
15TH SEPT	Housing Strategy
24TH NOV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update on Housing Strategy Consultation ▪ Invest Wirral including the support of business in the present economic circumstances ▪ NGA Broadband
12TH JAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Poverty Needs Assessment ▪ Outcomes from projects and programmes currently receiving funding and then to define the future outcomes to be achieved (Programmes include Working Neighbourhoods Fund, Future Jobs Fund, HMRI, Business Start and Business Support Programmes)
14TH MAR	Review of work programme

Report 4

PROGRESS REPORT ON IN-DEPTH PANEL REVIEWS ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

START OF MUNICIPAL YEAR 2010/2011

Title of Review	Members of Panel	Progress to Date	Date Due to report back

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WIRRAL COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 MARCH 2011

SUBJECT:	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR WIRRAL – EVIDENCE BASE – APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS TO CARRY OUT A WATER CYCLE STUDY
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	KEVIN ADDERLEY – INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR. ANDREW HODSON
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs Members that consultants have now been appointed by the Interim Director of Corporate Services under delegated powers to undertake a joint Water Cycle Study with Liverpool City Council in line with the resolution of Cabinet on 14th October 2010 (Minute 176 refers).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That the appointment of Scott Wilson for the sum of £27,800 (excluding VAT) under the delegated powers of the Interim Director of Corporate Services be noted.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 Cabinet on 14th October 2010 agreed to the commissioning of a joint Water Cycle Study with Liverpool City Council as part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy – part of Wirral's emerging Local Development Framework (Minute 176 refers).
- 3.2 It was agreed 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. A joint approach with Liverpool City Council was agreed, to achieve economies through joint commissioning and because the City Council is a partner in the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point.
- 3.3 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 allocations and to comply with the conditions of the designation of the Mersey Heartlands New Growth Point.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Procurement Unit advised that the recommended procurement route was via a 'Request for Quotation' exercise as the commission was valued less than £50,000. This advice supports the Constitution and Standing Orders for the Authority.
- 4.2 Requests for Quotation were sent to a short list of five consultants via 'The Chest' electronic procurement system on 5 November 2010 for reply by 12 noon on 26 November 2010. The companies selected were those which had carried out similar commissions for local authorities and Growth Point areas in the past, particularly those that operate in the North West. By the close of the period, four quotations had been received, from the following consultants: Aecom, Entec, Halcrow and Scott Wilson.
- 4.3 Following analysis of the quotation submissions against the technical and financial criteria set out in the Request for Quotation the Council's standard terms and conditions for services, it was decided to appoint Scott Wilson.
- 4.4 The decision to appoint Scott Wilson was taken on 15 December 2010 by the Interim Director of Corporate Services using delegated powers under paragraph 14.4 of the Contract Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution and was formally confirmed in writing on 16 December 2010.
- 4.5 The Inception Meeting for the Study was held on 6 January 2011 and the Study is expected to conclude by 29 April 2011.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 There are no risk 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 risk.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 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.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 In developing the brief for the project, the Draft Request for Quotation was circulated to Liverpool City Council, United Utilities, the Environment Agency, Welsh Water, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, Natural England and Countryside Council for Wales and was subsequently amended to take account of comments received.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 There are no implications for voluntary, community and faith groups arising from this report.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 The cost of the study will be jointly funded between Wirral Council and Liverpool City Council on a 50:50 split basis. The cost will be met from existing resources, involving the use of Investment Strategy funding allocated to Strategic Development. The Director of Finance has confirmed the availability of these resources. The price for the Study will be £27,800 excluding VAT and including expenses.

9.2 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.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The procurement exercise has been undertaken in line with the Council's financial regulations and standing orders.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

(b) If 'yes', has one been completed? No

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 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 carbon reduction priorities.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 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).

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

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APPENDICES

There are no appendices associated with this report.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

There is no reference material associated with this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	14 October 2010